

# West Suffolk Council

## Scrutiny Committees Procedure Rules

### A. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

#### 1. What will be the number of and arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny Committees?

- 1.1 The Council will have one Overview and Scrutiny Committee as set out in Article 7 and will appoint to it annually, unless Council cancels, defers or delays the Annual Meeting, in which case, the Members and the Chair and the Vice-Chair, shall remain in post until a successor is appointed. The Committee may appoint panels or 'task and finish' groups for fixed periods to consider specific issues.
- 1.2 The Committee will consist of a maximum of 16 members of the Council. *The Council will normally observe the rules governing political balance contained in Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 when allocating seats to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee but it may resolve to vary this provision if no Member votes against it.*
- 1.3 The terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be:-
  - (a) The performance of all overview and scrutiny functions on behalf of the Council (explained in Article 7 of this Constitution) and as set out in Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000
  - (b) To receive the draft West Suffolk Annual Report from the Leaders or representative(s) of Cabinet.
  - (c) To approve a rolling overview and scrutiny work programme, including the programme of any Panels or Groups it appoints, so as to ensure that the Committee's and Panels' or Groups' time is effectively and efficiently utilised;
  - (d) To put in place a system to ensure that referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Cabinet, either by way of report or for reconsideration, are managed efficiently.
  - (e) In the event of the volume of reports to the Cabinet creating difficulty for the management of Cabinet business or jeopardising the efficient running of Council business, at the request of the Cabinet, to make decisions about the priority of referrals made.

- (f) To act as the Crime and Disorder Committee for the purposes of Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and associated regulations, and accordingly:
  - (i) To scrutinise the actions undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership and the partners who comprise it, insofar as their activities relate to the Partnership itself; and
  - (ii) To receive reports from the Suffolk Police and Crime Panel; and
  - (iii) To make reports or recommendations to the Council and partner organisations with respect to the discharge of those functions.
- (g) To consider local crime and disorder matters in accordance with the Councillor Call for Action Protocol.
- (h) To work collaboratively, as may be appropriate, with the scrutiny function of other local authorities to fulfil the crime and disorder scrutiny function.
- (i) To advise on the development of new policy in accordance with its agreed work programme.
- (j) To advise, where appropriate, on corporate projects and strategies.
- (k) To appoint informal Member Panels and 'Task and Finish' Groups to assist the work of the Committee; and
- (l) To review annually the work and constitution of such Panels and Working Parties.
- (m) To agree the procedures for the ways in which matters can be referred to the Committee and how its own Task and Finish Groups should be formed and operated.
- (n) To appoint one member of the Committee to act as the Council's representative on the Suffolk Health Scrutiny Committee who will report their findings back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to appoint one member of the Committee as a substitute member on the Suffolk Health Scrutiny Committee.

## **2. Who may sit on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee?**

- 2.1 All Councillors, except members of the Cabinet and full Members of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee, may be Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However, no Member may be involved in scrutinising a decision in which they have been directly involved in the development of, or making.

### **3. Co-optees**

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall be entitled to recommend to Council the appointment of a number of people as non-voting co-optees. Panels and Working Groups of the Committee may appoint non-voting co-optees to assist with specific reviews.

### **4. Meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

- 4.1 The Committee shall have meetings programmed approximately every six weeks (i.e. normally, there will be up to eight ordinary meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in each year).
- 4.2 Meetings will be conducted in accordance with the Committee Procedure Rules unless there are specific exceptions in these Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

### **5. Who chairs Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings?**

- 5.1 Following discussions between Group Leaders, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be appointed by the Council. In the event that there is a majority group within the Council, it will be desirable for:-
- (a) The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be chaired by a Member who is not a member of the majority group; and
  - (b) The Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be a member of the majority group.
- 5.2 The Chair and Vice-Chair will hold office until:-
- (a) They resign from the office of Chair or Vice-Chair; or
  - (b) They are no longer a Councillor; or
  - (c) The next Annual Meeting of the Council save that the Council may remove the Chair or Vice-Chair at an earlier date but only in the event of a change in the political control of the Council.
- 5.3 Upon the occurrence of a vacancy in the office of Chair or Vice-Chair, the Council shall fill the vacancy at the next ordinary meeting of the Council or, if the vacancy occurs as a result of the removal of the Chair and/or Vice-Chair in the event of a change in the political control of the Council, at the meeting at which that resolution was passed. The person appointed to fill the vacancy shall hold office for the remainder of the original term, subject to the rules on earlier termination in paragraph 5.2 above.

