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TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be held on Monday, 17 September 2018 at 7.00 pm in the Council Chamber - Civic Offices.

The agenda for the meeting is set out below.

RAY MORGAN
Chief Executive

NOTE: Filming Council Meetings

Please note the meeting will be filmed and will be broadcast live and subsequently as an archive on the Council's website (www.woking.gov.uk). The images and sound recording will also be used for training purposes within the Council. Generally the public seating areas are not filmed. However by entering the meeting room and using the public seating area, you are consenting to being filmed.

AGENDA

PART I - PRESS AND PUBLIC PRESENT

1   Minutes

To approve the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 July 2018 as published.

o   Follow up clarification of NVH Biannual Overview of Complaints

2   Urgent Business

To consider any business that the Chairman rules may be dealt with under Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

3   Declarations of Interest

To receive declarations of disclosable pecuniary and other interests from Members in respect of any item to be considered at the meeting.

4   Work Programme OSC18-003 (Pages 3 - 22)

Reporting person: Councillor I Johnson

5   Basingstoke Canal Proposal Update

Reporting person: Ray Morgan

6   Update on Raynes Close

Reporting person: Ian Lelliott

7   Performance and Financial Monitoring Information

To consider the July publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book). Councillors are asked to bring their copy of the Green Book to the meeting.

Reporting person: Councillor I Johnson

8   Dementia Awareness Presentation

Reporting person: Jade Buckingham and Julie Meme

9   Briefing Paper No. 4 - Overview and Scrutiny Toolkit OSC18-001 (Pages 23 - 74)

Reporting person: Hanna Taylor and Frank Jeffrey

10   Task Group Update OSC18-002 (Pages 75 - 76)

To receive an update following the recent meetings of the Housing Task Group

Reporting person: Councillor I Johnson

AGENDA ENDS

Date Published - 5 September 2018

For further information regarding this agenda and arrangements for the meeting, please contact Hanna Taylor, Democratic Services Officer, Ext 3056, Email Hanna.Taylor@woking.gov.uk

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WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Overview and Scrutiny

Work Programme

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OSC18-003

INTRODUCTION TO WOKING BOROUGH COUNCIL'S

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

This Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme is published with the purpose of assisting the Council in its overview and scrutiny role. The Work Programme covers the following areas:

- o   Items for consideration at future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

- o   An extract from the latest version of the Council's Forward Plan.

- o   Any Scrutiny Review Topics proposed by Members of the Council for inclusion on the Work Programme.

- o   Any topics identified for pre-decision scrutiny.

- o   Details of the current Task Groups under the Committee's remit.

The Work Programme is designed to assist the Council with its overview and scrutiny role by providing Members with an indication of the current workload, subjects to be considered for review and items which the Executive expects to consider at its future meetings, so that matters can be raised beforehand and/or consultations undertaken with a Member of the Executive prior to the relevant meeting.

The Committee

Chairman: Councillor I Johnson
Vice-Chairman: Councillor D E Hughes

Councillor H J Addison	Councillor S Hussain
Councillor J Bond	Councillor R Mohammed
Councillor G G Chrystie	Councillor M I Raja
Councillor K Howard	Councillor C Rana

2018/19 Committee Dates

- o   18 June 2018
- o   16 July 2018
- o   17 September 2018
- o   26 November 2018
- o   21 January 2019
- o   25 February 2019
- o   25 March 2019

Suggested Additions to the Work Programme

Decision to be Taken	Proposed by	Officer Comment
Review of Play Areas. To explore the provision of play areas in the Borough, including programme of refurbishment and equipment maintenance.	Chairman and Vice-Chairman	A review is scheduled for later this year to refresh the Council's Play Strategy – the outcome of which will influence future provision and investment. In light of this it is proposed that the Committee is invited to comment on the draft Strategy once completed, potentially early next year.
Health and Well-Being and the Role of Leisure Facilities. To explore options to build strong links between the health and well-being objectives of the Council and the Borough's leisure facilities.	Chairman and Vice-Chairman	Subject to further details of the proposal, Officers may be in a position to report on this topic later in the year.
Support Services for those Discharged from Hospital. To explore the different support services offered to those residents of Borough discharged from hospital.	Chairman and Vice-Chairman	There is significant amount of joint work being undertaken with partners within North West Surrey. It is suggested that the scope of the topic is discussed with Officers before a commitment can be given for a future meeting of the Committee.
Closure of Children's Centres. To consider the impact in the Borough of the County Council's proposals to close Children's Centres.	Chairman and Vice-Chairman	Further information on the current proposal of Surrey County Council will be needed before a commitment can be given for a future meeting of the Committee.

Activity Plan for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 26 November 2018			
Decision to be Taken	**Consultation**	**Background Documents**	**Contact Person**
Performance Management			
Performance & Financial Monitoring Information. For the Committee to consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book)	None	None	Cllr I Johnson
Presentations			
Enterprise M3. Enterprise M3 is the Local Enterprise Partnership under which Woking falls and, following on from the work of the work of the Effective Scrutiny Task Group, representatives have been invite to attend the meeting of the Committee to present the Annual Report.	None	None	Chris Norrington / Dave Axam from Enterprise M3
Matters for Determination			
Work Programme. For the Committee to receive the updated Work Programme.	None	None	Hanna Taylor

Countryside Estate. To receive a report exploring the options available to the Council to support the work undertaken to manage the Borough's countryside portfolio (arising from the Surrey Heathlands Project site meeting and subsequent discussions).	None	None	Tracey Haskins
Update on Victoria Square Development. The Committee to receive an update on the Victoria Square Development.	None	None	Ray Morgan
Review of Grounds Maintenance. To review the grounds maintenance programme, exploring the standard of sports provision such as football and cricket pitches to ensure the facilities are fit for purpose.	Feedback to be sought from users of the facilities.	None	Geoff McManus

Matters for Scrutiny			
Celebrate Woking 2018/19 Review and Forward Plan. For the Committee to be updated on the outcomes of the various events that have taken place within the Borough over the past year and to be informed of future plans for encouraging visitors into the area.	None	None	Riette Thomas/ Chris Norrington
Task Group Updates			
Economic Development Task Group Update. To receive an update on the work of the Economic Development Task Group under the remit of the Committee.	None	None	Cllr I Johnson

Finance Task Group Update. To receive an update on the work of the Finance Task Group under the remit of the Committee.	None	None	Cllr K Davis
Housing Task Group Update. To receive an update on the work of the Housing Task Group under the remit of the Committee.	None	None	Cllr I Johnson

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 21 January 2019			
Decision to be Taken	**Consultation**	**Background Documents**	**Contact Person**
Performance Management			
Performance & Financial Monitoring Information. For the Committee to consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book)	None	None	Cllr I Johnson
Matters for Determination			
Work Programme. For the Committee to receive the updated Work Programme.	None	None	Hanna Taylor
Matters for Scrutiny			
Overview of Complaints Received – Biannual Update. For the Committee to consider the report of Complaints received since July 2018.	None	None	Joanne McIntosh
Waste Management Contract Review. To review the level of complaints and service provided by Serco.	None	None	Richard Bisset
Freedom of Information. To receive a report on the FOIs received.	None	None	Frank Jeffrey
Brexit. To explore the possible impacts and risks from Brexit, and how it could affect the Council and how to prepare for changes.	None	None	TBC

Task Group Updates			
Economic Development Task Group Update. To receive an update on the work of the Economic Development Task Group under the remit of the Committee.	None	None	Cllr I Johnson

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting – 25 February 2019			
Decision to be Taken	**Consultation**	**Background Documents**	**Contact Person**
Performance Management			
Performance & Financial Monitoring Information. For the Committee to consider the current publication of the Performance & Financial Monitoring Information (Green Book)	None	None	Cllr I Johnson
Matters for Determination			
Work Programme. For the Committee to receive the updated Work Programme.	None	None	Hanna Taylor
Task Group Updates			
Task Group Update. To receive an update on the work of the Task Groups under the remit of the Committee.	None	None	Cllr I Johnson

Latest Version of the Forward Plan

The Forward Plan gives an indication of the decision to be taken by the Executive. Published monthly, the Forward Plan has traditionally given an indication of the decisions to be taken over the following four months.

