

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ACTION PLAN

Ongoing

1. Pre and post meeting briefings with Panel Members be held supported only by scrutiny support staff.
2. Pre meeting briefings be convened at 7.00 p.m., prior to the commencement of Panel meetings at 7.30 p.m. with an anticipated conclusion of 9.30 p.m.
3. Chief Officers and others not directly supporting the scrutiny process should not attend Panel meetings unless invited to do so by a Panel.
4. Drafting of questions by scrutiny support staff on a confidential basis for Panel Members to be addressed to persons invited to attend meetings: Scrutiny support staff also to liaise with invitees on potential areas for questioning to facilitate research and responses.
5. The publication of an annual report on behalf of the Panels with a wide circulation.
6. Induction arrangements by scrutiny support staff for new members of the Panels.
7. Induction arrangements for new members of the Council to include information on overview & scrutiny.
8. Invitation to all members of the Council to participate in training organised for overview & scrutiny.
9. 'Cultural' change within the Council to maximise the effectiveness of overview and scrutiny by acknowledging its independence of the executive, its role, and its importance in terms of the Council's governance arrangements.

Short Term

(within 6 months)

10. Retention of two Overview & Scrutiny Panels but increase in membership to 15 per panel.
11. Renaming and reallocation of the terms of reference of Panels as follows -

Service Delivery

Cabinet portfolios of Environment & Transport, Leisure and Housing & Public Health and that part of the Operations and Information Technology portfolio relating to Operations.

Service Support

Cabinet portfolios of Finance, Planning Strategy and Resources & Policy and that part of the Operations and Information Technology portfolio relating to Information Technology.

12. The establishment of a new Overview & Scrutiny Panel with the name 'Corporate and Strategic Framework' and terms of reference to include matters of a corporate nature and the strategic and financial framework of the Council, together with issues of major significance (e.g. budget, community strategy, corporate plan, replacement office accommodation).
13. Membership of the new Panel be fixed at 15, including 5 Members appointed by each of the Panels to include their chairmen and vice-chairmen and any 5 additional Members from either Panel at their request, such permission to be at the discretion of the Head of Administration, after consultation with the chairmen of the two Panels.
14. Chairmanship of the new Panel be shared between the Chairmen of the Service Delivery and Service Support Overview & Scrutiny Panels, dependent on the subject area to be discussed.
15. Meetings of the new Panel be held on an ad hoc basis but, where practicable, these be held on the evening of meetings of either of the two other panels.
16. Meetings of the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the Service Delivery and Service Support Panels be held on 6 occasions per annum to review progress on the Action Plan and issues of mutual interest.
17. Written responses (where appropriate) from Cabinet to recommendations from Overview & Scrutiny Panels with reasons if recommendations not accepted.
18. Training for Panel members on performance review.
19. Development of outcomes for overview & scrutiny and assessment of performance.

Medium Term

(within 18 months)

20. Review of practices and procedures for overview & scrutiny.
21. Implementation of training programme for Heads of Service and Activity Managers on the role and relevance of overview & scrutiny.
22. Identification of further steps to engage and consult appropriate stakeholders on overview & scrutiny.
23. Identification of specialist support to assist, as necessary, in overview & scrutiny work programmes.

Long Term
(over 18 months)

24. Submission and approval of MTP bid for dedicated officer to support overview & scrutiny process.