### **6. Work programme**

- 6.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be responsible for setting its own work programme and in doing so it shall take into account the wishes of Members of the Committee.

## **7. Agenda items**

- 7.1 Any Member of the Council shall be entitled to give notice to the Scrutiny Officer that they wish an item relevant to the functions of the Committee to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting of the Committee. On receipt of such a request the Scrutiny Officer will ensure that it is included on the next available agenda. The request must be by way of any procedures agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in order to ensure the Committee has all the information it needs to decide whether to take the issue forward.
- 7.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall also respond, as soon as its work programme permits, to requests from the Council, the Cabinet, and the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee to review particular areas of Council activity. Where it does so, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall report its findings and any recommendations back to the Cabinet and/or Council. The Council and/or the Cabinet shall consider the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting.

## **8. Policy review, service development and performance management**

- 8.1 The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the development of the Council's budget and policy framework is set out in detail in the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.
- 8.2 In relation to the development of the Council's approach to other matters not forming part of its policy and budget framework, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may make proposals to the Cabinet for developments in so far as they relate to matters within its terms of reference.
- 8.3 To fulfil its role, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may hold enquiries and investigate the available options and may appoint advisers and assessors to assist it in this process. The Committee and any Panel it appoints may go on site visits, conduct public surveys, hold public meetings, commission research and do all other things that it reasonably considers necessary to form its deliberations. It may ask witnesses to attend to address it on any matter under consideration and may pay to any advisers, assessors and witnesses a reasonable fee and expenses for doing so.

## **9. Reports from Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

- 9.1 Once it has formed recommendations on proposals for development, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will prepare a formal report and submit it to the Scrutiny Officer for consideration by the Cabinet (if the proposals are consistent with the existing budgetary and policy framework), or to the Council as appropriate

(e.g. if the recommendation would require a departure from or a change to the agreed budget and policy framework).

- 9.2 The Chair, or in their absence, the Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will normally be responsible for presenting the report to the Cabinet or the Council as appropriate. However, in the case of the report of a panel or working group, the report to the Cabinet and/or Council can also be made by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Panel/Working Group.
- 9.3 If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee cannot agree on one single final report to the Council or Cabinet as appropriate, then up to one minority report may be prepared and submitted for consideration by the Council or Cabinet with the majority report.
- 9.4 The Council or Cabinet shall consider the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the next available meeting.

## **10. Making sure that overview and scrutiny reports are considered by the cabinet**

- 10.1 Once the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has completed its deliberations on any matter it will forward a copy of its final report to the Scrutiny Officer who will allocate it to either or both the Cabinet and the Council for consideration, according to whether the contents of the report would have implications for the Council's budget and policy framework. If the Scrutiny Officer refers the matter to Council, they will also serve a copy on the Leader with notice that the matter is to be referred to Council. The Cabinet must be given the opportunity to respond to the Overview and Scrutiny report before the Council meets to consider it. When the Council does meet to consider any referral from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a matter which would impact on the budget and policy framework, it shall also consider the response of the Cabinet to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee proposals.
- 10.2 The agenda for Cabinet meetings shall include an item entitled 'Issues arising from Overview and Scrutiny'. Any reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee referred to the Cabinet shall be included at this point in the agenda (unless they have been considered in the context of the Cabinet's deliberations on a substantive item on the agenda).
- 10.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will, in any event, have access to the Cabinet's Decision Plan and timetable for decisions. Even where an item is not the subject of detailed proposals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee following a consideration of possible policy/service developments, the Committee will at least be able to respond in the course of the Cabinet's consultation process in relation to any key decision.

## **11. Rights of Overview and Scrutiny Committee members to documents**

- 11.1 In addition to their rights as Councillors, members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have the additional right to documents, and to notice of meetings, as set out in the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution.
- 11.2 Nothing in this paragraph prevents more detailed liaison between the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate depending on the particular matter under consideration.

## **12. Members and officers giving account**

- 12.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may scrutinise and review decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any Council functions. As well as reviewing documentation, in fulfilling the scrutiny role, it may require any member of the Cabinet, the Head of Paid Service and/or any Chief Officer to attend before it to explain in relation to matters within its remit:-

- (a) Any particular decision or series of decisions;
- (b) The extent to which the actions taken implement Council policy; and/or
- (c) Their performance.

and it is the duty of those persons to attend, or send an appropriate substitute, if so required.