13 September 2018

Key Decision	Subject	Decision to be taken	Consultation (Undertaken prior to the meeting unless otherwise stated)	Background Documents	Contact Officer
Yes	Business Rates Recovery Policy	To recommend to Council that the Business Rates Recovery Policy be adopted.	Cllr Azad, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Finance Officer (Leigh Clarke)
Yes	Council Tax Recovery Policy	To recommend to Council that the Council Tax Recovery Policy be adopted.	Cllr Azad, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Finance Officer (Leigh Clarke)
Yes	West Byfleet Recreation Ground - Children's Play Area - Consultation Outcome	To receive a report on the outcome of the public consultation regarding the Children's Play Area in West Byfleet Recreation Ground and to agree a timescale for delivery.	Cllr Kemp, Portfolio Holder, Local Residents.	None.	Chief Executive (Ray Morgan)
No	Performance and Financial Monitoring Information	To consider the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information contained in the Green Book.	Cllr Bittleston, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Finance Officer (Leigh Clarke)

Yes	Land Management - Byfleet	To consider the acquisition of land. (The press and public will be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this item in view of the nature of the proceedings that, if members of the press and public were present during this item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, to the Local Government Act 1972.)	Cllr Azad, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Executive (Ray Morgan)
Yes	School Place Provision	To consider a proposal to support the provision of new school places. (The press and public will be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this item in view of the nature of the proceedings that, if members of the press and public were present during this item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, to the Local Government Act 1972.)	Cllr Bittleston, Leader of the Council.	None.	Chief Executive (Ray Morgan)

| No | Contaminated Land Sites Review and Report into Future Funding | To receive an update on the review of contaminated land and the requirements for future funding of desk top studies and site investigations.

(The press and public will be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this item in view of the nature of the proceedings that, if members of the press and public were present during this item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, to the Local Government Act 1972.) | Cllr Azad, Portfolio Holder. | None. | Deputy Chief Executive (Douglas J Spinks) |

11 October 2018

Key Decision	Subject	Decision to be taken	Consultation (Undertaken prior to the meeting unless otherwise stated)	Background Documents	Contact Officer
Yes	Tree Strategy and Tree Management Policies	To recommend to Council that the Tree Strategy and Tree Management Policies be adopted.	Cllr Mrs Hunwicks, Portfolio Holder, Climate Change Working Group.	None.	Deputy Chief Executive (Douglas J Spinks)
Yes	Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Investment Strategy Update	Following a review of the Investment Strategy, the Executive to consider proposals to generate £3.5m of savings or income required by March 2022.	Cllr Azad, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Finance Officer (Leigh Clarke)
No	Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Strategy	To receive a report detailing the Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Cllr Azad, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Finance Officer (Leigh Clarke)
No	Affordable Housing Expenditure Update	To receive a report providing an update on the expenditure incurred on increasing the supply of affordable housing in the Borough.	Cllr Azad, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Finance Officer (Leigh Clarke)
Yes	ATG Cinemas	To consider proposals for redevelopment of the Cinemas.	Cllr Azad, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Executive (Ray Morgan)

No	Performance and Financial Monitoring Information	To consider the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information contained in the Green Book.	Cllr Bittleston, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Finance Officer (Leigh Clarke)
No	Monitoring Reports - Projects	To provide quarterly reports on the progress of projects in the interests of financial prudence and corporate governance.	Cllr Bittleston, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Finance Officer (Leigh Clarke)
Yes	ATG Cinemas	To receive confidential financial information in respect of ATG Cinemas in Part I of the agenda. (The press and public will be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this item in view of the nature of the proceedings that, if members of the press and public were present during this item, there would be disclosure to them of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, to the Local Government Act 1972.)	Cllr Azad, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Executive (Ray Morgan)

22 November 2018

Key Decision	Subject	Decision to be taken	Consultation (Undertaken prior to the meeting unless otherwise stated)	Background Documents	Contact Officer
Yes	Review of Fees and Charges 2019-20	To recommend to Council that the discretionary Fees and Charges for 2019-20 be approved.	Portfolio Holder, service users where appropriate.	None.	Deputy Chief Executive (Douglas J Spinks)
No	Update of Contract Standing Orders/Procurement Procedures	To update the Council's Contract Standing Orders.	Cllr Azad, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Head of Democratic and Legal Services (Peter Bryant)
No	Update of Financial Regulations	To update the Council's Financial Regulations.	Cllr Azad, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Finance Officer (Leigh Clarke)
No	Calendar of Meetings 2019-20	To recommend to Council the Calendar of Meetings for 2019-20.	Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Executive (Ray Morgan)
Yes	Hoe Valley Flood Alleviation and Environmental Enhancement Scheme	Authorisation to release remaining funds to allow scheme to be constructed.	Portfolio Holder.	None.	Deputy Chief Executive (Douglas J Spinks)
Yes	Draft Investment Programme 2018-19 to 2021-22	To receive the draft Investment Programme.	Portfolio Holder, Business Managers.	None.	Chief Finance Officer (Leigh Clarke)

No	Draft Housing Revenue Account Budget Update 2019-20	To receive the draft Housing Revenue Account estimates 2019-20 for the purposes of finalising proposals for service.	Portfolio Holder, Business Managers.	None.	Chief Finance Officer (Leigh Clarke)
No	Draft General Fund Budget 2019-20	To receive the draft General Fund 2019-20 for the purpose of finalising proposals for service budgets and Council Tax.	Portfolio Holder, Business Managers.	None.	Chief Finance Officer (Leigh Clarke)
No	Performance and Financial Monitoring Information	To consider the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information contained in the Green Book.	Cllr Bittleston, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Finance Officer (Leigh Clarke)

13 December 2018

Key Decision	Subject	Decision to be taken	Consultation (Undertaken prior to the meeting unless otherwise stated)	Background Documents	Contact Officer
Yes	Applications for Financial Assistance 2019/20	To receive the annual report on applications for the Community Support Scheme for the 2019/20 financial year.	Cllr Azad, Portfolio Holder. Internal Officers.	None.	Chief Executive (Ray Morgan)
No	Progress on the Gender Pay Gap	Following Council on 5 April 2018, to receive a report from the Chief Executive on progress to reduce the gender pay gap.	Cllr Bittleston, Portfolio Holder.	None.	Chief Executive (Ray Morgan)

The meeting on 13 December will consider applications for financial assistance from voluntary and community organisations. The list of applications will be added to the Executive's Forwards Plan once the deadline for applications has passed.

Current Task Groups Responsible to the Committee

The table below provides a list of current Task Groups established by the Committee, including an indication of the resource requirements and the anticipated completion date. Updates on the progress of individual Task Groups are included elsewhere on the Committee's agenda.

Task Group	Topic	Membership	Resources	Date Established	Anticipated Completion Date
Economic Development Task Group	To identify and seek the implementation of measures to mitigate the impact of the economic downturn on the residents, community organisations and businesses in the Borough of Woking.	Cllrs Addison, Ali, Azad, Barker, Chrystie. Davis and Johnson.	Officer and Councillor time.	11.03.09	Ongoing
Standing Finance Task Group	To review Financial issues as and when identified by the Committee. Financial Performance of the Council Management and Administration of Accounts procurement Strategy, Pension fund, Financial Strategy.	Cllrs Ashall, Azad, Barker, Bond, Davis, Hughes, and Martin.	Officer and Councillor time.	25.05.06	Ongoing
Standing Housing Task Group	To review Housing issues as and when identified by the Committee, including Housing Strategy, Housing Business Plan, Housing Service Plans, Housing Revenue Account, Housing Conditions, Housing Needs, Private Sector Housing, Home Improvement Agency, Housing and Council Tax Benefits, and monitor/review progress of the PFI Scheme	Cllrs Addison, Aziz, Bridgeman, Hughes, Johnson, Kemp and Mohammad.	Officer and Councillor time.	25.05.06	Ongoing

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 17 SEPTEMBER 2018

BRIEFING PAPER NO. 4 – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TOOLKIT

Executive Summary

This Briefing paper sets out the scrutiny guidelines for Members of the Council to use when scrutinising topics selected by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and forms part of the Council's support for Member Learning and Development. The Toolkit includes elements of topic selection and what Scrutiny is and is not, whilst providing an insight into the background, process and role of the Committee. The Toolkit explains that Overview and Scrutiny requires specific ways of working and different skills for all concerned.

