

Blackpool Council

10 September 2019

To: Councillors Mrs Callow JP, Collett, Galley, Hobson, Mitchell, Mrs Scott, Stansfield and Walsh

The above members are requested to attend the:

SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD

Thursday, 19 September 2019 at 6.00 pm
in Committee Room A, Blackpool Town Hall, Blackpool, FY1 1AH

A G E N D A

1 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests in the items under consideration and in doing so state:

(1) the type of interest concerned either a

- (a) personal interest
- (b) prejudicial interest
- (c) disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI)

and

(2) the nature of the interest concerned

If any member requires advice on declarations of interests, they are advised to contact the Head of Democratic Governance in advance of the meeting.

2 COUNCIL PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORTING (Pages 1 - 28)

To discuss the requirements of Scrutiny Members in the receipt of performance information relating to the Council Plan and key performance indicators for 2019/2020.

3 FORWARD PLAN (Pages 29 - 48)

To review the Forward Plan, October 2019 – January 2020 to determine areas for further scrutiny.

4 NEW STATUTORY SCRUTINY GUIDANCE (Pages 49 - 90)

To review the new statutory scrutiny guidance, identifying areas and initiatives for implementation in Blackpool.

5 SCRUTINY WORKPLAN UPDATE (Pages 91 - 106)

To review the work of the Scrutiny Leadership Board and the Scrutiny Committees, and to approve the Channel Shift Scrutiny Review Scoping Document and establish the review panel.

6 DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

To note the date and time of the next informal meeting of the Scrutiny Leadership Board as Tuesday, 29 October 2019.

Venue information:

First floor meeting room (lift available), accessible toilets (ground floor), no-smoking building.

Other information:

For queries regarding this agenda please contact Sharon Davis, 01253 477213, Tel: , e-mail

Copies of agendas and minutes of Council and committee meetings are available on the Council's website at www.blackpool.gov.uk.

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Report to: | SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD |
| Relevant Officer: | Kate Aldridge, Head of Delivery and Performance |
| Date of Meeting: | 19 September 2019 |

COUNCIL PLAN PERFORMANCE 2019/2020

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To discuss the requirements of Scrutiny Members in the receipt of performance information relating to the Council Plan and key performance indicators for 2019/2020.

2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 To identify the information required by Scrutiny Members and how it will be presented.

3.0 Reasons for recommendations:

3.1 To ensure the Board is carrying out its work efficiently and effectively.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? N/A

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council priorities are:

- The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool
- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

5.0 Background Information

5.1 Kate Aldridge, Head of Delivery and Performance will be in attendance to discuss with Members their requirements relating to the receipt of performance information

and key performance indicator data.

5.2 It is recognised that Scrutiny has a key role in holding to account performance against achieving the priorities identified within the Council Plan and also performance in relation to the identified key performance indicators. Members are asked to consider the way in which they wish to carry out this role.

5.3 Attached at Appendix 2(a) is the Council Plan 2019-2024 which contains the key priorities of the Council for consideration.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

List of Appendices:

Appendix 2(a): Council Plan 2019-2024

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

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Council Plan 2019 – 2024



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Foreword

In our introductions to the 2015-2020 Council Plan we described an organisation which had re-shaped its entire outlook to overcome some of the biggest budget cuts handed out by Central Government. We talked about taking tough spending decisions to change or secure much needed and respected services, but also the innovative thinking going on to open up new opportunities. The Plan was big on ideas and ambition, never straying from the idea that “Progress” – in spite of our financial and social context – should be our watchword.

Half way through delivering the plan, we reviewed how much we’d achieved so far, and took stock of the changing context in which we operate. It was also time to ask “What’s next?” With so many other great seaside resorts in Britain, what would keep Blackpool ahead of the pack, whilst making sure that everyone who lives here feels a real, lasting benefit from the work? This updated plan is our response to this review, and it takes forward our vision into the 2020s.

We are clear that the direction we took in 2015 remains the right one. With Blackpool still at the wrong end of many indicators measuring the strength of the economy, or health, we need to continue focussing on the things that matter – maximising economic growth and opportunity for everyone in the town, and creating stronger, more resilient communities. Some of the plan is about using programmes and projects we’ve already got in place to deliver more, faster. And some of it is about starting on new projects which fit with our vision and priorities.

Working in partnership is a growing theme of our approach to delivering more with less. For example, in October 2018, we launched the Blackpool Town Prospectus, developed with the private sector and one of the Prince of Wales’s charities Business In The Community. Working together we have identified a list of aspirational projects which will fundamentally change how Blackpool and the Fylde Coast works, looks and feels. Together, we will promote Blackpool’s cause across government and business, creating further opportunities to deliver on our vision and priorities. So whilst we’re delivering this updated plan, we’re also looking for further opportunities, partnerships, projects, initiatives, funding and support for the next steps.

Blackpool is the UK’s best family resort. Delivery of this plan will make it even better.



Cllr Simon Blackburn
Leader of the Council

Neil Jack
Chief Executive

Introduction

The pace of change in Blackpool is quickening. A modern beach resort with big city facilities is emerging. This plan contains details of a wave of exciting projects and initiatives to grow our economy and strengthen our communities. Our core priorities have not changed since our 2015 Council Plan, but our ambitions have grown and become ever more realistic.

We already delivered over £300m of investment in the visitor economy since the mid-2000's, arresting a decline in the number of staying visitors, and giving the private sector confidence to invest. We now have improved sea defences, a renewed tramway, new rolling stock and buses, a new promenade environment, and refurbishments to the Blackpool Tower and Winter Gardens. Furthermore, well over £100m of further investment is on its way, with a new conference centre, tram extension and new hotels currently coming out of the ground.

Our holistic approach has also seen effort and investment to diversify our employer base beyond tourism, pushing up average wages and reducing seasonal employment, with the co-creation of two Enterprise Zones in the wider Fylde Coast which seek to deliver 6,500 extra jobs. Hundreds of poor quality housing units have been demolished or refurbished, replaced by quality affordable units for rent and sale, whilst standards in the wider private sector have been driven up by a targeted approach to rogue landlords.

By building on our strengths, but nurturing emerging specialities, we aim to produce a well-rounded, resilient economy, with a variety of opportunities to suit workers of all skill levels, which both attracts staff and provides further opportunity for them to stay locally as their career develops.

In tandem with this, we have moved to develop our communities, helping them to get better at helping themselves. Two lottery-funded flagship programmes, the NSPCC-led A Better Start and the Council's HeadStart initiative have started to shift the perception of what life can be like in Blackpool, with community connectors empowering young families by bringing them together with services to improve nutrition, language skills and emotional development. Meanwhile, our teenagers are leading a "resilience revolution", working with us on a range of initiatives to make all 10-16 year olds better able to cope with their individual circumstances.

This focus on young people extends to their education. As an Opportunity Area, we are working with the Department for Education to ensure that the aspirations of our young people are raised through evidence-based approaches, and to ensure that our teaching provision is of the highest quality. This will enable our young people to aspire to further education and challenging careers, making the most of institutions like Blackpool and Fylde College's new Energy HQ, which will be crucial to meeting the future needs of our employers.