- 12.2 Where any Member or Officer is required to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee under this provision, the Chair of the Committee will inform the Scrutiny Officer. The Scrutiny Officer shall inform the Member or Officer in writing, giving at least five working days notice of the meeting at which they are required to attend. The notice will state the nature of the item on which they are required to attend to give account and whether any papers are required to be produced for the Committee. Where the account to be given to the Committee will require the production of a report, then the Member or Officer concerned will be given sufficient notice to allow for preparation of that documentation.
- 13.3 Where, in exceptional circumstances, the Member or Officer is unable to attend on the required date, then the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall, in consultation with the Member or Officer, arrange an alternative date for attendance to take place within a maximum of 10 working days from the date of the original request.

### **13. Attendance by others**

13.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may invite people other than those people referred to in paragraph 12.1 above to address it, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions. It may, for example, wish to hear from residents, stakeholders and Members and Officers in other parts of the public sector and shall invite such people to attend. Attendance is of course entirely optional.

### **14. Call-in**

14.1 A key element of the scrutiny role of the Committee concerns the arrangements for the "call-in" of a decision taken by or on behalf of the Cabinet. A decision by the Cabinet, or a Key Decision made by an Officer or Portfolio Holder with delegated authority, may be "called-in" by Members of the Council submitting a request in writing on the Call-in Request Form to the Director (HR, Governance and Regulatory) within five working days of the publication of that decision. No action can be taken on an item called in for scrutiny.

14.2 Call-in should only be used in exceptional circumstances. These are where Members have evidence which suggests that the decision was not taken in accordance with the principles set out in Article 11 (Decision Making). In order to ensure that call-in is not abused; nor causes unreasonable delay, certain limitations are to be placed on its use. These are:-

- (a) A decision must be called-in by at least five Members of the Council; and
- (b) A decision on the same item may only be "called-in" for scrutiny by the Committee on one occasion within a six month period. The six month period is to commence from the date the "call-in" request is received by the Director (HR, Governance and Regulatory).
- (c) Members who have called-in a decision may withdraw their call-in at any time prior to the meeting taking place to hear the call-in, by giving notice in writing to the Scrutiny Officer.
- (d) A decision should not be called-in where it was considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to the decision being made, unless it can be reasonably demonstrated that the Cabinet decision was flawed.

14.3 The following arrangements for the call-in of decisions made by the Cabinet will apply:-

- (a) When a decision is made by the Cabinet (or by any Members of the Cabinet with a delegated authority contained in Part 3 of this Constitution) or a Key Decision is made by an Officer

or Portfolio Holder with delegated authority, the decision shall be published electronically. Normally, such publication will be on the Thursday of the week in which the decision was taken. Notification of all such decisions will also be issued to all Members within the same timescale by the person responsible for publishing the decision.

- (b) The relevant notice will bear the date on which it is published and will specify that the decision will come into force, and may then be implemented, on the expiry of five working days after the publication of the decision, unless it is called in.
- (c) During that period, the Scrutiny Officer shall call-in a decision for scrutiny by the Committee if so requested by Members (in accordance with paragraph 14.1 above) and shall notify the decision-taker of the call-in. An item called in for scrutiny will normally be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its next scheduled meeting. However, in consultation with the Chair of the Committee, they may call an extraordinary meeting of the Committee on such date as they may determine (in accordance with the Access to Information Procedure Rules in Part 4 of this Constitution).
- (d) Any Member considering calling in a Cabinet decision, or a Key Decision taken by an Officer or Portfolio Holder under delegated authority, first be required to make every effort to discuss the issue with the relevant Portfolio Holder or Leader of the Council.
- (e) Members using the call-in arrangements have the right to address the Committee when it deals with the issue.
- (f) Normally, the Committee will complete its scrutiny of the issue at that meeting and report the outcome to the next meeting of the Cabinet. However, the Committee may consider that further time is required to consider the issue and would, therefore, need to recommend to the Cabinet that further work be carried out and that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee makes recommendations at a later date. In these circumstances, the Cabinet will decide whether or not the decision should be implemented, having regard to the urgency, if any, of the matter and the provisions of the Budget and Policy Framework Rules (see (i) below);
- (g) If the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees with a called-in decision, the decision may be implemented immediately following the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.
- (h) If the Committee makes an alternative recommendation, this will be considered by the Cabinet at its next meeting and no action should be taken until a final decision has been made by the Cabinet (or the Council – see (i) below); and



- (i) As set out in the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules, called-in decisions which are deemed to be contrary to the policy framework, or contrary to or not wholly consistent with the budget, may have to be referred to the Council for a final decision.