Scrutiny is a core function of the Members of the Committee and it is intended to review the Toolkit annually, to be brought to the Committee at its June meeting at the beginning of each Municipal Year. This will enable new Members of the Committee to raise any questions over the processes and will ensure that the Committee's approach to scrutiny remains relevant.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That

(i) the briefing paper be noted; and

(ii) subject to any final formatting alterations or changes agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Overview and Scrutiny Toolkit as set out in the appendix to this report be published.

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendations set out above.

Background Papers: None.

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Contact Person: Hanna Taylor, Democratic Services Officer
Email: hanna.taylor@woking.gov.uk, Extn: 3056

Date Published: 5 September 2018

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Briefing Paper has been drawn up to inform the Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the Members on the Council as a whole, how to utilise the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Toolkit which includes details of the Council's procedures.

2.0 What is the Overview and Scrutiny Toolkit?

2.1 This Toolkit provides information, practical guidance and clarity to everyone involved in the overview and scrutiny process at Woking Borough Council. It has been drawn from a variety of sources and includes many best practice points selected from leading authorities in the field.

2.2 The Toolkit enables Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure that they concentrate on topics that matter to the residents of Woking, and this in turn will assist in shaping the future direction of the Borough. The Toolkit includes:

   o An introduction to Overview and Scrutiny

   o Information on Topic Selection and the Annual Work Programme

   o The Overview and Scrutiny Process

   o The Call-In Procedure

   o Councillor Call for Action

   o Public Participation

   o Supporting Documents

2.3 The Toolkit will be reviewed annually, to be brought to the Committee at its June meeting at the beginning of each Municipal Year. This will enable new Members of the Committee to raise any questions over the processes and will ensure that the Committee's approach to scrutiny remains relevant.

3.0 Task Groups

3.1 Within the document there is information on the Task Groups created by the Committee, which can be set up to carry out an in depth piece of work on behalf of the Committee. The topic to be reviewed is chosen by the Committee, and the Task Group chooses how best to carry out the review. Members are appointed to Task Groups by the Committee.

3.2 There are two types of Task Groups:

   o Standing Task Group – which is ongoing and provides an overview of the services of the Council, reporting directly to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

   o Ad Hoc Review Task Group – which can be established by the Committee to review particular issues that cannot be considered within a normal meeting.

4.0 Work Programme

4.1 The Work Programme is a live document and subject to regular review. It has the capacity to consider matters referred to the Committee by the Executive and also deal with any Call-Ins. Overview and Scrutiny is a Member led process and when Members lead on developing the Annual Work Programme the benefits to the community are maximised.

4.2 Topics can be suggested by Councillors, Officers and members of the public, and topics can be referred from the Executive or Council. Before a subject is chosen for review, at least

one of the following criteria should be met to establish whether the proposed topic should be selected:

- o The Scrutiny Review is likely to result in improvements for local people.

- o The topic falls within a Community or Corporate priority area, such as the Community Strategy and the Council's priorities.

- o The topic represents a key issue for the public.

- o The service proposed for Scrutiny Review is performing poorly. A Review may pick up on areas of weakness identified through the Council's Audit reports or the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information published by the Council.

- o There is a high level of dissatisfaction with the service.

5.0   Implications

Financial

5.1   There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Human Resource/Training and Development

5.2   There are no human resource implications arising from this report, which forms part of the Councils overarching approach to Member learning and development.

Community Safety

5.3   There are no community safety implications arsing from this report.

Risk Management

5.4   There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

Sustainability

5.5   There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Equalities

5.6   There are no equality implications arising from this report.

Safeguarding

5.7   There are no safeguarding implications arising from this report.

6.0   Conclusions

6.1   This Briefing Paper sets out the Council's provisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Toolkit and forms part of the Council's programme for elected Member learning and development. It is intended to keep the Toolkit under review, with a report to be brought to the Committee at its June meeting at the beginning of each Municipal Year. This approach will enable new Members of the Committee to raise any questions over the processes and will ensure that the Committee's approach to scrutiny remains relevant.

REPORT ENDS

Overview and Scrutiny Toolkit 2018/19

Foreword

This toolkit aims to provide information, practical guidance and clarity to everyone involved in the overview and scrutiny process at Woking Borough Council.

The toolkit has been drawn from a variety of sources and includes many good practice points selected from leading authorities in the field.

The toolkit will enable members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure that they concentrate on topics that matter to the residents of Woking, and this in turn will help us play a significant role in shaping the future direction of the Borough.

Contents

1. An introduction to Overview and Scrutiny

"Effective Public Scrutiny can be a powerful vehicle for change. It can improve the delivery of services; it can connect the public to decision makers and politicians; it can improve efficiency." Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) December 2008

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

Overview and Scrutiny was introduced as part of the modernisation agenda for local government under the Local Government Act 2000. This Act required Local Authorities to develop a new political structure and arrangements to replace the old Committee system. An essential part of these new arrangements was the introduction of Overview and Scrutiny; designed to hold the Executive to account and to help in the development of new policies.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is not a decision making body and holds no executive authority over the business of the Council. Their role relates to scrutiny and review, and their power lies in raising awareness of important issues and placing influence on others to take action in certain ways.

The overview and scrutiny process provides an opportunity for Councillors and, in some cases, external representatives, to examine various functions of the Council, to ask questions about how decisions have been made and to consider whether service improvements can be put in place. It provides an opportunity for Councillors to champion issues of public concern and to participate in the development of new policies. It facilitates debate about priorities, budget, the strategy of the Council and its vision for the Borough.

Overview and Scrutiny is a positive activity and should contribute to the delivery of efficient and effective services that meet the needs and aspirations of the local community. The Committee should not shy away from the need to challenge and question decisions and make constructive criticism, but should avoid unnecessary conflict and confrontation.

The role of overview and scrutiny also provides new opportunities for public involvement and debate, supporting the Council in taking a community-orientated approach and bringing new ideas and wider experience into the Council processes.

Overview and Scrutiny requires new ways of working and different skills for all concerned. In particular, to work effectively, overview and scrutiny needs to be Member-led.

What Overview and Scrutiny is not

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee does not deal with complaints or regulatory matters such as planning applications or applications for licences. Overview and scrutiny focuses on strategic delivery of services, not individual issues. It is important that scrutiny reviews do not turn into a witch hunt – it is not about apportioning blame or seeking to interrogate people in public aggressively.

The work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee can:

- review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken by the Executive, individual Executive Members or Officers of the Council;

- prepare reports and/or recommendations to Council and/or the Executive;

- consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants; and

- exercise the right to Call-in, for reconsideration, decisions made but not yet implemented by the Executive.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee can also:

- require Executive Members and senior officers to attend meetings and to be challenged about matters within their areas of responsibility;

- invite expert advisors and other members of the Council and members of the public to take part in Scrutiny reviews;

- refer matters to 'Task Groups' made up of smaller groups of Councillors to undertake in-depth reviews;

- submit formal questions to the Chairman regarding matters that come within the remit of the Committee.

The Council's Structure

The Council has 30 Councillors in total who are elected by local residents and represent 10 wards. The whole Council agrees overall policies. Day-to-day decisions are then made by the Executive comprising a leader and six Councillors who are appointed by the Council. The Council also has a number of Committees to deal with such matters as Planning, Licensing and internal governance issues.

The rules governing the way in which the Overview and Scrutiny Committee operates can be found in the Council's Constitution (Part 2 pages 21-23, Part 3 page 53-54 & Part 4 pages 131-139).

At Woking Borough Council there is a single Overview and Scrutiny Committee which has 10 members and meets seven times per year. This Committee, along with a number of Task Groups, carry out the function of Overview and Scrutiny in Woking.

Task Groups

A Task Group is a small group of Councillors (usually no more than four to six) who are asked to carry out an in depth piece of work on behalf of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Task Groups are set up individually for each review. The topic to be reviewed is chosen by the Committee, but it is for the Task Group itself to decide upon the way it chooses to carry out the review. Membership of the Task Group can be

drawn from all Councillors and it is not limited to the Members of the Committee. It is often useful to include Members with a range of views and perspectives.

