

Scrutiny Review Topic Selection

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

Your name:	James Sanderson
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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.	X
Topic represents a key issue for the public.	X
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.

Outcomes of the Review

Why should the Scrutiny Review be undertaken?

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider that a scrutiny review of the HIF project would add value to ensure that the project is focused on the delivery of outcomes that reflect the needs of and improves the outcomes for Woking communities. The O&S Committee acknowledge that there is a process in place to support the project via the HIF Oversight Panel.

The role of the HIF Oversight Panel is to:

- oversee the governance and implementation of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF);
- oversee project communications;
- receive updates on the Project; and,
- note and monitor progress of the Project, through the receipt of programme reports, against key milestone dates, budget and key risks.

For reference, this panel has proportional constitutional representation of Councillors in order to ensure that members of the authority that are not part of the Executive can hold the Executive to account as an integral part of the delivery of the project.

The focus of the proposed O&S review is intended to provide effective constructive critical friend challenge, focussing on:

- the decisions the project is planning to make;
- how these are planned to be implemented;
- amplifying the voices and concerns of communities;
- improving outcomes; and,
- contributing to the development of a vision for the project and how this connects with related Council strategy and other change activity

To support the O&S Committee to focus on outcomes, and as an initial action of its scrutiny, it would assist the Committee if they have assurances around the HIF systems of governance, risk management and control that are delivered through by the HIF project under the existing oversight of the HIF Oversight Panel.

To give assistance on this it is proposed that the Standards and Audit Committee approve an additional audit within the audit plan to accommodate the HIF project which would:

- provide assurance that the Council has fully identified all the risks in respect of the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) project and it has sufficient mitigation in place to manage these risks.
- provide assurance that due processes in decision making and project management have been applied and assess how the demands and potential conflicts of multiple major projects occurring concurrently are managed. To identify the wider lessons from a project of this scale with very significant external dependencies.

The final scope for this audit is agreed with the respective Chairs of the Standards and Audit Committee and the O&S Committee.

The O&S Committee will then consider this audit report and subsequently propose how it would help to develop a vision for the project and how this connects with related Council strategy and other change activity.

A subsequent review could also consider if further public consultation and involvement is required in order to address any concerns raised noting the commitment to consult on the housing HIF numbers as part of the Woking Town Centre Masterplan and noting the recent motion at council which has called for:

- The HIF scheme housing to be put to public consultation with full honest disclosures.

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- The council cease to make any further promises on HIF to any bodies until such consultation is complete.
- The council re asses the scheme’s housing targets under new market conditions, (especially post COVID) public opinion and if needed is open to renegotiations with central government.

What benefits could result from the Scrutiny Review?

Through an audit of the current systems of governance, risk management and control, identify as early as possible whether further mitigation is required in order to ensure the successful completion of this project. This is a very major project that the Council is undertaking involving other stakeholders and is going to have a significant impact of residents. O&S is in a position to scrutinise the background behind this and it will provide assurance to members and residents of that this project is best placed to complete successfully.

What level of impact will the Scrutiny Review have?

Substantial benefits community wide or for a significant proportion or section of the Community.	X
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.	X
Report and/or presentation.	X
Councillor time.	X
Portfolio Holder Involvement.	X
Expert or External Representatives participation.	X
Establishment of a Task Group.	X

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Site visits.	
Research and Evidence.	X
Consultation Exercise.	
Other	
Please add explanatory note for any resource selected above.	
<p>Sources of information and evidence should include all relevant Council and Executive papers, details of the HIF project itself including the bid document, the Homes England conditions, correspondence from stakeholders, communication to residents and the papers of the HIF Oversight Panel. It should also include reaching out to relevant experts and stakeholders.</p> <p>For the scrutiny review itself, no specific consultation is planned but the Residents Panel or community engagement panel could be involved.</p>	
Please add any further information that you think would be useful in the consideration of this Scrutiny Review Topic.	
<p>Risk analysis is critical for this topic and there is a high degree of public interest. It should be conducted on a timely basis including an early as possible completion of the audit review.</p>	

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.