

# Review of effectiveness of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## February 2016

### Key

- ✓ Suggestion can be implemented into existing working practice.
- X This was discussed but the committee did not feel this would add value.

Feedback received	Status
<b>1. Committee Work Programme</b>	
a) Members of the Committee would like to see more challenge/review of/presentations of external organisations and key partners. Specific organisations mentioned were Severn Vale Housing Society, Fire Service and Healthwatch Gloucestershire.	✓
b) Very supportive of the updates given at Committee on Police and Crime Panel and Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee and this should continue.	✓
c) The Committee adds real value through its Task and Finish Review Working Groups and policy reviews. Two to three Working Groups per year can be accommodated.	✓
<b>2. Review of performance management information</b>	
a) Quarterly performance management information provided a good overview to Members on how well the Council is performing and should continue in its current format. Officers will look at further improvements to how it is presented in light of the new Council Plan.	✓
b) Where appropriate, give consideration to Lead Members attending Committee meetings where issues in their Portfolio have arisen.	✓
c) The financial position overview supporting the performance information was more detailed than previously reported. This current format was well received and should continue.	✓

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d) The potential of forming a Performance Management Sub-Group that could scrutinise the performance information in more detail and feed back to the main Committee was discussed. There was strong opinion regarding how this arrangement would work and it was felt the whole Committee should receive the information and be able to challenge.	X
<b>3. Choosing areas for review</b>	
a) A neighbouring Council includes within its annual report a form so that members of the public can put forward potential review subjects. Members felt this would not add value and could potentially lead to vexatious requests. Officers had contacted other Councils on this and confirmed there had been limited success.	X
b) Members agreed they need to keep eyes and ears open to things that might be coming up and not necessarily rely on Officers – horizon scanning.	✓
<b>4. The challenge role currently provided by the Committee</b>	
a) The potential for Lead Members to attend Overview and Scrutiny Committee and be challenged on their Portfolio – see 2b) above.	✓
b) A pre-briefing, immediately before the main Committee on key areas for challenge – it was acknowledged this should not become a Committee-type meeting in itself. Agreed to try as a pilot. An alternative may be to email Members with key areas for consideration.	✓
c) The critique that, generally, individual Members need to be more challenging and that, overall, the Committee, where relevant needs to show the attributes of a Select Committee. Members agreed for an independent person to watch and critique the workings of the Committee.	✓
d) The potential of changing the dynamics of challenge in relation to performance management. Performance management information could first be presented at Executive Committee with the decisions and response from that Committee then subject to scrutiny. Members strongly agreed that the current system works well.	X

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<b>5. Role as a 'community' Committee</b>	
a) The potential to take the committee out into the community, for example, holding meetings within other parts of the Borough was not strongly supported as this had been tried in the past but without great success.	X
b) There was recognition though that this would work well with regard to certain Working Groups, where members of the public may have an interest.	✓
<b>6. Training and development</b>	
a) All new Members to the Committee should receive an induction on the role of the Committee – this is 'one-off' action and has been completed. Members commented on how comprehensive induction had been.	✓
b) Training needs to be ongoing and not just at the induction stage.	✓
c) A quarterly bulletin on local and national scrutiny topics has been produced and issued to all members – feedback on this is welcomed.	✓
d) A link to the Centre for Public Scrutiny website has been sent to Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members so they can subscribe to alerts.	✓
e) Look to learn from others, for example, how other Councils undertake scrutiny – Members would be supportive of this but only if adds value. A Member suggestion to consult the facilitator who undertook the scrutiny training to advise on possible best practice Councils was supported.	✓