

SCRUTINY PROCEDURE RULES

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As the Council operates a Leader and Cabinet model of governance, it is required to have at least one Scrutiny Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to influence the policies and decisions made by the Council and other organisations involved in delivering public services. They do this through meeting regularly and having input into some policies and decisions before they are made, investigating important public issues through Task and Finish Groups and where appropriate challenging or reviewing decisions once they are made.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Committee can scrutinise and review decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any Council functions.

2. How many Scrutiny Committees does the Council have?

- 2.1 The Council has one Scrutiny Committee which will perform all scrutiny functions on behalf of the Council.
- 2.2 The Scrutiny Committee can only consider matters within its Terms of Reference.

3. Who can be a member of the Scrutiny Committee?

- 3.1 All Councillors (except members of the Cabinet, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor) may be members of the Scrutiny Committee.

4. Substitution

- 4.1 There shall be no substitutes on Scrutiny Committee.

5. When will the Scrutiny Committee meet?

- 5.1 The Scrutiny Committee shall meet in accordance with the [Calendar of Meetings](#).
- 5.2 Extraordinary meetings may be called if considered necessary as determined by the Chief Executive Officer following consultation with the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee and in line with the Call In Procedure

6. Quorum (amount of members needed to attend each meeting)

- 6.1 The quorum for each Scrutiny Committee shall be four members of the Scrutiny Committee.

7. Who Chairs the Scrutiny Committee?

7.1 The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee will be drawn from among the Councillors sitting on the Scrutiny Committee as proposed by the respective groups in accordance with political balance.

7.2 Council will determine who will be Chair and Vice Chair at its [Annual Meeting](#).

8. Annual Work Plan

8.1 Each year the Scrutiny Officer will ensure that proposals for the Scrutiny Committee's [Annual Work Plan](#) are provided to all members. The Scrutiny Chair and Vice Chair will be responsible for setting the [Annual Work Plan](#) for the Scrutiny Committee and in doing so it shall take into account the wishes of all members including the wishes of those who are not members of the largest political group on the Council.

8.2 The [Annual Work Plan](#) is a living document and will be reviewed at each meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

8.3 In adding items for review to the [Annual Work Plan](#), the Chair of the Scrutiny Committee shall consider;

- Which [Corporate Priority](#) the item links to
- If the item is of significant community concern
- If the issue is significant to Partners and/or Stakeholders
- What the added value is of doing the work
- What evidence there is to support the work
- If the Scrutiny work can be completed within a proportionate time to the task identified
- If the work is being done somewhere else
- What will be achieved
- If the Council has the resources to carry out the work effectively

8.4 The Annual Work Plan shall consist of;

Work Plan	Detail
Matters which inform the development of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework .	The Scrutiny Committee shall follow the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules .
Matters which inform the development of the Council's approach to matters not forming part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework	This may result in a report to Council

<p>Holding enquiries and investigating the available options for future direction in policy development, matters of public concern and any other issues within their Terms of Reference.</p> <p>○</p>	<p>This may result in a report to the Cabinet</p> <p>This may result in the establishment of a Task and Finish Group</p>
<p>Call in of Key Decisions</p>	<p>The Scrutiny Committee shall follow the Call In Procedure Rules</p>
<p>Requests by a member of the Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>Any member of the Scrutiny Committee shall be entitled to ask the Chair for an item relevant to the functions of the Committee to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting of the Committee. The Chair shall have discretion as to whether this should be included in the next meeting's agenda.</p>
<p>Requests from the Council and if it considers it appropriate, the Cabinet</p>	<p>The Scrutiny Committee shall respond, as soon as their Annual Work Plan permits, to review particular areas of Council activity. Where they do so, the Scrutiny Committee shall report their findings and any recommendations back to the Cabinet and/or Council.</p>

9. Who can attend Scrutiny Committees?

9.1 All meetings of the Scrutiny Committee shall be open to the public except where the item under discussion is considered exempt under Schedule 12A and Section 1001 of the Local Government Act 1972 or confidential under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972.

9.2 The Scrutiny Committee may require any Cabinet member, the Chief Executive and any Director or Assistant Director to attend before it to explain in relation to matters within their remit:

- any particular decision or series of decisions;
- the extent to which the actions taken implement Council policy;
- service performance.

9.3 Members of the Cabinet, Chief Executive and/or Director or Assistant Directors have a duty to attend the Scrutiny Committee when requested through the Annual Workplan.

9.4 Cabinet Members shall attend Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis to report on their portfolios budget and performance.

9.5 Where, in exceptional circumstances, the Member or Officer is unable to attend on the required date, the Chair of the requiring Scrutiny Committee shall in consultation with the member or officer arrange an alternative date for attendance.

9.6 The Scrutiny Committee may invite people other than those people referred to above to address it, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions. It may, for example, wish to hear from residents, stakeholders, Members and officers in other parts of the public sector and shall invite such people to attend. Attendance is entirely optional and shall relate to an item on the agreed Annual Work Plan.

10 Task and Finish Groups

10.1 The Scrutiny Committee may establish specially set up Task and Finish Groups for specific investigation contained within their Annual Work Plan. There shall be a maximum of two Task and Finish Groups at any one time.

10.2 The Committee shall decide on the number of members to form the group and also seek volunteers from within the Committee's membership to join the group. The Committee may also decide to open up membership of the Task and Finish group to other councillors, or co-opt other members on to the group from relevant partners, organisation or community groups.

10.3 The Committee shall agree the Scope of the Task and Finish Group using the Scoping Document which shall include a timescale for the process.

10.4 The Scrutiny Committee may appoint advisers and assessors as appropriate to assist them in this process. They may go on site visits, conduct public surveys, hold public meetings, commission research and do all other things that they reasonably consider necessary to inform their deliberations. They may ask witnesses to attend to address them on any matter under consideration and may pay to any advisers, assessors and witnesses a reasonable fee and expenses for doing so.

10.5 Once the evidence has been gathered, the Task and Finish Group will produce a report to be submitted to the relevant Scrutiny Committee outlining details of the review process, evidence gathered, conclusions and subsequent recommendations.

10.6 The Task and Finish Groups are informal meetings without decision making powers and will not generally be open to the public. They shall not be formally minuted.

11. Reports from the Scrutiny Committee

11.1 Once the Scrutiny Committee has completed its deliberations on any matter a copy of its final report will be forwarded to the Chief Executive who will allocate it to either or both the Cabinet and the Council for consideration.

11.2 Where the proposals are consistent with the existing Budget and Policy Framework the report shall be considered by the Cabinet at its next ordinary meeting following submission of the report to the Chief Executive.

11.3 Where the proposals would require a departure from or a change to the agreed Budget and Policy Framework the report shall be considered by Council at the next ordinary meeting of the Council. The Cabinet shall have six weeks in which to respond to the Scrutiny report. Their response would be included within the consultation section of the Scrutiny Report. If the next ordinary Council meeting is prior to the Cabinet having formed a response to the report, the report will be considered at the following meeting of the Council.

12. The Party Whip

12.1 When considering any matter in respect of which a member of the relevant Scrutiny Committee is subject to a party whip the member must declare the existence of the whip and the nature of it before the commencement of the Committee's deliberations on the matter. The declaration and the detail of the whipping arrangements shall be recorded in the minutes of the meeting.