

Part E – Scrutiny

Section E2 The Roles, Responsibilities and Attributes of Scrutiny Members

In Part E:-

Section E1 contains information about the scrutiny function generally, and details of the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees – Cheshire West and Chester Overview and Scrutiny Committee, People Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Places Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Membership of the Committees is set out (including co-opted members) along with the terms of reference of each Committee.

This Section (E2) sets out the roles and responsibilities of Scrutiny Members and Chairs

Section E3 contains the Scrutiny Procedure Rules

Part E – Scrutiny

Section E2:- Roles, Responsibilities and Attributes of Scrutiny Members

In this Section:-

- 1. Scrutiny Members**
- 2. Scrutiny Chairs and Deputy Chairs**

1. Scrutiny Members

Introduction

- 1.1 Scrutiny Members are responsible for scrutinising the work of the authority at large (which includes the organisations that we work in partnership with) and, in particular, for ensuring the effectiveness of the Cabinet.
- 1.2 Scrutiny Members are accountable to their Chairs, Council, and ultimately to the communities that they are elected to represent.

Roles and Responsibilities

- 1.3 In addition to the roles and responsibilities that apply to all Elected Members (Section B3), Scrutiny Members will:-
 - (a) participate fully in the scrutiny function in an evidence based objective, proactive, informed and effective manner taking account of all relevant code, rules and statutory requirements
 - (b) participate fully in the activities of the Scrutiny Committee or Sub Committee, delivery of its work programme and any associated task and finish groups
 - (c) challenge and assist in the assessment creation, development, improvement and refinement of Council policy
 - (d) Monitor performance and service delivery and investigate and address the causes of under performance
 - (e) contribute to the identification and mitigation of risk
 - (f) promote the role of scrutiny within and outside the council, developing effective internal and external relationships and building a dialogue around priorities, objectives and performance among communities and stakeholders
 - (g) evaluate the validity of Cabinet decisions and challenge inappropriate decisions through call in

Values, Skills and Attributes

- 1.4 In addition to the values, skills and attributes required of all Members, the following qualities are required in effective Scrutiny Members:-
- (a) the ability to assess risk and interpret information and data from a wide range or sources
 - (b) the ability to constructively challenging and improve performance
 - (c) the ability to act objectively and on the basis of evidence
 - (d) knowledge of local issues and expectations
 - (e) the ability to work effectively with all members of the community and build understanding and ownership of scrutiny
 - (f) knowledge of the individuals and organisations in the community especially those traditionally excluded
 - (g) the ability to participate in meetings including effective listening, questioning and speaking
- 1.5 In particular, Scrutiny Members must have:-
- (a) the appetite, ability and commitment to prepare sufficiently to engage effectively in the scrutiny function by undertaking research, investigations and attending relevant meetings and briefings.
 - (b) a sound understanding of the Scrutiny function's remit and role as a whole, member support functions, relevant policies, best practice, guidance, codes, rules, statutory requirements, performance management principles and the provisions of this constitution including call-in procedures.

2. Scrutiny Chairs and Deputy Chairs

Introduction

- 2.1 References in this section to Chairs include references to Deputy Chairs unless the context requires otherwise.

- 2.2 Scrutiny Chairs must provide leadership and direction in the work of their committees and act as ambassadors for the work of their committee both within and beyond the Council to develop its standing and the integrity of its role.
- 2.3 They must have a sound understanding of the relevant subject matter, laws, procedures codes of conduct and protocols and the ability to champion them with committee members and inspire and enthuse committee members for the work of the committee
- 2.4 Chairs are accountable to their committee members, Council and ultimately to the communities that they are elected to represent.

Roles and Responsibilities

- 2.5 In addition to the roles and responsibilities that apply to all Members and all Scrutiny Members the following responsibilities apply to all Scrutiny Chairs:-
 - (a) To be a focal point of knowledge, leadership, advice and development for Scrutiny Members support them, assessing their performance and identify any training and development needs and procuring appropriate learning and development
 - (b) To promote the role of Scrutiny within and outside the council, liaising effectively both internally within the Council and externally with the Council's partners to build understanding and ownership of scrutiny
 - (c) To develop a balanced work programme for the committee which includes appropriate topics for pre-decision scrutiny, policy development and review, investigative scrutiny, and performance monitoring
 - (d) To ensure the programme takes account of relevant factors such as the work programmes of the Cabinet and other committees, strategic priorities and risks, and relevant community issues
 - (e) To liaise with officers, other Members and community representatives to resource and deliver the work programme and to report on progress

against the work programmes to a variety of different audiences as required

- (f) To evaluate the impact and added value of scrutiny activity and identify areas for improvement
- (g) To fully involve relevant stakeholders, partners, service users and experts and ensure that all participants have an opportunity to make an appropriate contribution
- (h) To provide confident and effective management of their committee meetings and work effectively managing projects, resources, people and priorities and facilitating effective questioning, listening and discussion