

BRIEFING PAPER NO. 1 – SUBMITTING A TOPIC FOR SCRUTINY REVIEW

Executive Summary

This Briefing paper set out the process for Members of the Council to submit a topic for scrutiny review and forms part of the Council's support for Member Learning and Development. It is intended to bring to future meetings of the Committee 'bite-size' briefing papers on the different roles and functions of the Members appointed to the Committee, including elements of the Council's Tool Kit, Call-in arrangements and Call For Action arrangements.

Recommendations

The Committee is requested to:

RESOLVE That the Briefing Paper be noted.

The Committee has the authority to determine the recommendation set out above.
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Background Papers: None.

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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 of the Council as a whole, of the Council's procedures for the submission and consideration of topics for scrutiny review.

2.0 The Arrangements

- 2.1 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. A key element of the Work Programme is the identification of topics for scrutiny reviews.
- 2.2 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 form must be completed for every topic suggested in order to define the objectives, determine the methodology of the review and agree timescales of the review.
- 2.3 An example of the form is attached. Those Members wishing to raise a topic should access the eform through eWokPlus under the Councillors' Pages. The completed form is referred to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Committee for information and is brought to next available meeting of the Committee to determine whether the topic is to be taken forward for scrutiny.

3.0 The Scrutiny Process

- 3.1 Ideally when considering a topic for scrutiny Members should consider what benefits the review will achieve, the anticipated timescale and what resources will be necessary to complete the review. Scrutiny Reviews are Member-led and as such Members will have a greater role to play than would be the case with a standard working group of the Council.
- 3.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee can appoint any Member to a Task Group, regardless of their Committee membership, with a view to ensuring that those with the most relevant background serve on the Task Groups. The responsibilities of Members will be determined at the earliest stage of a review, identifying those Members responsible for undertaking the necessary research, inviting 'witnesses' or 'experts' and managing the Scrutiny review.
- 3.3 Reviews can be undertaken by a single Councillor or a group of Councillors, to be appointed by the Committee. The Members undertaking a review will be expected to report regularly to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on its progress and to bring forward its findings at the end of the process.
- 3.4 The work programme of the Committee will be taken into consideration when considering any topic review requests..

4.0 Implications

Financial

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report. Any financial implications of a scrutiny review will need to be considered before a decision is taken to proceed with a review.

Human Resource/Training and Development

- 4.2 There are no human resource implications arising from this report, which forms part of the Council's overarching approach to Member learning and development. Proposals for

Briefing Paper No. 1 – Submitting a Topic for Scrutiny Review

scrutiny review topics will need to identify the level of human resource necessary to complete the review.

Community Safety

- 4.3 There are no community safety implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

- 4.4 There are no risk management implications arising from this report.

Sustainability

- 4.5 There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

Equalities

- 4.6 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

Safeguarding

- 4.7 There are no safeguarding implications arising from this report.

5.0 Conclusions

- 5.1 This Briefing Paper sets out the Council's arrangements for the submission of proposals for scrutiny review topics, as part of the Council's learning and development programme. It is intended to submit further Briefing Papers to future meetings of the Committee on different aspects of the roles and responsibilities of the Members appointed to the Committee.

REPORT ENDS

Scrutiny Review Topic Selection

Set out below is a copy of the online form set up for Councillors to submit a Scrutiny Review Topic Selection for consideration at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

This form must be completed in full with as much detail as possible.

Your name:	
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Your email:	
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Selection criteria	
Criteria for Scrutiny Review:	
Scrutiny Review likely to result in improvements for local people.	
Topic falls within a Community or Corporate priority.	
Topic represents a key issue for the public.	
A service is performing poorly.	
High level of dissatisfaction with a service.	
Criteria for rejecting a Scrutiny Review Topic:	
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.	

If your proposed Scrutiny Review Topic falls under any of these rejection criteria, it may not be a suitable topic to progress.

Briefing Paper No. 1 – Submitting a Topic for Scrutiny Review

Outcomes of the Review	
Why should the Scrutiny Review be undertaken?	
What benefits could result from the Scrutiny Review?	
What level of impact will the Scrutiny Review have?	
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 substantial benefits for only one client group.	
Minor benefits for only one client groups.	
No benefits likely to result.	

Topic Review Process	
Resources to be included in the Scrutiny Review:	
WBC Officer Time Committee.	
Report and/or presentation.	
Councillor time.	
Portfolio Holder Involvement.	
Expert or External Representatives participation.	
Establishment of a Task Group.	
Site visits.	
Research and Evidence.	
Consultation Exercise.	

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Other
Please add explanatory note for any resource selected above.
Please add any further information that you think would be useful in the consideration of this Scrutiny Review Topic.

Once submitted, if your Scrutiny Review Topic meets the selection criteria and enough information has been provided, it will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their next meeting, where they will decide whether to add the topic to their Work Programme.