

ARTICLE 8

8 Overview and scrutiny committees

Terms of reference

(1) The Council will appoint the overview and scrutiny committees specified in Schedules 1 and 2 to the *Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules* to discharge between them the functions conferred by section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000, namely –

- to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the executive;
- to make reports or recommendations to the Council or the Cabinet with respect to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the executive;
- to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are not the responsibility of the executive;
- to make reports or recommendations to the Council or the Cabinet with respect to the discharge of any functions which are not the responsibility of the executive;
- to make reports or recommendations to the Council or the Cabinet on matters which affect the borough or the inhabitants of the borough.

General role

(2) Within their terms of reference, overview and scrutiny committees will between them –

- review or scrutinise decisions or review and scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
- make reports or recommendations to the full Council or the Cabinet (or both) and to a joint committee, area assembly or area assembly co-ordinating group in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
- consider any matter affecting the borough or its inhabitants;
- exercise in the case of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board right to call-in for reconsideration decisions made but not yet implemented by the executive or an area assembly co-ordinating group (if applicable);
- under the Council's scheme for handling petitions,
 - i make reports or recommendations in response to petitions referred by the Council;
 - ii question senior officers in response to qualifying petitions holding officers to account;

- iii review the Council's response to petitions upon request by the petition organiser.

Policy development and review

(3) Overview and scrutiny committees may –

- assist the Council and the Cabinet in the development of its budget and policy framework by in-depth analysis of policy issues;
- conduct research and consult with local communities and others, in the analysis of policy issues and possible options;
- consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options;
- question members of the Cabinet and committees and chief officers about their views on issues and proposals affecting the borough; and
- liaise with other external organisations operating in the borough, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local communities are enhanced by collaborative working.

Scrutiny

(4) Overview and scrutiny committees may between them –

- review and scrutinise the decisions made by, and performance of, the executive and committees and council officers both in relation to specific decisions and generally;
- review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and particular service areas;
- question members of the Cabinet and committees and chief officers about their decisions and performance, whether generally (in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time) or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects;
- make recommendations to the Cabinet, the committees and the Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process;
- review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies (including health authorities) in the borough and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the particular overview and scrutiny committee and local people about their activities and performance;
- scrutinise issues affecting the well-being of the population of the borough
- question and gather evidence from any person (with their consent);
- consider any requests submitted by a member of the Council under the councillor call for action procedure.

Finance

(5) Overview and scrutiny committees may exercise overall responsibility for any finances made available to them.

Annual report

(6) The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board will report annually to the full Council on the operation of overview and scrutiny committees and make recommendations where appropriate for future work programmes and amended working methods.

Officers

(7) Overview and scrutiny committees may exercise overall responsibility for the work programme of the officers employed to support their work.

Proceedings of overview and scrutiny committees

(8) Overview and scrutiny committees will conduct their proceedings in accordance with the *Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules*.