Blackpool is Britain's Number One family resort. This plan seeks to build on this position over the next five years, getting the town ready for even higher aspirations in the future.



Achievements since 2015

Economy

- Secured the status of Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone, which has already created and safeguarded over 700 jobs
- Won £18m of funding and started construction on the new £26m Winter Gardens Conference Centre
- Secured funding and started construction on the £23m tramway extension to Blackpool North Station
- Started delivery of the £7m Quality Corridors programme to improve key roads and streetscape in the town
- Captured and delivered over £10m of road bridge improvements, and undertook work to improve and stabilise Yeadon Way
- Gained national recognition for the town's commitment to customer service, after being awarded WorldHost Recognised Destination status, training 2500 staff over two years
- Fully allocated two rounds of the Business Loans Fund, with nearly £100m going into businesses in Blackpool, enabling them to grow and strengthen, and also facilitating the development of the Hampton by Hilton hotel in South Shore
- In 2017, Blackpool Transport served the highest number of passengers on the tramway in over 15 years (5.1 million), and introduced a ticketing app offering live travel information
- The LightPool project resulted in approximately 465,000 additional visitors to the Illuminations in 2016 alone
- My Blackpool Home has now delivered over 250 brand new affordable home for rent through the conversion of poor quality property, addressing some of our worse housing stock
- Secured an initial £6m towards the capital cost of the Blackpool Museum Project

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Achievements since 2015

Resilient Communities

- Delivered, in partnership with the NSPCC, A Better Start – with initiatives including Baby Steps, Family Nurse Partnership and Community Connectors promoting better parenting around language skills, social and emotional development, and nutrition
- Engaged 45 schools with our HeadStart Resilience Revolution, with 945 school staff now trained to help pupils make resilient moves to promote mental health
- Opened the Health and Social Care Careers Academy, supporting those beginning or wanting to advance their careers in the health and social care sectors, helping to ensure the sector can access the skills necessary to deliver changing care needs
- Launched The HealthWorks, bringing together employment, health and lifestyle advice to help local residents gain and sustain jobs, as well as improve their overall physical and mental health
- Our innovative work placement programme for students with disabilities, Project Search, is into its fifth year, and has enabled 20 interns to gain and maintain paid employment
- Delivered 191 new council homes at Queens Park on the site of the former tower blocks in Brunswick
- Improved property standards through rigorous enforcement and extension of our selective landlord licensing schemes
- £739,000 investment in Marton Mere Local Nature Reserve, safeguarding ecosystems and enabling safe access
- Improved accessibility, cleanliness and water quality along our coastline
- New gyms at Palatine and Moor Park, and a High Ropes adventure course at Stanley Park
- Completed sea defences at Anchorsholme, attracting £27 million of grant funding



Our Council Plan

Retaining our position as the UK's Number One family resort, with a thriving economy that supports a happy and healthy community who are proud of this unique town

Blackpool
Values: Accountability, Compassion, Fairness, Quality Services, Trustworthiness



The Economy

Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool



Visitor Experience:
Tourism & Culture



Enterprise, Skills &
Economic Inclusion



Improving Housing
Increasing Resilience



Infrastructure
& Regeneration



Communities

Creating stronger communities & increasing resilience



Health & Social Care



Young People



Safeguarding

Addressing **Economic** and **Health** Inequalities

A Resilient Organisation: Innovative, Efficient & Customer Focused, with great staff and strong governance

Working in partnership with our companies and other local organisations

Equalities: Fair- Treatment, diversity in decision-making celebration increased respect, a representative and understanding workforce

The Economy

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The site of the Airport Enterprise Zone, which will contribute to the creation of around 6,500 new jobs





The Economy: Maximise growth and opportunity across Blackpool

Our plans for the economy for 2019-2024 can afford to be increasingly ambitious, capitalising on our strong market position amongst seaside resorts, whilst continuing to diversify into new areas.

Much has been written about Blackpool's social and economic issues. We recognise that support is needed at all levels, from supporting people to gain confidence and enter or re-enter the workplace, right up to encouraging those with academic aptitude to raise their aspirations and qualification levels. We will deliver further tailored programmes, building on our existing provision to deal with the complex factors suppressing people's ability to achieve. All of this will be matched with the needs of companies seeking to grow.

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“ The Enterprise Zone will develop and safeguard skilled jobs ”

The next five years will see us delivering on our ambition to take our visitor offer well beyond the basics expected of any modern resort. We will open an exciting new museum for the town and commence delivery of a whole new world-class Leisure Quarter Blackpool Central – as well as opening our new conference centre, the biggest push yet to re-capture a larger slice of this burgeoning market. All this will bring extra visitors and spend, who will be able to get around the resort more easily thanks to investment in our transport infrastructure, and stay in an expanded range of high quality hotels as big brand names seek to capitalise on Blackpool's growth. And crucially, all of these new developments will create new jobs for local people.

Having now found its feet, the Enterprise Zone will continue to develop and safeguard skilled jobs, but the benefits of skilled work will be shared around the borough as the Talbot Gateway development moves into new phases of delivery. The renewal and creation of high quality affordable housing will enable us to retain more of the economic benefits of these jobs in the borough, as people choose to live and work in the town, further boosting the quality of our town centre offer.





The Economy: Visitor Experience – Tourism and Culture

By 2024, we will:

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Complete development of a new 21st century conference offer at the Winter Gardens, and increase numbers of new conferences.



Finalise design and funding, then deliver the Blackpool Museum project.



Implement a new model of funding and delivery to sustain the Illuminations, events programme and cultural services.



Deliver the first phase of a £300m investment into Blackpool Central, to include world class visitor attractions, including the UK's first flying theatre.





The Economy: Infrastructure and Regeneration

By 2024, we will:

Complete the tram extension, transport interchange and new 4* hotel at Blackpool North station.



Implement the Blackpool Enterprise Zone Delivery Plan, facilitating the growth of energy, aviation and food sectors.



Deliver extensions to the Central Business District at Talbot Gateway.



Further invest in highways, including completing the Quality Corridor programme, Yeadon Way upgrade and bridge renewal programme.





The Economy: Enterprise, Skills and Economic Inclusion

By 2024, we will:

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Get hundreds of people back into work via job schemes for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged, including HealthWorks and More Positive Together.



Support local businesses to grow and expand by maximising take-up of the Business Loans Fund.



Work with partners to deliver the Opportunity Area programme, raising attainment and aspirations of our young people.





The Economy: Improving Housing

By 2024, we will:

Deliver hundreds more affordable new homes, including the re-development of land at Grange Park and further properties at Foxhall Village.



Enable further housing delivery through pro-active assistance to developers, including use of CPO powers where necessary.



Enable My Blackpool Home to deliver at least an additional 455 new quality affordable homes for rent.