#### 14.4 Call-in and urgency

- 14.4 The call-in procedure set out above shall not apply where the decision being taken by the Cabinet is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would ***seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interest***. The record of the decision, and notice by which it is made public shall state whether in the opinion of the decision-making person or body, the decision is an urgent one, and therefore not subject to call-in. The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee must agree both that the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's consent shall be required. In the absence of both, the Head of Paid Service or their nominee's consent shall be required. Decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of the Council, together with the reasons for urgency.

#### 15. Councillor call for action

- 15.1 Any Councillor may request that the Committee consider the inclusion of a Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) on its work programme, under the terms of a CCfA Protocol to be agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This should only be in exceptional circumstances where all other possible avenues for resolution of the issue have been followed by the referring Councillor, and yet a problem still exists.

#### 16. The party whip

- 16.1 For the purpose of this section, reference to "the party whip" shall mean:-

*"Any instruction given by or on behalf of a political Group to any Councillor who is a Member of that Group as to how that Councillor shall speak or vote on any matter before the Council or any Committee or Sub-Committee, or the application or threat to apply any sanction by the Group in respect of that Councillor should they speak or vote in any particular manner."*

- 16.2 The imposition of the party whip is regarded by the Council as incompatible with Overview and Scrutiny. The party whip should not therefore be imposed on any member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee while engaged in the work of Overview and Scrutiny.

## **17. Business at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings**

17.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall consider the following business:-

- (a) Minutes of the last meeting.
- (b) Declarations of Interest.
- (c) Public speaking in accordance with the Committee Procedure Rules.
- (d) Consideration of any matter referred to the Committee for a decision in relation to call-in of a decision.
- (e) Responses of the Cabinet to reports of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- (f) Any recommendations or reports from the Committee's Panels or Task and Finish Groups.
- (g) Consideration of the Decisions Plan; and
- (h) The business otherwise set out on the agenda for the meeting.

17.2 Where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee conducts investigations, the Committee may also ask people to attend to give evidence at Committee meetings which are to be conducted in accordance with the following principles:-

- (a) That the investigation be conducted fairly and all Members of the Committee be given the opportunity to ask questions of attendees, and to contribute and speak.
- (b) That those assisting the Committee by giving evidence be treated with respect and courtesy; and
- (c) That the investigation be conducted so as to maximise the efficiency of the investigation or analysis.

17.3 Following any investigation or review, the Committee shall prepare a report, for submission to the Cabinet and/or Council as appropriate and shall make its report and findings public.

## **B. PERFORMANCE AND AUDIT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

### **1. What will be the arrangements for the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee?**

- 1.1 The Council will have a Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee as set out in Article 7 and will appoint to it annually, unless Council cancels, defers or delays the Annual Meeting, in which case, the Members and the Chair and the Vice-Chair, shall remain in post until a successor is appointed.
- 1.2 The Committee will consist of a maximum of 10 Members of the Council and two non-voting co-opted non-elected independent members. The Council will normally observe the rules governing political balance contained in Section 15 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 when allocating seats to the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee but it may resolve to vary this provision if no Member votes against it.
- 1.3 The two non-voting co-opted non-elected independent members will be appointed for a term of four years and may serve for a maximum of two terms.
- 1.4 The terms of reference of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee will be:-
  - (i) To monitor and scrutinise the performance of the Council's services by having regard to a variety of information, including performance indicators, financial information, reports from external inspections, audit reports and monitoring of action plans.
  - (ii) To suggest means of improving and promoting the performance management and audit functions of the Council.
  - (iii) The Committee will also assist the Council and the Cabinet in the development of the budget framework and act as the Council's Audit Committee and will have reference to any or all of the following areas:-
    - (a) Integration of the Audit role**  
To ensure that the principles of effective audit are integrated into the work of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee and the Council generally.
    - (b) Risk Management**  
To provide assurance of the effectiveness of the corporate risk assessment process and monitor the effective development and operation of risk management policies in the Council, specifically including monitoring of the Risk Management Strategy and the Corporate Risk Register.

