

3.5 Overview and Scrutiny Committee: General Terms of Reference

3.5.1 This committee is appointed in accordance with the statutory requirements to achieve **political balance**. The **Chair and Vice Chair** of the Committee are appointed by Full Council at the Annual Meeting. The committee collectively discharge the functions conferred by Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000.

3.5.2 **Membership:** All Councillors except Members of the Executive may be members of the committee. However, no Member may be involved in scrutinising a decision in which they have been directly involved. The committee has 13 members (excluding co-opted members) who are elected councillors. Each member of the committee is required to complete in full an induction programme and undertake regular mandatory training. Any member not undertaking these training activities will be unable to serve (or continue to serve) on the committee until such time that the full training requirement has been met.

3.5.2 Areas of Work:

- (a) Sets its own work programmes;
- (b) Review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives and develop new policy recommendations for Executive and full Council approval;
- (c) Report annually to full Council on its workings and where appropriate, propose amendments in their working methods.

3.5.3 In doing so, the committee may:

- (a) make recommendations to the Executive (or Full Council if a Full Council responsibility) arising from its work as part of call in measures or policy development and service improvement;
- (b) appoint review / working groups to investigate specific time limited tasks and report back to it within an agreed time period;
- (c) conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options;
- (d) recommend to the Council the appointment of up to 5 co-optees (without voting rights) onto their committee or sub-committees;
- (e) consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options;
- (f) question Members of the Executive, committees and Chief Officers about their decisions, views on issues and proposals affecting the area or specific policy proposals and reviews;
- (g) ask witnesses to attend committee and informal meetings (and where appropriate require on provision of reasonable notice) to address them on any matter under consideration and may pay to any external advisers, assessors and witnesses reasonable expenses for doing so with the Team Leader (Democratic Services) authorised to approve the level of payment and make payments;

- (h) liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working;
- (i) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and local people about their activities and performance; and
- (j) if it, or the Chair of the Committee, or five members of the Committee considers that a key decision has been taken which was not included in the forward plan; or the subject of the general exception procedure; or the subject of an agreement with the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair, or the Chair/Vice-Chair of the Council:
 - to resolve that the Executive to submit a report to the Council within such reasonable time as the committee specifies; or
 - for the Chair of the Committee or any five members to request the Head of Paid Service to arrange for a report to be submitted on the matter to the Committee.