Communities





Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience

At the centre of life in Blackpool are our residents and our communities. Our aim continues to be on making life better for everyone, focussing on prevention more than support. Three flagship projects – A Better Start, HeadStart and most recently the Department for Education-funded Opportunity Area – all mark a decisive shift towards enabling future generations and creating the right conditions for their success.

We want to focus more on building on our assets, whilst providing core services for those most in need. This will allow us to manage our limited resources, but continue the move started in the last Council Plan towards starting a conversation with communities on how we can build a better town together, encouraging people to volunteer and take positive social action. Some of this is around creating the right conditions for community life and mental health to flourish – something our Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy will address through creating and restoring green spaces, linking

them together better to encourage their use.

Our health and social issues are well documented, and these must be addressed if we are to become truly resilient. Partnerships with independent projects such as Fulfilling Lives will tackle some of our most deep-seated social issues, providing intensive support for those with multiple complex needs around homelessness, reoffending, problematic substance misuse and mental ill health. But much of the effort will focus around our social care services, reducing the cost of delivery whilst improving

the outcomes for all. Over the period of the plan there will be local and national pressures and opportunities for adult social care that Blackpool will need to respond to. Our approach will be the same as the one we have adopted in the previous Council Plan. We will work closely with health services to challenge traditional ways of working, maximise the use of resources to support people in the community to be as independent as possible, make sure people who are reliant on services are safe and supported and work to ensure that people are able to play a meaningful part in their community.



“ Our aim continues to be on making life better for everyone, focussing on prevention



Communities: Young People

By 2024, we will:

Continue to implement the NSPCC-led A Better Start initiative, improving life chances for 0-3 year olds.



Improve the experiences and outcomes of young people in our services by improving relationships between organisations.



Facilitate a school led system which improves attainment at Key Stage 4.



Development of family hub model in local neighbourhoods for all age engagement and building community resilience.





Communities: Health and Social Care

By 2024, we will:

Implement a new approach to delivering smoking cessation support and initiatives in the town.



Shape the work of the Council towards delivering the Green and Blue Infrastructure strategy, greening the town.



Continue to increase numbers accessing drug and alcohol services at an earlier stage and sustaining a positive outcome.



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Communities: Safeguarding

By 2024, we will:

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Reduce numbers of Looked After Children in a safe, sustainable way through incremental improvements of the social care system.



Work in partnership across Blackpool to review our approach to delivering safeguarding and support for families.





Communities: Increasing Resilience

By 2024, we will:

Deliver whole system change by sustaining the HeadStart Resilience Revolution, increasing mental health resilience amongst 10-16 year olds across the town.

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Stabilise our communities through additional activity to regulate private sector housing, reducing supply and improving quality.



Improving the co-ordination of volunteers across the town.



Develop a placed-based approach to service delivery in community settings in partnership with public and voluntary sector organisations.



Addressing inequalities and promoting equality through our values

All Council staff are asked to share in some common values, which we adopted back in 2011. These are our principles for how our organisation engages with people. They influence how we deliver services, and help to create a positive experience for anyone who comes into contact with us.

Our values are:

- **Accountability:** We take responsibility for delivering on the promises we make, and can be challenged if we fall short.
- **Compassion:** We'll be caring and understanding when we listen to your concerns, and try to help even if we can't solve the problem ourselves. When we deliver services, we'll consider individual and community needs as much as possible
- **Quality:** We take pride in delivering services, and will always do this to the best of our abilities
- **Trustworthiness:** We will be honest with you about what we can and can't do and the decisions we make, only make promises we can keep, and make sure your information is kept confidential and securely
- **Fairness:** Everyone, regardless of their circumstances, will receive a service appropriate to their circumstances, which treats them with respect.

Closely linked to our values is our approach to fulfilling our legal obligations on equalities. We understand that fairness means making reasonable adjustments for people and groups so they can get access to services and support. Our approach to this is set out in our Equality Goals, which are reviewed every 4 years.

All new Council plans and strategies are reviewed to make sure they're tailored to the needs of groups with protected characteristics. Going beyond this, in the course of our work we also consider how to contribute to eliminating discrimination, harassment and victimisation; how to advance quality of opportunity; and how we can help different groups of people get along together. Our equality objectives aim to get more people to tell us they experience fair treatment by Council services; to make our workforce representative of our communities, with more people from diverse backgrounds involved in decision-making at every level; that equality and diversity is embedded in staff culture; and that we celebrate growing diversity and increase respect and understanding for all.



A platform to deliver: ensuring a resilient organisation

To deliver on our ambitions the Council needs to be efficient and resilient – able to withstand short term distractions and pressures, as well as ongoing reductions in the funding we have available. We've already developed different ways of working, maximising our chances of achieving our outcomes. Examples of this include our Wholly-Owned Companies, bidding for funding, working in partnership, and making savings whilst transforming our services.

The Council has bought or retained ownership of companies where it is in the town's best interests for us to do so. Companies can be more flexible in how they operate, and have greater flexibility to earn income than the Council. We can also support them through loans and preferential rates which benefit both organisations. This has led to unparalleled investment in our bus fleet, with plans to go all-electric in the coming years; the Sandcastle Waterpark operating at maximum capacity in high season and looking at options to expand; the Winter Gardens attracting new conference trade; our housing companies re-shaping our physical environment with quality new builds and conversions; and being able to influence the development of the Enterprise Zone by buying the companies operating Blackpool Airport. We will continue to work in partnership with our companies, helping them to seek and deliver new opportunities for the benefit of the town.

Most of our resilience comes from a planned approach to dealing with reductions to our funding. We will have made over 150m of savings by 2020 compared to 2010, through a combination of technical savings, policy changes, service transformations and reductions, moving more of our services online, generating more income, encouraging voluntary activity and social action, and measures to reduce demand on our services in favour of preventative and alternative delivery approaches.



How we'll deliver on our commitments

To make sure we monitor how well we're delivering this Council Plan, we have developed a new Performance Management Framework, allowing us to understand how we're doing against our priorities, identify areas of underperformance, and move resources around as needed. It makes sure that staff are accountable for how well we're doing.

Council performance indicators are monitored and scrutinised quarterly, with an annual report analysing performance against targets and similar authorities. Our approach follows the industry-recognised "Plan-Do-Review-Revise" cycle, which provides structure around the process undertaken annually and ensures that lessons are learned, to feed back into future action planning activity.

In late 2017 we reformed the performance monitoring of our Companies through a new Shareholder Advisory Board. As well as regularly reviewing the overall performance of our companies, the Board ensures that our companies contribute to the wider strategic vision for the town.

Within the Council, directorate and departmental business plan set out the actions described in this plan in more detail, with named officers personally responsible for delivering actions within the agreed timescales and resources. These plans are monitored internally by Councillors and Officers, and considered as part of reports to the Overview and Scrutiny committee, opening up discussions about performance.

Beyond the scope of the Council Plan, further arrangements exist to monitor the day-to-day activity of Departments to deliver statutory responsibilities, with Departmental Management Teams reviewing further performance indicators to check progress against their own Business Plans and Service Plans. These all link down to the individual activity of staff identified through our Performance Appraisal process.