A Task Group allows a topic to be looked into in some depth and it will normally take up to six months to complete their work. At Woking Borough Council there are two types of Task Group:

Standing Task Groups provide an overview of the services of the Council and report directly to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. These Task Groups do not have a limited life span and are ongoing.

Ad Hoc Review Task Groups are established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to carry out scrutiny reviews to investigate particular issues which cannot be adequately considered within a normal meeting.

The Task Group must be clear on the purpose, rationale and objectives of their review and set an anticipated completion date.

The Task Groups must feedback regularly to the Committee and at the conclusion of its investigation; the Group will prepare a report for the consideration of the Committee.

Task Groups normally meet in private, but can take place in various locations, depending on the type of work they are undertaking.

Overview and Scrutiny Task Groups 2018/19

Economic Development Task Group	Councillor Mrs Hilary Addison Councillor Mohammed Ali Councillor Ayesha Azad Councillor Ann-Marie Barker Councillor Graham Chrystie Councillor Kevin Davis Councillor Ian Johnson
Finance Task Group	Councillor Simon Ashall Councillor Ayesha Azad Councillor Ann-Marie Barker Councillor John Bond Councillor Kevin Davis (Chairman) Councillor Deborah Hughes Councillor Nancy Martin
Housing Task Group	Councillor Mrs Hilary Addison Councillor Tahir Aziz Councillor Mary Bridgeman Councillor Deborah Hughes Councillor Ian Johnson (Chairman) Councillor Colin Kemp Councillor Rashid Mohammed

Annual Report

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee prepares an Annual Report which details the work that has been undertaken during the year. The Annual Report outlines the outcome of recommendations made by the Committee and highlights those measures and approaches which have proved effective during the scrutiny reviews. The Committee can also make recommendations for future Work Programmes through the Annual Report, and suggest amended working methods if appropriate. The Annual Report is written by the Chairman, although it must be agreed by the Committee before it is presented to Council.

"Effective work programming is the bedrock of an effective scrutiny function. Done well, it can help lay the foundations for targeted, inclusive and timely work on issues of local importance, where scrutiny can add value. Done badly, scrutiny can end up wasting time and resources on issues where the impact of any work done is likely to be minimal" A Cunning Plan? Devising a Scrutiny Work Programme, CfPS, March 2011

Work Programme

The setting of an Annual Work Programme is an important part of the Scrutiny process. Overview and Scrutiny is a Member led process and as such, Members should lead on developing the Work Programme for the Committee.

The Work Programme is a living document and should be subject to regular review. Members should consider the resource implications and be aware of the resource requirements of larger reviews. The Work Programme should also have capacity to consider matters referred to the Committee by the Executive and also to deal with Call-Ins. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee need to be flexible and responsive to the needs of the organisation. In putting the Work Programme together, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will need to have regard to Members' capacity to deliver the Programme and the capacity of Officers to support them in that task. A good maxim would be '**If in doubt, leave it out'. It is far better to do a few topics well, than many topics poorly.**

The Work Programme includes within it ongoing issues such as performance management and annual budget monitoring and one off issues and reviews that may be referred to smaller Task Groups for an in-depth investigation.

Submitting Topics for Scrutiny

Who can suggest a topic?

Councillors, Officers and members of the public can suggest a topic for the Committee to scrutinise. Members of the public can submit their suggestions via the e-form on the Council's website. Topics can also be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the Executive or Council.

Recent changes in legislation also make it possible for Councillors to refer matters to scrutiny through what is called a 'Councillor Call for Action' (CCfA). More information on this is provided in section 5 of this toolkit.

Topic Selection

Before a subject is chosen for review, at least one of the following criteria should be met to establish whether the proposed topic should be selected:

- The Scrutiny Review is likely to result in improvements for local people.

- The topic falls within a Community or Corporate priority area, such as the Community Strategy and the Council's priorities.

- The topic represents a key issue for the public.

- The service proposed for Scrutiny Review is performing poorly. A Review may pick up on areas of weakness identified through the Council's Audit reports or the Performance and Financial Monitoring Information published by the Council.

- There is a high level of dissatisfaction with the service.

Topic Rejection

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will not deal with a topic if:

- The topic is already being addressed.

- The matter is subjudice or prejudicial to the Council's interests.

- The specific case falls within the Council's complaints procedure.

- The topic involves an individual disciplinary or grievance matter.

- Scrutiny Review of the proposed topic is unlikely to result in improvements for local people.

It is important that all topics are assessed against the criteria to ensure that time is not wasted on impulse decisions. That way, less important matters can be rejected in a structured transparent way.

A Topic Selection Form has been developed to assist the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to select topics in a structured and consistent way, which can be recorded and justified if necessary. **A 'Scrutiny Review Topic Selection Form' must be completed for every topic suggested/selected in order to define the objectives, determine the methodology of the review and agree timescales.**

[This **Scrutiny Review Topic Selection** e-form is referenced in Section 7 – Supporting Documents.]

Steps to setting a Work Programme

Step 1 – Identify potential topics / issues

- Identify standard items such as performance monitoring and annual budgets

- Review the Forward Plan

- Discuss priorities with Portfolio Holders and senior officers

- Invite suggestions for scrutiny from Members of the Council, officers and the public

- Leave capacity to deal with unexpected issues throughout the year

Step 2 – Filtering topics for further action

- Filter and prioritise each potential topic by measuring them against the selection and rejection criteria outlined above

- Divide topics into two categories. An active list containing the topics that will be pursued by the Committee and a reserve list for topics that may be scrutinised at a future date

- Reject all topics that fall in line with the criteria outlined under 'Topic Rejection' above.

Step 3 – Review and update the programme

Keep the Work Programme under constant review. Adjust as necessary to delete redundant topics, and add subjects as new topics/suggestions are received or revealed through reports on poorly performing services.

"Scrutiny will only work in the long run, if Members drive the process" (CfPS)

Councillor Led

There are many different approaches to running Overview and Scrutiny. There is no 'one size fits all' approach. However, what is clear is that successful scrutiny relies upon Member involvement.

In order for the Council to maintain and develop a successful scrutiny function, Councillors must take a leading role in the process. This is not a task just for Chairman or Vice Chairman, scrutiny relies upon engagement from a wide number of enthusiastic Councillors to achieve success.

Councillors must act in a non-partisan manner, which places the needs and aspirations of the community above the consideration of party politics. They must encompass the appropriate skills and competencies required to be able to influence a wide range of public bodies with the aim of improving services for local people.

Councillors must take the lead in not only choosing topics for selection, but to take the lead in questioning witnesses, formulating recommendations and in preparing reports for consideration by decision makers. Councillors have to make time for detailed involvement in topics under review whilst demonstrating effective work management to make sure that scrutiny activities are timely and have impact.

Role of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Because the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is a Member led process, the role of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman is an important one. The Chairman has a pivotal role in maintaining the focus of scrutiny activity on issues that are of concern to the residents of Woking.

Each Chairman has to possess a range of abilities including good communication, listening, and analytical skills in order to balance the desire for Committee Members to have full and frank discussion about topics, with the need to ensure the Committee makes the best use of its time and resources. The Chairman has to encourage the Committee to operate in an open and robust manner, whilst also making sure that witnesses and officers are treated with respect and courtesy. It is also important that the Chairman summarises to confirm agreement and ownership of actions, decisions, and important points and at key stages refocus discussions.

Chairman and Vice-Chairman Liaison

It is good practice for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman to meet in between meetings of the Committee in order to discuss the Work Programme, any outcomes from previous meetings, potential agenda items, new developments in Overview and Scrutiny best practice etc. The Democratic Services Officer who supports the Overview and Scrutiny Committee also attends these meetings.

The Role of Councillors

Being a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is a rewarding responsibility, enabling a Member of the Council to really explore ways of improving the service the Council provides.

Overview and Scrutiny Members need to take an equal part in scrutinising the Council's policies and Executive decisions, and be active in collecting and assessing evidence and producing recommendations. Overview and Scrutiny provides Members with an opportunity to question Executive lead Members, Officers and others in order to gain knowledge of a topic and develop supporting evidence for recommendations.

Councillors will receive a considerable amount of paper work to read and as a result, they need to set aside sufficient time to allow them to attend meetings, forums, workshops and site visits.

