

## **Part E – Scrutiny**

### **Section E1:- Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

#### **In Part E:-**

**This Section (E1)** contains information about the scrutiny function generally, and details of the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Details of Membership of the Committees is available on the council's website.

**Section E2** sets out the roles and responsibilities of Scrutiny Members and Chairmen

**Section E3** contains the Scrutiny Procedure Rules

## **PART E - Scrutiny**

### **Section E1:- Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

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- Core Values
- General Functions
- Enquiries Development and Research

#### **2. Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

- Introduction and Composition
- Terms of Reference

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Effective scrutiny arrangements are an essential part of good governance in any local authority. Scrutiny is essential in achieving value for money and best practice and to ensure that there are appropriate checks and balances on the exercise of powers.

### **Core Values**

1.2 The council's scrutiny arrangements aim to reflect the following core values:

- (a) Holding the Cabinet and our partners to account;
- (b) Working to make a difference to outcomes for the public of Cheshire West and Chester; and
- (c) Ensuring the greatest possible public engagement in scrutiny

1.3 Council has appointed three Overview and Scrutiny Committees:

- Cheshire West and Chester Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- People Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Places Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1.4 These Committees are responsible for reviewing and scrutinising the work of the authority at large (which includes the organisations that we work in partnership with). In particular, the scrutiny function is responsible for ensuring the effectiveness of the Cabinet.

1.5 The Overview and Scrutiny Committees have a mandate to undertake reviews and scrutinise action (or inaction) in relation to general subject areas or in respect of particular matters before, during, or after a decision is made. They assist Council and the Cabinet in developing the Budget and Policy Framework and in monitoring the performance of the authority. They can make recommendations for change and have powers to intervene in the decision making process in certain circumstances.

## **General Functions**

1.6 General functions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees include to:-

- (a) review and scrutinise the performance of the council, its partners and any appropriate external organisations against any relevant plan or target
- (b) review and scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the council's functions
- (c) review and scrutinise the provision and performance of services
- (d) make reports and/or recommendations to Council, the Cabinet, individual portfolio holders or an outside organisation in connection with the discharge of any functions
- (e) consider any matter affecting the council, its area or the people who work or live in the borough
- (f) exercise the right to call-in for reconsideration decisions made but not yet implemented by the Cabinet, individual Portfolio Holders; and
- (g) To respond to direct requests from the Council or the Cabinet when appropriate

## **Enquiries Development and Research**

1.7 The Overview and Scrutiny Committees may hold scrutiny enquiries and carry out development work and may appoint advisers and assessors to assist in this process.

1.8 Scrutiny Members may also undertake site visits, conduct public surveys, hold public meetings, commission research and do all other things that they reasonably consider necessary to inform their deliberations.

1.9 They may ask witnesses to attend to address them on any matter under consideration and a reasonable fee and/or expenses for doing so may, within budgetary provision, be available.

1.10 Any budgetary provision is for the use of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Director of Governance will be responsible for expenditure of the budget in respect of proposals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and/or their Chairmen.

1.11 The Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be supported by Democratic Services Officers. These officers will provide a research and advice function.

## **2. Cheshire West and Chester Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

### **Introduction and Composition**

2.1 Is responsible for holding to account those who deliver services on a borough wide basis and cross cutting issues impacting on the Council and the Borough as a whole.

2.2 The committee comprises 9 Members constituted on a politically proportionate basis in line with the political composition of the Council.