To ensure our services are accessible to all, documents prepared by Blackpool Council are available in large print, Braille, on audio-cassette or computer disk upon request. We can also provide help for British Sign Language users and provide information in other languages. Please ask for details or telephone 477117.

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - SUMMARY OF KEY DECISIONS

(OCTOBER 2019 TO JANUARY 2020)

*** Denotes New Item**

| Anticipated Date of Decision | Matter for Decision | Decision Reference | Decision Taker | Relevant Cabinet Member |
|------------------------------|---|--------------------|----------------|-------------------------|
| October 2019 | Town Centre Investment(this item to be considered in private by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) | 1/2018 | Executive | Cllr Smith |
| October 2019 | Applications for Business Loans above £500,000. (this item to be considered in private by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) | 2/2018 | Executive | Cllr Blackburn |
| October 2019 | To agree strategic acquisitions in or adjoining the Enterprise Zone (this item to be considered in private by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) | 3/2018 | Executive | Cllr Smith |
| October 2019 | Lancashire and Blackpool Flood Risk Management Strategy | 11/2018 | Executive | Cllr Jackson |

| Anticipated Date of Decision | Matter for Decision | Decision Reference | Decision Taker | Relevant Cabinet Member |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| October 2019 | The School Organisation Plan 2020-2028 addresses the Council's statutory duty to ensure there is sufficient provision of school places for young people within the borough. It looks at existing school provision in the town and pupil projections over the next several years, and makes recommendations regarding the strategic approach to managing the supply and demand for places over the life of the plan. | 13/2019 | Executive | Cllr Benson |
| October 2019 | The implementation of a regional adoption agency with Lancashire County Council in November 2019, in accordance with the regionalising adoption agenda | 16/2019 | Executive | Cllr Cain |
| October 2019 | Review of residential children's home provision | 17/2019 | Executive | Cllr Cain |
| October 2019 | Sale of land in the North of Blackpool (this item to be considered in private by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) | 18/2019 | Executive | Cllr Smith |

| Anticipated Date of Decision | Matter for Decision | Decision Reference | Decision Taker | Relevant Cabinet Member |
|-------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| October 2019 | To approve investment for the direct development of a 40,000 sqft industrial property at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone. (this item to be considered in private by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information | 19/2019 | Executive | Cllr Smith |
| October 2019 | Libraries Ambition Plan (2019-2024) | 20/2019 | Executive | Cllr Campbell |
| *October 2019 | To agree the 2019/2022 Community Safety Plan and the priorities within the plan to be addressed by the Community Safety Partnership as identified by the Strategic Assessment (Crime and Disorder Audit) | 21/2019 | Council on recommendation of Executive | Cllr Campbell |
| *October 2019 | To agree the 2019/2022 Alcohol Strategy | 22/2019 | Executive | Cllr Williams |
| *October 2019 | To agree the 2019/2022 Drug Strategy | 23/2019 | Executive | Cllr Williams |
| *October 2019 | Approval for Prudential Borrowing to develop a soft play centre and café facility within Blackpool Sports Centre, to complement the existing parks and leisure facilities. | 24/2019 | Executive | Cllr Kirkland |
| *December 2019 | Investment Strategy for Council Homes. | 25/2019 | Executive | Cllr Brookes |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for Decision Ref N° 1/2018 | Town Centre Investment(this item to be considered in private by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) |
| Decision making Individual or Body | Executive |
| Relevant Portfolio Holder | Councillor Mark Smith, Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Job Creation |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | Senior Officers |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | None Applicable |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | Report |
| Name and address of responsible officer | Alan Cavill, Director of Director of Communications and Engagement e-mail: alan.cavill@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 47 7006 |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for Decision Ref N° 2/2018 | <p>To consider any applications for Business Loans from the Council's Business Loan Fund that exceed the key decision threshold.</p> <p>If any such applications are received the Director of Finance will present the application and a report to the next meeting of the Executive.</p> <p>(this item to be considered in private by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)</p> |
| Decision making Individual or Body | Executive |
| Relevant Portfolio Holder | Councillor Simon Blackburn, Leader of the Council |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | N/A |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | N/A |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | Report of the Director of Resources Loan application |
| Name and address of responsible officer | Steve Thompson, Director of Resources, Resources Directorate, Blackpool Council, Number 1 Bickerstaffe Square, Talbot Road, Blackpool, FY1 3AH e-mail:steve.thompson@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 478505 |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for Decision Ref N° 3/2018 | To agree strategic acquisitions in the Enterprise Zone (this item to be considered in private by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) |
| Decision making Individual or Body | Executive |
| Relevant Portfolio Holder | Councillor Mark Smith, Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Job Creation |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | Fylde Borough Council (for any acquisitions that fall within their boundary) Commercially confidential and sensitive. |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | N/A |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | Report(s) supported by External Valuations and Justification report and Enterprise Zone Masterplan. |
| Name and address of responsible officer | Alan Cavill, Director of Director of Communications and Engagement Alan.Cavill@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 477006 |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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|--|--|
| Matter for decision Ref 11/2018 | Lancashire and Blackpool Flood Risk Management Strategy |
| Decision making individual or body | Executive |
| Relevant Cabinet Member | Councillor Fred Jackson, Cabinet Member for Environment, Transport and Climate Change |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | Relevant stakeholders and interested parties Neighbouring Councils |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | Representations were sought in writing by 1 February 2018 |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | Executive Report Draft Strategy |
| Name and address of responsible officer | John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services John.blackledge@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 478400 |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for Decision Ref N° 13/2019 | The School Organisation Plan 2020-2028 addresses the Council's statutory duty to ensure there is sufficient provision of school places for young people within the borough. It looks at existing school provision in the town and pupil projections over the next several years, and makes recommendations regarding the strategic approach to managing the supply and demand for places over the life of the plan. |
| Decision making Individual or Body | Executive |
| Relevant Portfolio Holder | Councillor Kath Benson - Cabinet Member for Schools, Education and Aspiration |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | Blackpool schools, academies, and multi-academy trusts |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | By e-mail to hilary.wood@blackpool.gov.uk before 19 July 2019 |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | Report plus School Organisation Plan 2020-2028 |
| Name and address of responsible officer | Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services, Blackpool Council, Number 1 Bickerstaffe Square, Talbot Road, Blackpool, FY1 3AH. e-mail: diane.booth@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 476558 |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for decision Ref No: 16/2019 | To approve the implementation of a regional adoption agency with Lancashire County Council in November 2019, in accordance with DfE's regionalizing adoption agenda. This means transferring of staff and financial resources to Lancashire County Council as the host to deliver Adoption services. All local authorities must be part of a Regional Adoption Agency by 2020. |
| Decision making individual or body | Executive |
| Relevant Cabinet Member | Councillor Graham Cain (Deputy Leader (Children)) |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | Adopters and staff have been consulted on the design of the RAA over the past 12 months. The project team have also engaged with adopted children and birth families |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | Members of the public can make representations to the Executive. However, adopter, birth families and adopted children have been consulted. |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | Report accompanied by legal and financial agreement |
| Name and address of responsible officer | Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services, Blackpool Council, Number 1 Bickerstaffe Square, Talbot Road, Blackpool, FY1 3AH. e-mail:diane.booth@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 476558 |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for decision Ref No: 17/2019 | A review of residential children's home provision is taking place to inform the Council of the future need and shape of residential provision within Blackpool. This review has been commissioned independently to look at: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present and future projected demand/need.• Configuration of services to meet projected demand/need based on our model of practice and principles in respect to care for children and young people.• Future delivery of services, including reviewing both in-house and external provision in respect to the meeting of demand/need and value for money in line with present and future framework costs. |
| Decision making individual or body | Executive |
| Relevant Cabinet Member | Councillor Graham Cain (Deputy Leader (Children)) |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | Service users and staff will be consulted following Cabinet Member decision PH41/2019 to temporarily close 331 Bispham Road. |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | Members of the public can make representations to the Executive. |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | Report |
| Name and address of responsible officer | Diane Booth, Director of Children's Services, Blackpool Council, Number 1 Bickerstaffe Square, Talbot Road, Blackpool, FY1 3AH. e-mail:diane.booth@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 476558 |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for decision Ref No: 18/2019 | Release of land in north Blackpool for development of new homes (this item to be considered in private by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) |
| Decision making individual or body | Executive |
| Relevant Cabinet Member | Councillor Mark Smith, Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Job Creation |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | Alan Cavill – Director of Communications and Regeneration Nick Gerrard – Growth and Prosperity Programme Director Growth and Prosperity Board One Public Estate Cabinet Office Ministry of Communities Housing and Local Government |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | Not applicable |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | Report and plan of site |
| Name and address of responsible officer | Alan Cavill – Director of Communications and Regeneration e-mail: alan.cavill@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 477006 |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for decision Ref No: 19/2019 | To approve investment for the direct development of a 40,000 sqft industrial property at Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone (this item to be considered in private by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) |
| Decision making individual or body | Executive |
| Relevant Cabinet Member | Councillor Mark Smith, Cabinet Member for Business, Enterprise and Job Creation |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | Internally those involved in the Growth and Prosperity project. |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | Not applicable |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | Report and plan of site |
| Name and address of responsible officer | Alan Cavill – Director of Communications and Regeneration e-mail: alan.cavill@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 477006 |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for decision Ref No: 20/2019 | Libraries Ambition Plan (2019-2024) Blackpool Libraries have undertaken a robust programme of research and consultation over recent months to develop an ambitious 5-year plan that will see Libraries making a significant contribution to key corporate priorities with modest additional investment (The Plan and supporting budget are being brought for decision). |
| Decision making individual or body | Executive |
| Relevant Cabinet Member | Councillor Gillian Campbell Deputy Leader (Tourism and Place) |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | <p>An extensive amount of research has already been undertaken as part of the Libraries Ambition Plan programme, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents street survey (575+ people) • Customer focus groups/interviews • Partners and Stakeholder engagement workshop (June 2019) • Strategic discussions with Public Health, Children’s, Better Start, Headstart, Inter faith forum, Economy and Culture management team • Review of Libraries customer data • Mosaic analysis of users and non-users per library • CIPFA benchmarking (national, regional and benchmarking group) • Visits/discussions with Head of Services in other authorities • LGA/ACE Peer Challenge (June 2019) <p>Additionally, discussions have been ongoing with the Portfolio holder for Libraries throughout the research phase. Ward Councillors are aware that the service has been undertaking a strategic review/consultation on Libraries. And, the Plan is due to be discussed by Scrutiny committee on 18 September 2019</p> |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | Open surveys and discussions have been ongoing throughout the process, and any feedback will be considered through to the end of September 2019 (to be directed to Head of Service, contact details below). |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | Covering report, with the following appendices: Libraries Peer Challenge - Final report Libraries Ambition Plan - Research headlines Blackpool Libraries Ambition Plan - Final draft Blackpool Libraries Ambition Plan – Overview version Libraries Ambition Plan - Investment plan |