Councillors will:

- Agree a manageable Work Programme.

- Take an active role in Scrutiny reviews either in the full Committee or through Task Groups.

- Receive and examine information and monitor the performance of service areas and participate in reviews as appropriate.

- Hold Executive Members and Senior Officers to account.

- Take part in training and development programmes.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members 2018-19

Member:	Member Position:
Councillor Ian Johnson, *Liberal Democrat*	Chairman
Councillor Deborah Hughes, *Liberal Democrat*	Vice-Chairman
Councillor Hilary Addison, *Conservative*	Committee Member
Councillor Ken Howard, *Liberal Democrat*	Committee Member
Councillor John Bond*, Independent*	Committee Member
Councillor Graham Chrystie*, Conservative*	Committee Member
Councillor Saj Hussain, *Conservative*	Committee Member
Councillor Rashid Mohammed*, Conservative*	Committee Member
Councillor Mohammed Ilyas Raja, *Labour*	Committee Member
Councillor Chitra Rana, *Conservative*	Committee Member

Carrying out a Scrutiny Review

Stage 1 – Topic Selection

Scrutiny topics are selected by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Items can come from a variety of sources including Members of the Council, members of the public or be referred to the Committee by the Executive or Council. Scrutiny Reviews will be undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee itself or in the majority of cases allocated to a Task Group.

Topic selection has been covered in detail in Section 2 of this guide.

Stage 2 – Scoping & Planning the Review

Before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can agree the Scrutiny Review, a 'Scrutiny Review Topic Selection Form' must be completed and submitted to the Committee.

Comprehensive scoping and planning is essential in order to ensure that the Scrutiny review is as effective as possible - if a Review is too broad, it may not be possible to identify the necessary resources to complete the Review within the proposed timescale and the Review may lose its focus, leading to ineffective outcomes.

Once a Scrutiny Review topic has been agreed, it is likely that a Task Group will be established to undertake the Review (although this is not always necessary). The Committee will encourage interested Councillors to volunteer to sit on the Task Group and will seek to achieve a politically balanced group.

Before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can formally agree the establishment of a Task Group, a 'Terms of Reference' form must be completed and submitted to the Committee for approval. [An example of this form can be found in Section 7 – Supporting Documents]

The Terms of Reference will consider-

- The purpose, rationale and objectives of the review

- Key issues and areas of focus

- Responsibilities of Councillors and Officers

- The risks involved in undertaking the review (and how they can be minimised)

- How the review will be undertaken

- Timescales

At the first meeting of the Task Group, the Members will -

- Elect a Chairman and appoint a Vice Chairman

- Determine dates for future meetings of the Group

- Establish a target date for completing the review and submitting a final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Task Groups are encouraged to consider innovative and imaginative ways of working. Examples of such working can include holding Task Group meetings at locations across the Borough, use of questionnaires and the staging of public meetings.

Stage 3 – Collecting Evidence

What information is going to be needed? Once the scope for the Review has been agreed, the Task Group will need to consider what information is required to fulfil the objectives of the Review.

When the information requirements have been identified, the Task Group will need to identify where and how the information can be gained, with consideration given to -

- Undertaking site visits

- Calling on expert witnesses Council and external sources

- Hearing evidence from community and voluntary groups, the public and business sector, and consulting service user groups and local interest groups.

- Commissioning research & researching best practice through local government organisations e.g. www.idea.gov.uk, www.lga.gov.uk

- Joint working with other authorities and organisations

- Officer reports and presentations

Stage 4 – Considering the Evidence

When the evidence has been collected, the Task Group will need to meet to consider and analyse the findings. It is important that both the findings and the recommendations are drawn out of the evidence and are adequately supported by it.

Stage 5 – Report

A draft report based on the Task Groups' finding and recommendations will be prepared by the Chairman of the Task Group and the appointed Lead Officer.

Recommendations should:

- Be based on clear evidence

- Address identified need

- Link to Council priorities

- Demonstrate tangible benefits

- Take account of resources

The final report and any recommendations from the Task Group will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee before being recommended to the Executive. Any changes to the Council's policies will then need to be dealt with by way of a recommendation to Council.

In the event of there being dissent from the recommendations, a minority report will also be allowed to be forwarded to the Executive, Council or Partner Organisation, proposing an alternative course of action.

Stage 6 – Feedback and Monitoring

Following the reporting process, it is important that feedback is given to contributors to the Review and stakeholders concerned about the outcome. The feedback should make it clear what actions are proposed as a result of the Review.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will need to make suitable arrangements to monitor the implementation of the recommendations adopted, and request progress reports from officers and Portfolio Holders.

Officers

Whilst Woking Borough Council does not have a dedicated Overview and Scrutiny Officer, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is supported by a Democratic Services Officer and Lead Officers throughout the Council.

Democratic Services Officer

The Democratic Services Officer will act as a contact, advisor and support for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to co-ordinate the work of the Councillors and Officers supporting the Task Groups. This Officer does not always necessarily participate in the work of the Task Groups, but does aid and assist Members with any necessary arrangements and application of Overview and Scrutiny. The Officer will also act as a link between the Task Group and the Council's Committee process.

The Democratic Services Officer will also assist in:

- the arrangement and organisation of Task Group meetings;

- the development of terms of reference;

- the arrangement of site visits, workshops, etc and the attendance of witnesses;

- use of the Internet/Intranet;

- applying the Tool Kit for Successful Scrutiny.

Contact Details: Hanna Taylor, Democratic Services Officer
                        Woking Borough Council
                        Civic Offices
                        Gloucester Square
                        Woking GU21 6YL
                        Telephone 01483 743056
                        Email: hanna.taylor@woking.gov.uk

Lead Officer

Each Scrutiny Review will have a Lead Officer appointed, who will be best placed to advise and inform. The Lead Officer will be involved for the duration of the Review and will assist the Task Group in its consideration of the evidence collected and the production of the final report. The Officer will assist in scoping the Review, establishing clear aims and objectives and ensuring that the right information and participants are available.

Responsibilities of the Lead Officer include:

- working with the Task Group to establish a plan to define the objectives, timetable and methodology;

- keeping the work of the Task Group under review in light of any additional issues or changes in timescale identified by the Task Group;

- assisting in assimilating information and data and present any findings or conclusions arising from the Review in an appropriate format;

- assisting in communications, including progress reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and consultation with stakeholders; and

- assisting in the preparation of the final recommendations and Committee report.

Additional Officers may be called upon by the Task Group for specific technical information, either written and/or verbal. **Legal Services** will provide procedural, legislative and constitutional advice.

Call-In Procedure

One of the main responsibilities of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to hold the Executive to account. They can do this by Calling-In a decision of the Executive and preventing the decision from being implemented until it has been fully discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Although the Overview and Scrutiny Committee cannot change the decision, it can refer the matter back to the decision taker to ask for the decision to be reviewed or to consider an alternative course of action.

The Call-In procedure does not apply where the decision being taken by the Executive is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would be seriously prejudicial to the Council's or public interest.

Once a decision has been made by the Executive, Councillors have five working days to Call-In a decision. If the decision is called-in, it cannot be implemented until it has been referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for advice.

The called-in decision must be considered by the Committee within five working days of the decision to call it in.

The decision will be referred to the first available meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee if within timescales, or a special meeting of the Committee will be arranged. The Committee then has three options:

- To offer no advice, in which case the decision may be implemented immediately.

- To make a recommendation, in which case the matter must be referred to the Executive in order for a decision to be made upon it.

- To make a recommendation to Council (bypassing the Executive).

The Executive or Council is not bound to accept any recommendation to it and will have sole discretion on any further action to be taken.

Where the Scrutiny Committee does decide to make a recommendation this must be clearly documented in the minutes.

Occasionally, matters subject to call-in will be confidential or exempt and the press and public may be required to leave the room for the whole or part of the proceedings in such circumstances.

The detailed procedure for 'Call-In' can be found in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in the Constitution (Page 158-159). A detailed report on Call-in was submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee art its meeting on 16 July 2018.

5. Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)

The Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) provides Members with the opportunity to ask for discussions at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on issues where local problems have arisen and where all other methods of resolution have been exhausted.