### **Terms of reference**

- a) To develop, co-ordinate and implement an annual work programme.
- b) To establish, prioritise and allocate Task & Finish Groups (time limited task groups) to undertake individual scrutiny reviews. To appoint Lead Members to lead the review and a Scrutiny Officer to support the group. These groups will report back to the Committee their findings and recommendations.
- c) To improve the quality of life for all communities in Cheshire West and Chester, by making recommendations about the services which they receive or any matters that impact on a borough wide basis, including:
  - Effectiveness and delivery of borough wide services and strategies
  - Corporate support services and customer service information
  - Community Engagement

- Council Companies
- Overall Performance
- Budget Development and Consultation
- Pre-decision scrutiny relating to cross cutting and corporate issues

d) Scrutinise the Council's Annual Budget.

e) Receive and scrutinise items which have been referred to it from Cabinet and Council.

f) Produce an Annual Scrutiny Report summarising the work of the Committee.

g) Consider Call-ins that fall within the remit of the Committee

h) Receive and scrutinise reports on the Performance Management Framework on a quarterly basis.

i) To refer specific matters for further scrutiny to the People or Places Overview and Scrutiny Committee as defined by their Terms of Reference.

### **3 People Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

#### **Introduction and Composition**

3.1 Is responsible for holding to account those who deliver services based on individual need to children and adults, including health and wellbeing and education services.

3.2 The Committee comprises 9 Members constituted on a politically proportionate basis in line with the political composition of the Council. The Committee to appoint the Statutory Co-optees relating to education matters.

3.3 The Committee may consider establishing a Sub-Committee as required to undertake its Statutory Scrutiny responsibilities, particularly those relating to Health Services.

### 3.4 Terms of reference

- a) To develop, co-ordinate and implement an annual work programme.
- b) To establish, prioritise and allocate Task & Finish Groups (time limited task groups) to undertake individual scrutiny reviews. To appoint Lead Members to lead the review and a Scrutiny Officer to support the group. These groups will report back to the Committee their findings and recommendations.
- c) To review and make recommendations for improvement in relation to any matter that has an impact on the Educational Needs, Safety or Health and Wellbeing of people in Cheshire West and Chester, including:
  - Statutory Scrutiny Responsibilities relating to Health Services
  - Statutory Scrutiny Responsibilities relating to Education (minimum of two meetings per year dedicated to education scrutiny)
  - Social Care and Safeguarding
  - Welfare Rights
  - Healthy Life and Lifestyle Choices for Adults and Children
  - Public Health and Health Inequalities
  - Integration of services with partner organisations
  - Pre-decision scrutiny that relates to the portfolios within the remit of the Committee
- d) To take responsibility for reviewing Performance relating to services for Adults and Children for example: OFSTED reports.
- e) Receive and monitor completed Recommendation 41 Inspection reports.  
Monitor the outcomes from the Member Regulation 33 Inspection Reports.

- f) Receive and scrutinise items which have been referred to it from Cabinet and Council.
- g) Produce an Annual Scrutiny Report summarising the work of the Committee.
- h) Consider Call-ins that fall within the remit of the Committee.

### **3 Places Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

#### **Introduction and Composition**

- 3.1 Is responsible for holding to account those who deliver all place based services including environment, localities, regeneration and growth.
- 3.2 The Committee comprises 9 Members constituted on a politically proportionate basis in line with the political composition of the Council

#### **3.3 Terms of reference**

To develop, co-ordinate and implement an annual work programme.

- a) To establish, prioritise and allocate Task & Finish Groups (time limited task groups) to undertake individual scrutiny reviews. To appoint Lead Members to lead the review and a Scrutiny Officer to support the group. These groups will report back to the Committee their findings and recommendations.
- b) To review and make recommendations for improvement in relation to any matter that has an impact on the physical, geographical and economic needs of Cheshire West and Chester, including:
  - Statutory Scrutiny Responsibilities in relation to Flood Management
  - Statutory Scrutiny Responsibilities in relation to Crime and Disorder
  - Highways
  - Streetscene
  - Locality Working

- Regeneration and Growth
  - Pre-decision scrutiny that relates to the portfolios within the remit of the Committee
- c) To take responsibility for reviewing Performance relating to place based services
- d) Receive and scrutinise items which have been referred to it from Cabinet and Council.
- e) Produce an Annual Scrutiny Report summarising the work of the Committee.
- f) Consider Call-ins that fall within the remit of the Committee.