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| Name and address of responsible officer | Mark McCree, Head of Libraries e-mail: mark.mccree@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 478010 Alan Cavill, Director of Communications and Regeneration e-mail: alan.cavill@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 477006 |
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EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for decision *Ref 21/2019 | To agree the 2019/2022 Community Safety Plan and the priorities within the plan to be addressed by the Community Safety Partnership as identified by the Strategic Assessment (Crime and Disorder Audit) |
| Decision making individual or body | Council on recommendation of Executive |
| Relevant Cabinet Member | Councillor Gillian Campbell, Deputy Leader of the Council and Chair of the Blackpool Community Safety Partnership |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | In line with the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, as amended by following Acts, once the priorities for the Community Safety Plan were identified by the Strategic Assessment (Crime and Disorder Audit), members of the public were consulted during November, December 2018 and January 2019 on the proposed priorities through a survey which took place in the town centre. During the same period an article was also published on the winter edition of "Your Blackpool", so that all those receiving the publication were provided with an opportunity to comments on the priorities. |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | The survey and the consultation on "Your Blackpool" have both been carried out and were completed in February 2019. The outcomes of both exercises was that the priorities were supported by those consulted, and hence the Community Safety Plan has been developed accordingly. |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | The 2019/2022 Community Safety Plan. |
| Name and address of responsible officer | Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health. e-mail: arif.rajpura@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: 01253 47 6367 |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for decision *Ref 22/2019 | To agree the 2019/2022 Alcohol Strategy |
| Decision making individual or body | Executive |
| Relevant Cabinet Member | Councillor Lynn Williams, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | The Alcohol Strategy Steering Group |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | Members of the public are not normally consulted on the Alcohol Strategy, although membership of the Alcohol Strategy Steering group includes members of the public. |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | The 2019/2022 Alcohol Strategy |
| Name and address of responsible officer | Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health. e-mail: arif.rajpura@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: 01253 47 6367 |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for decision *Ref 23/2019 | To agree the 2019/2022 Drug Strategy |
| Decision making individual or body | Executive |
| Relevant Cabinet Member | Councillor Lynn Williams, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | The Drug and Alcohol Managers group |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | Members of the public are not normally consulted on Drug Strategies, although members of the Lived Experience Team are members of the Drug and Alcohol Managers Group |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | The 2019/2022 Drugs Strategy |
| Name and address of responsible officer | Dr Arif Rajpura, Director of Public Health. e-mail: arif.rajpura@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: 01253 47 6367 |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for decision *Ref 24/2019 | Approval for prudential borrowing to develop a soft play centre and café facility within Blackpool Sports Centre, to complement the existing parks and leisure facilities. |
| Decision making individual or body | Executive |
| Relevant Cabinet Member | Councillor Maria Kirkland, Cabinet Member for Third Sector Engagement and Leisure Services |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | October 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | Consultation with the main groups affected will be carried as detailed within the report. |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | Representations can be made to the service directly. |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | Executive report and appendix detailing estimated build costs and income projections. |
| Name and address of responsible officer | John Blackledge, Director of Community and Environmental Services John.blackledge@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 47 8400 |