CCfA was introduced as part of wider changes introduced to provide Overview and Scrutiny with greater powers to work more closely with partners across organisational boundaries. It enables Councillors, as the democratic representatives of their communities, to raise issues that it has not been possible to resolve by other means.

The power is limited to issues affecting single wards and any Councillor can make a CCfA irrespective of their existing role on the Council. It can be about any issue of the Councillor's choice, regardless of which organisation is responsible, subject to statutory exceptions (for example if the matter is the subject of an existing complaint or is vexatious in nature).

A flow diagram detailing the preparation of a CCfA is shown on the next page and a copy of the CCfA Request Form is included in Section 7 – Supporting Documents.

The procedure for CCFA can be found in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules in the Constitution. A detailed report on the process was presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 16 July 2018.

Step 1
Before you seek a
Call for Action

Have you exhausted all
other avenues to try and
resolve this problem?

Yes

No

Is the issue
a matter that
affects a
single
Ward?

Yes

Have you discussed the matter
with the

CMG Member, Senior Manager
or Portfolio Holder?

Are other Organisations
involved who could assist?

These avenues must be
exhausted first.

No

A Call for
Action must
be for a
single Ward.

Does the issue fall within
one of the statutory
exclusion for CCfA (i.e.
matter of complaint, planning
or regulatory, vexatious,
persistent, unreasonable or
discriminatory)?

No

Yes

**Proceed to
Step 2**

Please contact Democratic
Services. This issue may be
exempt from the process.

Step 2 Call for Action Form	**In completing the form you should:** • State what the issue is; • State what action has been taken to resolve the issue; • Include an outline of the resolution being sought; • Indicate any other organisations that are involved in the CCfA • **Send your completed form to Democratic Services.**
Step 3 Chairman's consideration of the CCfA Form	The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee determines whether or not to accept the CCfA for consideration **In doing so he will ask if:** • All existing options to resolve the problem have been exhausted; • There are potential resource implications in the Committee's work programme to accommodate the CCfA; and • The statutory exclusions have been considered e.g. subject of a complaint, vexatious, persistent, unreasonable or discriminatory. In the event a Call for Action is submitted by the Chairman, the Vice-Chairman will determine whether or not the Call for Action is considered.
Step 4 Overview and Scrutiny Committee	The Initial Report allows the Committee to determine the appropriate priority in its work programme for the CCfA. It will include information on: • What the Councillor is requesting as the proposed outcome (with an opportunity to speak on the item); • Action taken prior to the Call for Action being made; • Any other known information; • Exclusions process information; • Which organisation/ Business Managers would be affected; • Potential resource implications; and • Whether and when to include CCfA into the work programme. Details of requests for a Call For Action which have been rejected by the Chairman will be reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee will consider any representations by the Member responsible for the request and determine whether to uphold the Chairman's decision or agree that the Call for Action be taken forward.
Step 5 Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Once the CCfA is in the Committee's work programme it will receive: • a report including the background to the CCfA; • comments from partner organisations; • other information submitted for consideration by the Committee; and • evidence from appropriate experts. **The Committee will seek to recommend a resolution to the CCfA.**
Step 6 Seeking a resolution	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee makes recommendations to the Executive if it is a Council matter or to other partners. CCfAs may be about matters that cut across the remit of partner organisations. The Committee will send its recommendations direct to the organisation concerned. The Committee might say that there is no action to be taken.
Step 7 Monitoring of Recommendation	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will monitor the implementation of its 'recommendations'.

6. Public Participation

Public participation is an important part of the scrutiny process and there are a number of ways members of the public can get involved and keep updated.

- Suggesting topics for scrutiny via the e-form on our website

- Attending Committee meetings

- Submitting written evidence or appearing as a witness when invited to do so

- Committee agendas, reports & minutes

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may request a range of individuals to give evidence and answer questions on a particular topic. These can include:

- Executive Members

- Senior Officers

- Members of the Public

- Outside organisations / Service Providers

- Experts

Most of the discussions in Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings will take place in public and the press are also invited to attend. Task Groups are usually not held in public, although their final report to the Committee will most likely be a public document.

Witnesses/Expert attendance at the meeting

Witnesses and experts have a key role to play in helping the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Task Groups to fulfil their objectives. Examples of experts and witnesses may include Members of the Executive, Portfolio Holders, Union representatives, external partners, local businesses and voluntary sector groups.

Prior to the meeting

The Chairman or Democratic Services Officer will:

- Inform the witness of the time place and date of the meeting

- Inform the witness of the issue the Committee would like to question them about

- Inform the witness of any written information or documentation that the Committee may require

- Provide the witness with copies of the agenda and relevant reports

- Answer any questions the witness may have

At the meeting

Overview and Scrutiny meetings are normally held in public and there will often be members of the press and public in attendance. There will also be Committee Members, Officers and possibly other Councillors and witnesses. The Democratic Services Officer will have contacted the witness/expert before the meeting to make arrangements to meet them and explain the format of the meeting. The Chairman will also introduce her/himself.

The witness/expert may have been asked to provide the Committee with a presentation. The Members of the Committee will then ask the witness/expert questions in an orderly and respectful manner. Witnesses & experts should take their time to answer the questions clearly, if they are unsure of an answer or do not understand a question, they are encouraged to say so.

Guidance for Witnesses & Experts and Questioning Techniques can be found in Section 7 – Supporting Documents.

After the meeting

It is good practice for the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to write to the expert/witness to thank them for their attendance and to also inform them of the outcome following the Committee's investigation.
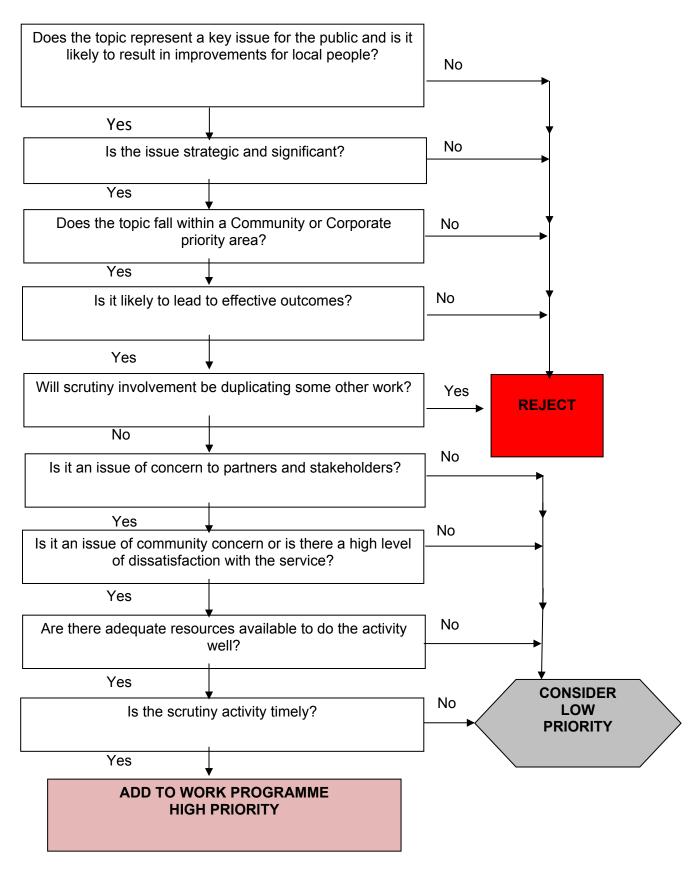
7. Supporting Documents

The following supporting documents are attached as appendices:

- o Work Programme Development - Overview and Scrutiny Topic Selection Flowchart

- o Scrutiny Review Task Group Terms of Reference *(also available electronically)*

- o Scrutiny Review Topic Selection Form

- o CCfA Form

- o Guidance for Witnesses and Experts

- o Questioning Techniques

If you have any questions about Overview and Scrutiny or the application of this Toolkit, please contact hanna.taylor@woking.gov.uk or 01483 743056.

Work Programme Development - Overview & Scrutiny Topic Selection Flowchart

Does the topic represent a key issue for the public and is it likely to result in improvements for local people?

No

Yes

Is the issue strategic and significant?

No

Yes

Does the topic fall within a Community or Corporate priority area?

No

Yes

Is it likely to lead to effective outcomes?

No

Yes

Will scrutiny involvement be duplicating some other work?