**(c) Internal Audit and Governance**

To provide an effective mechanism to monitor the control environment within the authority, ensuring the highest standards of probity and public accountability by:-

- (1) Reviewing and approving of the Annual Audit Plan.
- (2) Challenging and follow-up of internal audit recommendations.
- (3) Reviewing internal audit performance;
- (4) Reviewing of Code of Corporate Governance and Statement of Internal Control; and
- (5) Reviewing the anti-fraud and corruption controls and arrangements.

**(d) Financial Statements and Annual Accounts**

To provide scrutiny of the authority's financial performance by scrutinising the:-

- (1) Budget Monitoring Reports.
- (2) Capital Programme Audited Accounts; and
- (3) Any proposals for cost reductions or growth in the forward budget.

**(e) Financial Resilience and Treasury Management**

A Financial Resilience Sub-Committee will undertake the enhanced monitoring and scrutiny requirements of the revised Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy and will be responsible to the Committee for:-

- (1) The Council's responses to changes in statutory and regulatory requirements and guidance.
- (2) The Annual Treasury Management and Investment Strategy.
- (3) On-going revisions to treasury management strategies and policies.
- (4) The mid year treasury management review.
- (5) Reports on treasury management performance; and
- (6) The annual report on treasury management performance, including the effects of the decisions taken and the transactions executed in the past year, and on the circumstances of any non-compliance with the Council's treasury management policy statements.

**(f) External Audit**

To maintain and develop a trusting and professional relationship with the Council's external auditors and

ensure any issues arising from inspection are dealt with:-

- (1) Annual audit and Inspection Plan and any resulting reports.
- (2) Annual Audit Letter; and
- (3) Statement of Auditing Standard (SAS) 610 Communications.

**(g) Procurement**

Formal reporting of procurement issues.

- (iv) To receive an annual work programme based around a quarterly performance management and risk and budget monitoring cycle; and
  - (v) To approve the Annual Statement of Accounts and Annual Governance Statement each year in good time to meet the statutory deadline for adoption.
  - (vi) To receive reports from other external inspectors related to the financial and non-financial performance of the Council and ensure appropriate action is taken in response to recommendations. This shall include adverse findings of the Local Government Ombudsman which do not amount to a wider maladministration on the part of the Council.
  - (vii) To provide an effective mechanism to monitor the governance and scrutiny of health and safety, including reviewing the health and safety Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on a quarterly basis. The Portfolio Holder for Governance and Regulatory to also present an annual report to the Committee covering a review of performance across the year and the wider development of health and safety across the organisation.
- 1.5 It is not within the terms of reference of this Committee to carry out in-depth service reviews, although the Committee may from time-to-time carry out initial investigation into or scoping of an issue, which may lead to recommendations for further work by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Cabinet and may also serve to assist the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in its own detailed examinations or Task and Finish Group work.

**2. Who may sit on the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee?**

- 2.1 All Councillors, except members of the Cabinet and full Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, may be Members of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee.

### **3. Co-optees**

- 3.1 The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee shall be entitled to recommend to Council the appointment of a number of people as non-voting co-optees.

### **4. Meetings of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee**

- 4.1 There will be up to six ordinary meetings of the Committee each year, comprising four quarterly meetings based around a programme of performance management and risk and budget monitoring, and, as required, a meeting to approve the annual accounts, and a further meeting to scrutinise proposals for cost reductions and growth in the forward budget.
- 4.2 Meetings shall be held in accordance with the Committee Procedure Rules as set out in Part 3 of this Constitution, except where these Scrutiny Committees Procedure Rules specify otherwise.

### **5. Who chairs Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee meetings?**

- 5.1 Following discussions between Group Leaders, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee will be appointed by the Council.
- 5.2 The Chair and Vice-Chair will hold office until:-
- (a) They resign from the office of Chair or Vice-Chair; or
  - (b) They are no longer a Councillor; or
  - (c) The next Annual Meeting of the Council save that the Council may remove the Chair or Vice-Chair at an earlier date but only in the event of a change in the political control of the Council.
- 5.3 Upon the occurrence of a vacancy in the office of Chair or Vice-Chair, the Council shall fill the vacancy at the next ordinary meeting of the Council or, if the vacancy occurs as a result of the removal of the Chair and/or Vice-Chair in the event of a change in the political control of the Council, at the meeting at which that resolution was passed. The person appointed to fill the vacancy shall hold office for the remainder of the original term, subject to the rules on earlier termination in paragraph 5.2 above.