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN - KEY DECISION:

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| Matter for decision *Ref 25/2019 | Investment Strategy for Council Homes. An updated plan for capital investment over the next 3-5 years, including investment in existing Council homes, plans for new Council house building, and approval to start buying back some homes sold in the past through the Right to Buy. |
| Decision making individual or body | Executive |
| Relevant Cabinet Member | Councillor Neal Brookes, Housing and Welfare Reform |
| Date on which or period within which decision is to be made | December 2019 |
| Who is to be consulted and how | Blackpool Coastal Housing Board |
| How representations are to be made and by what date | To Head of Housing by end of November 2019 |
| Documents to be submitted to the decision maker for consideration | Report, and a summary of the financial position of the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan |
| Name and address of responsible officer | Andrew Foot, Head of Housing e-mail: andrew.foot@blackpool.gov.uk Tel: (01253) 476339 |

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| Report to: | SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD |
| Relevant Officer: | Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager |
| Date of Meeting | 19 September 2019 |

NEW STATUTORY SCRUTINY GUIDANCE

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To review the new statutory scrutiny guidance, identifying areas and initiatives for implementation in Blackpool.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 To identify changes required to the scrutiny function at Blackpool in light of the new statutory scrutiny guidance.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure the scrutiny function at Blackpool is efficient and effective.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 No changes to be made based on the guidance.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priorities are:

- The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool
- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1 The new statutory scrutiny guidance was published in May 2019 and is applicable to all local authorities. The full guidance is attached at Appendix 4(a), however, a summary of the key areas and points is contained within the table below along with potential recommendations or suggested improvements to be implemented.

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| Introduction and Context | |
| <p>Effective overview and scrutiny should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide constructive ‘critical friend’ challenge; • Amplify the voices and concerns of the public; • Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role; and • Drive improvement in public services. | |
| Culture | |
| <p>The prevailing organisational culture, behaviours and attitudes of an authority will largely determine whether its scrutiny function succeeds or fails. While everyone in an authority can play a role in creating an environment conducive to effective scrutiny, it is important that this is led and owned by members, given their role in setting and maintaining the culture of an authority.</p> <p>Creating a strong organisational culture supports scrutiny work that can add real value by, for example, improving policy-making and the efficient delivery of public services. In contrast, low levels of support for and engagement with the scrutiny function often lead to poor quality and ill-focused work that serves to reinforce the perception that it is of little worth or relevance.</p> <p>Members and senior officers should note that the performance of the scrutiny function is not just of interest to the authority itself. Its effectiveness, or lack thereof, is often considered by external bodies such as regulators and inspectors, and highlighted in public reports, including best value inspection reports. Failures in scrutiny can therefore help to create a negative public image of the work of an authority as a whole.</p> | <p>Culture was also a focus of the North West Employer’s Scrutiny Review.</p> <p>Recommendations have been implemented to raise the profile including reporting to Council and Corporate Leadership Team and building the relationship between the Executive and Scrutiny. Scrutiny has been referenced in Ofsted inspection reports of Blackpool services.</p> |
| How to establish a strong organisational culture | |
| <p>Recognising scrutiny’s legal and democratic legitimacy it is a statutory requirement for all authorities operating executive arrangements. Councillors have a unique legitimacy derived from their being democratically elected. The insights that they can bring by having this close connection to local people are part of what gives scrutiny its value.</p> | |

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| <p>Identifying a clear role and focus i.e. a niche within which it can clearly demonstrate it adds value. Therefore, prioritisation is necessary to ensure the scrutiny function concentrates on delivering work that is of genuine value and relevance to the work of the wider authority. Authorities should ensure a clear division of responsibilities between the scrutiny function and the audit function. While it is appropriate for scrutiny to pay due regard to the authority's financial position, this will need to happen in the context of the formal audit role. The authority's section 151 officer should advise scrutiny on how to manage this dynamic.</p> | <p>The Scrutiny Leadership Board has a key role in co-ordinating work and each Committee has undertaken a workplanning workshop to identify topics.</p> |
| <p>Ensuring early and regular engagement between the executive and scrutiny - authorities should ensure early and regular discussion takes place between scrutiny and the executive, especially regarding the latter's future work programme.</p> | <p>Chairs/Vice Chairs to ensure regular dialogue. Engagement at Scrutiny Leadership Board.</p> |
| <p>Managing disagreement - effective scrutiny involves looking at issues that can be politically contentious. It is therefore inevitable that, at times, an executive will disagree with the findings or recommendations of a scrutiny committee. It is the job of both the executive and scrutiny to work together to reduce the risk of this happening, and authorities should take steps to predict, identify and act on disagreement. One way in which this can be done is via an 'executive-scrutiny protocol' which can help define the relationship between the two and mitigate any differences of opinion before they manifest themselves in unhelpful and unproductive ways.</p> | <p>Executive/Scrutiny protocol is currently being revised.</p> |
| <p>Providing the necessary support - Support should also be given by members and senior officers to scrutiny committees and their support staff to access information held by the authority and facilitate discussions with representatives of external bodies. The authority should consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny's legal powers and responsibilities; • The particular role and remit scrutiny will play in the authority; • The training requirements of scrutiny members and support officers, particularly the support needed to ask effective questions of the executive and other key partners, and make effective recommendations; • The need for ad hoc external support where expertise does not exist in the council; • Effectively-resourced scrutiny has been shown to add value to the work of authorities, | <p>Introduction to scrutiny training has been held as part of the induction process. Specific sessions will be held on Children's Services, Adult Services, Health Scrutiny and Financial Scrutiny in 2019. Specialist Scrutiny Chairs training was also held, although not well</p> |

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| <p>improving their ability to meet the needs of local people; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively-resourced scrutiny can help policy formulation and so minimise the need for call-in of executive decisions. | <p>attended. Chairs are invited to take part in the Member Scrutiny North West Network.</p> |
| <p>Ensuring impartial advice from officers – authorities, particularly senior officers, should ensure all officers are free to provide impartial advice to scrutiny committees. This is fundamental to effective scrutiny. Of particular importance is the role played by ‘statutory officers’ – the monitoring officer, the section 151 officer and the head of paid service, and where relevant the statutory scrutiny officer. These individuals have a particular role in ensuring that timely, relevant and high-quality advice is provided to scrutiny.</p> | |
| <p>Communicating scrutiny’s role and purpose to the wider authority – the scrutiny function can often lack support and recognition within an authority because there is a lack of awareness among both members and officers about the specific role it plays, which individuals are involved and its relevance to the authority’s wider work. Authorities should, therefore, take steps to ensure all members and officers are made aware of the role the scrutiny committee plays in the organisation, its value and the outcomes it can deliver, the powers it has, its membership and, if appropriate, the identity of those providing officer support.</p> | <p>Members to consider if any further action can be taken to further promote the role and purpose of scrutiny. Scrutiny Manager will be attending department meetings and CLT to raise profile.</p> |
| <p>Maintaining the interest of full Council in the work of the scrutiny committee – part of communicating scrutiny’s role and purpose to the wider authority should happen through the formal, public role of full Council – particularly given that scrutiny will undertake valuable work to highlight challenging issues that an authority will be facing and subjects that will be a focus of full Council’s work. Authorities should therefore take steps to ensure full Council is informed of the work the scrutiny committee is doing.</p> | <p>Reporting to Council two times per year by the Chair of the Scrutiny Leadership Board.</p> |
| <p>Communicating scrutiny’s role to the public – authorities should ensure scrutiny has a profile in the wider community. Consideration should be given to how and when to engage the authority’s communications officers, and any other relevant channels, to understand how to get that message across.</p> | <p>To be progressed further.</p> |