Yes

REJECT

No

Is it an issue of concern to partners and stakeholders?

No

Yes

Is it an issue of community concern or is there a high level of dissatisfaction with the service?

No

Yes

Are there adequate resources available to do the activity well?

No

Yes

Is the scrutiny activity timely?

No

CONSIDER LOW PRIORITY

Yes

ADD TO WORK PROGRAMME HIGH PRIORITY

Scrutiny Review Task Group
Terms of Reference

PROPOSED NAME OF TASK GROUP	

SECTION ONE – THE SCRUTINY REVIEW

Scrutiny Review Topic:

Topic Raised by:	

Date Raised:	

Purpose of Review:
What is the purpose of the Task Group? What will the Group scrutinise?

Rationale of Review:
Why does the review need to be undertaken?

SECTION TWO - THE TASK GROUP

Membership Of Task Group:
Who will make up the Group i.e. Elected Members from the different parties, Portfolio Holders, Officers, Witnesses etc.?

SECTION THREE - THE SCRUTINY REVIEW PROCESS

Methodology/Approach
How will the Task Group undertake the review? Meetings, questionnaires, engagement etc

Sources of Information/Evidence:
Where will the Group gather information from? Council officers, Local Groups, reports etc

Consultation Exercises:
Will you carry out any consultation exercises?

Witness/Expert Participation:
Will you involve any witnesses/ experts? Who?

Site Visits:
Will the Task Group carry out any site visits? Where? Why?

Resource Requirements:
What Officer support will be required? Funding? etc

Risk Analysis:
Cost implications, unrealistic expectations, timescales etc

SECTION 4 - SCRUTINY REVIEW COMPLETION

Reporting Process:
How will the Group report back to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee? Presentation, written report?

Monitoring of Outcomes:
Regular reports to be submitted to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee? Members of the Task Group to monitor any recommendation & report back to the Committee?

Anticipated Completion Date:	

Draft Report Deadline:	

Meeting Frequency:	

Dates of Meetings:	*These will be identified by Member Services in consultation with the Task Group members.*

Further Information:

Please ensure you complete this form in full with as much detail as possible

Scrutiny Review Topic Selection

SECTION ONE – THE SCRUTINY REVIEW

Scrutiny Review Topic:

Topic Raised by:	

Date Raised:	

SECTION TWO – SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection Criteria:

Scrutiny Review likely to result in improvements for local people. ☐

Topic falls within a Community/Corporate priority. ☐

Topic represents a key issue for the public. ☐

Service proposed is performing poorly. ☐

High level of dissatisfaction with the service. ☐

Rejection Criteria:

Topic already being addressed. ☐

Matter is subjudice or prejudicial to the Council's interests. ☐

Specific case falls within the Council's complaints procedure. ☐

Topic involves individual disciplinary or grievance matter. ☐

Proposed topic is unlikely to result in improvements for local people. ☐

SECTION THREE – RATIONALE FOR SELECTION

Rationale
Why should the Review be undertaken?
How would the topic link to the Council's key aims and priorities?
What benefits could result from the Scrutiny Review?

SECTION FOUR – PRIORITISATION

Importance
Strong evidence linking topic to the Council's key aims and priorities.
Good evidence linking topic to the Council's key aims and priorities.
Good evidence linking topic to the Council's key aims but not to current priorities.
Some evidence that topic is indirectly related to the Council's key aims/priorities.
No evidence that topic is related to the Council's key aims/priorities.

Impact
Substantial benefits community wide or for a significant proportion or section of the Community.
Moderate benefits for two or more client groups or substantial benefits for only one client group.
Minor benefits for two or more client groups or moderate benefits for one client group.
Minor benefits for only one client group.
No benefits likely to result.

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SECTION FIVE – CONCLUSIONS

Topic Selection

Select		Reject		Reserve List	

Refer Topic to:

Scrutiny Review Task Group		Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
Other			

Date Topic Considered:	

Further Information:

Please ensure you complete this form in full with as much detail as possible

COUNCILLOR CALL FOR ACTION

REQUEST FORM

This form should be used by any Councillor at Woking Borough Council who would like the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider a Call for Action in their ward.

Subject of the Councillor Call for Action:

Would you like the opportunity to speak to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee?   Yes: [ ]   No: [ ]

Have you approached the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the same issue in the past six months?   Yes: [ ]   No: [ ]

Why you think the issue should be looked at by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Please give a brief synopsis of what the main areas of concern are:

What evidence do you have in support of your Call For Action:

Which areas or Community Groups are affected by the Call for Action:

Have you exhausted all avenues to resolve the issue?   Yes: [ ]   No: [ ]

What action have you taken to resolve the issue:

Are there any deadlines associated with the Call for Action of which the Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to be aware:

What outcomes would you hope for in making this Call for Action:

Is the Call for Action currently the subject of legal action by any party (to your knowledge) or is being examined by a formal Complaints' process?:   Yes: [ ]   No: [ ]

Councillor (print):

Signature:

Ward:

Date Submitted:

For Office Use Only:

Received by:

Received on:

Guidance for Witnesses/Experts

The Scrutiny Process

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may identify topics for scrutiny and undertake a review of a service or function of the Council or an item of public concern with a view to identifying an Improvement Plan to bring about improvements.

Scrutiny provides the opportunity for elected Councillors to examine the various functions of the Council, to ask questions on how decisions have been made, to consider whether service improvements can be put in place and make recommendations to this effect. Scrutiny also provides the opportunity for Councillors to champion issues of local concern to residents and to participate in the development of new policy.

In order to ensure the Review is comprehensive and the improvements realistic, often a Task Group is established to oversee the process. As part of the evidence gathering exercise, witnesses or experts may be requested to attend a meeting of the Committee or Task Group to provide information for the Review.

The Committee

The Committee will hold formal meetings, the time & venue for these meetings will be set the previous year. These will usually take place in the evening at 7pm in the Council Chamber at the Civic Officers.

The Committee is made up of 13 Councillors, although anyone can attend this meeting including other Councillors, Officers and members of the public.

The Task Group

The Task Group will hold informal meetings at times and venues suitable for those attending and the subject of the Review. For example, a Task Group reviewing the H G Wells Conference and Events Centre may therefore choose to hold its meetings at the H G Wells Centre rather than the Civic Offices.

The Task Group itself will comprise of between two and six Councillors together with supporting officers. An external representative may also sit on the Task Group. Notes of the meeting will be taken and a copy provided at a later date.

Attending the Meeting

You will be given advance notice of the date of the meeting and will be sent a copy of the agenda, together with any background and supporting documents, at least one week before the meeting. An indication of the type of questions likely to be put to you can also be sent to allow you to prepare your responses. Should you be unable to attend a meeting, the Committee/Task Group may request a written response from you on certain points. An indication of the timeframe for such responses will be given.

Upon arrival at the venue for the meeting, you will normally be met by an Officer or member of the Committee/Task Group. He or she will make contact with you prior to the meeting to confirm the arrangements and where possible give you an indication of when your evidence is likely to be heard and explain the format for the meeting. If you have any particular anxieties or questions then you should not hesitate to raise these. Those present at the meeting, including the Chairman, will introduce themselves at the start of the meeting. All those present will have copies of the papers circulated in advance of the meeting.

Giving Evidence

Members of the Committee/Task Group will ask you questions in an orderly and respectful manner as directed by the Chairman of the meeting.

Remember:
- Take your time and speak slowly and clearly.

- Ask for questions to be repeated if you do not understand or cannot hear.

- If you are not sure of the answer then say so.

- You may ask questions of the Task Group for clarification or background information.

Questioning Techniques

Witnesses are often the most valuable sources of information that Councillors rely upon, when undertaking a review. Good questioning will ensure that Councillors make the best use of witnesses, whose time may be limited.

Witnesses attend reviews to impart their knowledge in their area of expertise. It is then for Councillors to debate the evidence gathered from all sources in formulating a view. Witness would not be expected to enter into arguments about the merits of what they have said.

Below is a selection of examples of questioning techniques:

Open and Closed Questions

A closed question usually receives a single word or very short, factual answer. For example: "Are you thirsty?" The answer is "Yes" or "No", "Where do you live?" The answer is generally the name of your town or your address.