### **6. Work programme**

- 6.1 The Committee will receive a rolling work programme based around a quarterly performance management and risk and budget monitoring cycle.

## **7. Agenda items**

- 7.1 Any Member of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee shall be entitled to give notice to the Scrutiny Officer that they wish an item relevant to the functions of the Committee to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting of the Committee. On receipt of such a request the Scrutiny Officer will ensure that it is included on the next available agenda. If the item is accepted by the Committee, the extent to which such an item is investigated by the Committee shall be only to the level of initial scoping, in order to ascertain whether further investigation of an issue by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee should be recommended.
- 7.2 Any five members of the Council who are not members of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee may also give written notice to the Scrutiny Officer that they wish an item to be included on the agenda of the Committee. If the Scrutiny Officer receives such a notification, then they will include the item on the first available agenda of the Committee for consideration by the Committee. If the item is accepted by the Committee, the extent to which such an item is investigated by the Committee shall be only to the level of initial scoping, in order to ascertain whether further investigation of an issue by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee should be recommended.
- 7.3 The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee shall also respond, as soon as its work programme permits, to requests from the Council, the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to carry out such initial scoping investigations. Where it does so, the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee shall report its findings and any recommendations back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and/or Council. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Council and/or the Cabinet shall consider the report of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee at its next meeting.

## **8. Performance management and audit**

- 8.1 The role of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee in relation to its performance management and audit responsibilities is as set out in paragraphs 1.3 to 1.4 above and Article 7 of this Constitution.

## **9. Reports from the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee**

- 9.1 Once it has formed any recommendations, the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee will submit them to the Scrutiny Officer for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and/or Council as appropriate.
- 9.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Council or Cabinet shall consider the recommendations of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee at the next available meeting.

- 9.3 The agenda for Cabinet meetings shall, when applicable, include an item entitled '*Issues arising from the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee*'. Any reports of the Committee referred to the Cabinet shall be included at this point in the agenda (unless they have been considered in the context of the Cabinet's deliberations on a substantive item on the agenda).
- 9.4 The Chair, or in their absence, the Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will normally be responsible for presenting the report to the Cabinet or the Council as appropriate. However, in the case of the report of a Panel or Working Group, the report to the Cabinet and/or Council can also be made by the Chair or Vice-Chair of the Panel/Working Group.

## **10. Attendance by others**

- 10.1 Members of the Cabinet will be entitled to attend meetings of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee and speak on any matter under consideration.
- 10.2 Subject to the provisions of paragraph 1.4 above, the Committee may also invite Members, Officers and any other person to address its meetings, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions as part of its initial scoping or investigation of a matter. Attendance is of course entirely optional.

## **11. The party whip**

- 11.1 For the purpose of this section, reference to "the party whip" shall mean:-

*"Any instruction given by or on behalf of a political Group to any Councillor who is a Member of that Group as to how that Councillor shall speak or vote on any matter before the Council or any Committee or Sub-Committee, or the application or threat to apply any sanction by the Group in respect of that Councillor should they speak or vote in any particular manner."*

- 11.2 The imposition of the party whip is regarded by the Council as incompatible with Performance and Audit Scrutiny. The party whip should not, therefore, be imposed on any Member of the Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee while engaged in the Committee's work.

## **12. Procedure at Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee meetings**

- 12.1 The Performance and Audit Scrutiny Committee shall consider the following business:
- (a) Minutes of the last meeting.
  - (b) Declarations of Interest.



- (c) Public speaking in accordance with the Committee Procedure Rules.
- (d) Any decisions or reports of the Cabinet regarding the Committee's work.
- (e) Any previous recommendations or reports of the Committee referred back to the Committee by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet or Council; and
- (f) The business otherwise set out on the agenda for the meeting.

12.2 The Committee may also ask people to attend its meetings, which are to be conducted in accordance with the following principles:-

- (a) That all Members of the Committee be given the opportunity to ask questions of attendees, and to contribute and speak.
- (b) That those assisting the Committee by giving evidence or offering opinions be treated with respect and courtesy; and
- (c) That the meeting be conducted so as to maximise the efficiency of the discussion, investigation or analysis.

12.3 Following scrutiny of any matter, the Committee shall prepare, if necessary, recommendations for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and/or Council as appropriate, and shall make its recommendations and any accompanying findings public.