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| <p>Ensuring scrutiny members are supported in having an independent mindset – formal committee meetings provide a vital opportunity for scrutiny members to question the executive and officers. Inevitably, some committee members will come from the same political party as a member they are scrutinising and might well have a long-standing personal, or familial, relationship with them. Scrutiny members should bear in mind, however, that adopting an independent mind-set is fundamental to carrying out their work effectively. In practice, this is likely to require scrutiny chairs working proactively to identify any potentially contentious issues and plan how to manage them.</p> | |
| <p>Selecting Committee Members</p> | |
| <p>Selecting the right members to serve on scrutiny committees is essential if those committees are to function effectively. Where a committee is made up of members who have the necessary skills and commitment, it is far more likely to be taken seriously by the wider authority.</p> <p>Members invariably have different skill-sets. What an authority must consider when forming a committee is that, as a group, it possesses the requisite expertise, commitment and ability to act impartially to fulfil its functions.</p> <p>Selecting a Chair The Chair plays a leadership role on a scrutiny committee as they are largely responsible for establishing its profile, influence and ways of working.</p> <p>Chairs should pay special attention to the need to guard the committee’s independence. Importantly, however, they should take care to avoid the committee being, and being viewed as, a de facto opposition to the executive.</p> <p>Training Authorities should ensure committee members are offered induction when they take up their role and ongoing training so they can carry out their responsibilities effectively. Authorities should pay attention to the need to ensure committee members are aware of their legal powers, and how to prepare for and ask relevant questions at scrutiny sessions.</p> | <p>Job role profiles for Scrutiny Members and Chairs/Vice Chairs were provided to political groups following the election.</p> <p>Induction training has been held and there is an ongoing programme of scrutiny training.</p> <p>Appointments are currently being sought for the statutory co-opted members for the education and consideration is being given through the scope of each scrutiny panel of the representatives that</p> |

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| <p>While members and their support officers will often have significant local insight and an understanding of local people and their needs, the provision of outside expertise can be invaluable. (Co-opted Members or independent external advisers).</p> | <p>could be invited to attend.</p> |
| <p>Power to access information</p> | |
| <p>A scrutiny committee needs access to relevant information the authority holds, and to receive it in good time, if it is to do its job effectively. This need is recognised in law, with members of scrutiny committees enjoying powers to access information. In particular, regulations give enhanced powers to a scrutiny member to access exempt or confidential information.</p> <p>As committees can meet in closed session, commercial confidentiality should not preclude the sharing of information. Authorities should note, however, that the default for meetings should be that they are held in public</p> <p>When considering what information scrutiny needs in order to carry out its work, scrutiny members and the executive should consider scrutiny’s role and the legal rights that committees and their individual members have, as well as their need to receive timely and accurate information to carry out their duties effectively.</p> <p>Scrutiny members should have access to a regularly available source of key information about the management of the authority – particularly on performance, management and risk. Where this information exists, and scrutiny members are given support to understand it, the potential for what officers might consider unfocused and unproductive requests is reduced as members will be able to frame their requests from a more informed position.</p> <p>The law recognises that there might be instances where it is legitimate for an authority to withhold information and places a requirement on the executive to provide the scrutiny committee with a written statement setting out its reasons for that decision¹³. However, members of the executive and senior officers should take particular care to avoid refusing requests, or limiting the information they provide, for reasons of party political or reputational expediency.</p> | <p>The Forward Plan will be circulated upon publication to all scrutiny members with an invitation to request additional information on any of the decisions to be taken.</p> <p>A report will be received by the SLB regarding receipt of key performance management information. Members to determine how they wish to review and scrutinise the data.</p> |

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| <p>Seeking information from external organisations</p> <p>Scrutiny members should also consider the need to supplement any authority-held information they receive with information and intelligence that might be available from other sources, and should note in particular their statutory powers to access information from certain external organisations.</p> <p>When asking an external organisation to provide documentation or appear before it, and where that organisation is not legally obliged to do either, scrutiny committees should consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to explain the purpose of scrutiny • The benefits of an informal approach • How to encourage compliance with a request • Who to approach | <p>A 'Guide to Scrutiny' is being developed which will include a section on input from external organisations.</p> |
| <p>Planning work</p> | |
| <p>Effective scrutiny should have a defined impact on the ground, with the committee making recommendations that will make a tangible difference to the work of the authority. To have this kind of impact, scrutiny committees need to plan their work programme, i.e. draw up a long-term agenda and consider making it flexible enough to accommodate any urgent, short-term issues that might arise during the year.</p> <p>Authorities with multiple scrutiny committees sometimes have a separate work programme for each committee. Where this happens, consideration should be given to how to co-ordinate the various committees' work to make best use of the total resources available.</p> <p>Scrutiny works best when it has a clear role and function. This provides focus and direction. While scrutiny has the power to look at anything which affects 'the area, or the area's inhabitants', authorities will often find it difficult to support a scrutiny function that carries out generalised oversight across the wide range of issues experienced by local people, particularly in the context of partnership working. Prioritisation is necessary, which means that there might be things that, despite being important, scrutiny will not be able to look at.</p> | <p>Each Committee held a workplanning workshop and the Scrutiny Leadership Board will be taking a coordinating approach to the workplans. Each workplan was developed in a slightly different way with some seeking input from the Executive, officers and partners.</p> <p>Members may wish to consider introducing a consistent approach to</p> |

Who to speak to

- The public – input through Councillors who have conversations with constituents
- The authority's partners – public bodies, voluntary groups
- The Executive - should not direct scrutiny's work, but conversations will help scrutiny members better understand how their work can be designed to align with the best opportunities to influence the authority's wider work.

Information sources

Scrutiny will need access to relevant information to inform its work programme. The type of information will depend on the specific role and function scrutiny plays within the authority, but might include:

- Performance information from across the authority and its partners;
- Finance and risk information from across the authority and its partners;
- Corporate complaints information, and aggregated information from political groups about the subject matter of members' surgeries;
- Business cases and options appraisals (and other planning information) for forthcoming major decisions. This information will be of particular use for pre-decision scrutiny; and
- Reports and recommendations issued by relevant ombudsmen, especially the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Shortlisting topics

Approaches to shortlisting topics should reflect scrutiny's overall role in the authority. This will require the development of bespoke, local solutions, however when considering whether an item should be included in the work programme, the kind of questions a scrutiny committee should consider might include:

- Do we understand the benefits scrutiny would bring to this issue?
- How could we best carry out work on this subject?
- What would be the best outcome of this work?
- How would this work engage with the activity of the executive and other decision-makers, including partners?

workplanning across the Committees for future years bearing in mind the suggestions of who to speak to and information sources to consider contained within the guidance.