Open questions elicit longer answers. They usually begin with what, why, how. An open question asks the respondent for his or her knowledge, opinion or feelings.

"Tell me" and "describe" can also be used in the same way as open questions. Here are some examples:

- What happened at the meeting?

- Why did he react that way?

- Describe the circumstances in more detail.

Open questions are good for:

- Developing an open conversation: "What did you get up to on holiday?"

- Finding out more detail: "What else do we need to do to make this a success?"

- Finding out the other person's opinion or issues: "What do you think about those changes?"

Closed questions are good for:

- Testing your understanding, or the other person's: "So, if I get this qualification, I will get a raise?"

- Concluding a discussion or making a decision: "Now we know the facts, are we all agreed this is the right course of action?"

- A misplaced closed question, on the other hand, can kill the conversation and lead to awkward silences, so are best avoided when a conversation is in full flow.

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Double-Headed or Multiple Questions

These are questions which ask more than one question at a time and should be avoided as they can lead to confusion. Whilst both elements of the question may be valid, it would be more effective to ask each one separately.

Funnel Questions

This technique involves starting with general questions, and then homing in on a point in each answer, and asking more and more detail at each level. It's often used by detectives taking a statement from a witness:

- *"How many people were involved in the fight?"*
- *"About ten."*
- *"Were they children or adults?"*
- *"Mostly children."*
- *"What sort of ages were they?"*
- *"About 14 or 15."*
- *"Were any of them wearing anything distinctive?"*
- *"Yes, several of them had red baseball caps on."*
- *"Can you remember if there was a logo on any of the caps?"*
- *"Now you come to mention it, yes, I remember seeing a big letter N"*

Using this technique, the detective has helped the witness re-live the scene and gradually focus on a useful detail. It is unlikely he would have got this information if he's simply asked an open question such as "Are there any details you can give me about what you saw?"

Tip: *When using funnel questioning, start with closed questions. As you progress through the funnel, start using more open questions.*

Funnel questions are good for:

- Finding out more detail about a specific point: "Tell me more about Option 2."

- Gaining the interest or increasing the confidence of the person you're speaking with: "Have you used the IT Helpdesk?" "Did they solve your problem?" "What was the attitude of the person who took your call?"

Probing Questions

Asking probing questions is another strategy for finding out more detail. Sometimes it's as simple as asking your respondent for an example, to help you understand a statement they have made. At other times, you need additional information for clarification, "When do you need this report by, and do you want to see a draft before I give you my final version?", or to investigate whether there is proof for

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what has been said, "How do you know that the new database can't be used by the sales force?"

An effective way of probing is to use the "5 whys" method, which can help you quickly get to the root of a problem.

Tip: Use questions that include the word "exactly" to probe further: "What exactly do you mean by fast-track?", "Who, exactly, wanted this report?"

Probing questions are good for:

- Gaining clarification to ensure you have the whole story and that you understand it thoroughly; and

- Drawing information out of people who are trying to avoid telling you something

Leading Questions

Leading questions try to lead the respondent to your way of thinking. They can do this in several ways:

- With an assumption: "How late do you think that the project will deliver?" This assumes that the project will certainly not be completed on time.

- By adding a personal appeal to agree at the end: "Lori's very efficient, don't you think?" or "Option 2 is better, isn't it?"

- Phrasing the question so that the "easiest" response is "yes" (our natural tendency to prefer to say "yes" than "no" plays an important part in the phrasing of referendum questions): "Shall we all approve Option 2?" is more likely to get a positive response than "Do you want to approve option 2 or not?" A good way of doing this is to make it personal. For example, "Would you like me to go ahead with Option 2?" rather than "Shall I choose Option 2?"

- Giving people a choice between two options, both of which you would be happy with, rather than the choice of one option or not doing anything at all. Strictly speaking, the choice of "neither" is still available when you ask "Which would you prefer of A or B", but most people will be caught up in deciding between your two preferences. Note that leading questions tend to be closed.

Leading questions are good for:

- Getting the answer you want but leaving the other person feeling that they have had a choice

- Closing a sale: "If that answers all of your questions, shall we agree a price?"

Tip: Use leading questions with care. If you use them in a self-serving way or one that harms the interests of the other person, then they can, quite rightly, be seen as manipulative and dishonest.

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Rhetorical Questions

Rhetorical questions aren't really questions at all, in that they don't expect an answer. They're really just statements phrased in question form: "Isn't John's design work so creative?"

People use rhetorical questions because they are engaging for the listener - as they are drawn into agreeing ("Yes it is and I like working with such a creative colleague") - rather than feeling that they are being "told" something like "John is a very creative designer". (To which they may answer "So what?")

Tip: Rhetorical questions are even more powerful if you use a string of them. "Isn't that a great display? Don't you love the way the text picks up the colours in the photographs? Doesn't it use space really well? Wouldn't you love to have a display like that for our products?"

Rhetorical questions are good for:
Engaging the listener.

Using Questioning Techniques
You have probably used all of these questioning techniques before in your everyday life, at work and at home. By consciously applying the appropriate kind of questioning, you can gain the information, response or outcome that you want even more effectively.

Questions are a powerful way of:

- Learning: Ask open and closed questions, and use probing questioning.

- Relationship building: People generally respond positively if you ask about what they do or enquire about their opinions. If you do this in an affirmative way "Tell me what you like best about working here", you will help to build and maintain an open dialogue.

- Managing and coaching: Here, rhetorical and leading questions are useful too. They can help get people to reflect and to commit to courses of action that you've suggested: "Wouldn't it be great to gain some further qualifications?"

- Avoiding misunderstandings: Use probing questions to seek clarification, particularly when the consequences are significant. And to make sure you avoid jumping to conclusions, the "Ladder of Inferance" tool can help too.

- Diffusing a heated situation: You can calm an angry customer or colleague by using funnel questions to get them to go into more detail about their grievance. This will not only distract them from their emotions, but will often help you to identify a small practical thing that you can do, which is often enough to make them feel that they have "won" something, and no longer need to be angry.

- Persuading people: No one likes to be lectured, but asking a series of open questions will help others to embrace the reasons behind your point of view. "What do you think about bringing the sales force in for half a day to have their laptops upgraded?"

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY – 17 SEPTEMBER 2018

HOUSING TASK GROUP UPDATE

Executive Summary

Councillor Ian Johnson, Chairman of the Housing Task Group, provided an update from the Housing Task Group:

"The Housing Task Group met on 25 July and discussed a wide range of matters:

The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018 had resulted in significant additional caseload and process management. The number of homelessness assessments had shot up from 21 in the 1st quarter of 2017 to 148 in the same quarter this year due to the changes in the way potential homelessness has to be handled.

A review of the housing register had resulted in 986 people being taken off the list as they no longer qualified, leaving 1,049 on the register. Notably, 852 of the applicants were in need of 1 or 2 bedroom units.

The Canalside Selective Licensing policy had gone live at the end of April and 80% of the possible applications had been received leaving around 200 landlords who have yet to apply. Licences would be backdated to 1 April.

The Council's Housing management IT system was due to be replaced due to the current version being outdated and unable to be upgraded.

The Chief Executive provided an update on the Council's intended programme on affordable housing. This information was subsequently noted at the last meeting of Overview and Scrutiny.

The Task Group discussed a number of matters on the Transformation agenda including:-

o   A new web-based system 'Entitledto' which allows officers to assess affordability for housing clients.

o   Investigations into a relocation service for private owners who wished to downsize, possibly involving Thameswey.

o   WBC's handyman service would be taking on Spelthorne's service from September.

o   4 boroughs were looking to take on a 'home from hospital' scheme funded by NWS CCG, the main purpose of which would be to provide various levels care and assistance to hospital leavers for 6 weeks following discharge.

o   Surrey CC were consulting on the vision of residents for 2030.

o   The rebranded scheme to encourage private sector landlords to rent to social tenants has resulted in 21 new tenancies and a reduction of £50,000 in the cost of B&B.

o   The introduction of Universal Credit to new claimants from October could present challenges on rents and stronger links with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) who were now based at the Council offices would be helpful in managing the new situation.

The work programme would include a review of the Empty Homes Strategy at the next Task Group meeting in November."

OSC18-002

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the update be noted

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation set out above.

Background Papers: None.

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