No scoring system was used in developing the workplans, however, a scrutiny review checklist is in operation for suggestions made throughout the year.

Members may wish to consider establishing a

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| <p>Some authorities use scoring systems to evaluate and rank work programme proposals. If these are used to provoke discussion and debate, based on evidence, about what priorities should be, they can be a useful tool. Others take a looser approach. Whichever method is adopted, a committee should be able to justify how and why a decision has been taken to include certain issues and not others.</p> <p>Scrutiny members should accept that shortlisting can be difficult; scrutiny committees have finite resources and deciding how these are best allocated is tough. They should understand that, if work programming is robust and effective, there might well be issues that they want to look at that nonetheless are not selected.</p> | <p>more definitive system for work topic selection for future years.</p> |
| <p>Carrying out work</p> | |
| <p>Selected topics can be scrutinised in several ways, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a single item on a committee agenda • At a single meeting • At a task and finish group of two or three meetings • Via a longer term task and finish review • By establishing a standing panel <p>Evidence sessions</p> <p>Good preparation is a vital part of conducting effective evidence sessions. Members should have a clear idea of what the committee hopes to get out of each session and appreciate that success will depend on their ability to work together on the day. Chairs play a vital role in leading discussions on objective-setting and ensuring all members are aware of the specific role each will play during the evidence session.</p> <p>Recommendations should be evidence-based and SMART, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed. Where appropriate, committees may wish to consider sharing them in draft with interested parties. Committees should bear in mind that often six to eight recommendations are sufficient to enable the authority to focus its response, although there may be specific circumstances in which more might be appropriate.</p> | <p>At Blackpool a wide variety of ways of scrutiny are undertaken dependent on the subject matter.</p> <p>The Chairs training held in Jun 2019 covered the role of Chairs as a leader of scrutiny.</p> |

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 Appendix 4(a) Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities.

8.0 Legal considerations:

8.1 The new guidance is statutory guidance. Scrutiny is a statutory function in any authority operating an Executive decision making structure.

9.0 Human resources considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Equalities considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Financial considerations:

11.1 Consideration must be given to the level of resource available to support an increase in scrutiny work.

12.0 Risk management considerations:

12.1 The effectiveness, or lack thereof of scrutiny, is often considered by external bodies such as regulators and inspectors, and highlighted in public reports, including best value inspection reports. Failures in scrutiny can therefore help to create a negative public image of the work of an authority as a whole.

13.0 Ethical considerations:

13.1 None.

14.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

14.1 None.

15.0 Background papers:

15.1 None.



Ministry of Housing,
Communities &
Local Government

Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities



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Ministerial Foreword

The role that overview and scrutiny can play in holding an authority's decision-makers to account makes it fundamentally important to the successful functioning of local democracy. Effective scrutiny helps secure the efficient delivery of public services and drives improvements within the authority itself. Conversely, poor scrutiny can be indicative of wider governance, leadership and service failure.

It is vital that councils and combined authorities know the purpose of scrutiny, what effective scrutiny looks like, how to conduct it and the benefits it can bring. This guidance aims to increase understanding in all four areas.

In writing this guidance, my department has taken close note of the House of Commons Select Committee report of December 2017, as well as the written and oral evidence supplied to that Committee. We have also consulted individuals and organisations with practical involvement in conducting, researching and supporting scrutiny.

It is clear from speaking to these practitioners that local and combined authorities with effective overview and scrutiny arrangements in place share certain key traits, the most important being a strong organisational culture. Authorities who welcome challenge and recognise the value scrutiny can bring reap the benefits. But this depends on strong commitment from the top - from senior members as well as senior officials.

Crucially, this guidance recognises that authorities have democratic mandates and are ultimately accountable to their electorates, and that authorities themselves are best-placed to know which scrutiny arrangements are most appropriate for their own individual circumstances.

I would, however, strongly urge all councils to cast a critical eye over their existing arrangements and, above all, ensure they embed a culture that allows overview and scrutiny to flourish.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rishi Sunak'.

Rishi Sunak MP
Minister for Local Government

About this Guidance

Who the guidance is for

This document is aimed at local authorities and combined authorities in England to help them carry out their overview and scrutiny functions effectively. In particular, it provides advice for senior leaders, members of overview and scrutiny committees, and support officers.

Aim of the guidance

This guidance seeks to ensure local authorities and combined authorities are aware of the purpose of overview and scrutiny, what effective scrutiny looks like, how to conduct it effectively and the benefits it can bring.

As such, it includes a number of policies and practices authorities should adopt or should consider adopting when deciding how to carry out their overview and scrutiny functions.

The guidance recognises that authorities approach scrutiny in different ways and have different processes and procedures in place, and that what might work well for one authority might not work well in another.

The hypothetical scenarios contained in the annexes to this guidance have been included for illustrative purposes, and are intended to provoke thought and discussion rather than serve as a 'best' way to approach the relevant issues.

While the guidance sets out some of the key legal requirements, it does not seek to replicate legislation.

Status of the guidance

This is statutory guidance from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Local authorities and combined authorities must have regard to it when exercising their functions. The phrase 'must have regard', when used in this context, does not mean that the sections of statutory guidance have to be followed in every detail, but that they should be followed unless there is a good reason not to in a particular case.

Not every authority is required to appoint a scrutiny committee. This guidance applies to those authorities who have such a committee in place, whether they are required to or not.

This guidance has been issued under section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 and under paragraph 2(9) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, which requires authorities to have regard to this guidance. In addition, authorities may have regard to other material they might choose to consider, including that issued by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, when exercising their overview and scrutiny functions.

Terminology

Unless 'overview' is specifically mentioned, the term 'scrutiny' refers to both overview and scrutiny.¹

Where the term 'authority' is used, it refers to both local authorities and combined authorities.

Where the term 'scrutiny committee' is used, it refers to an overview and scrutiny committee and any of its sub-committees. As the legislation refers throughout to powers conferred on scrutiny committees, that is the wording used in this guidance. However, the guidance should be seen as applying equally to work undertaken in informal task and finish groups, commissioned by formal committees.

Where the term 'executive' is used, it refers to executive members.

For combined authorities, references to the 'executive' or 'cabinet' should be interpreted as relating to the mayor (where applicable) and all the authority members.

For authorities operating committee rather than executive arrangements, references to the executive or Cabinet should be interpreted as relating to councillors in leadership positions.

Expiry or review date

This guidance will be kept under review and updated as necessary.

¹ A distinction is often drawn between 'overview' which focuses on the development of policy, and 'scrutiny' which looks at decisions that have been made or are about to be made to ensure they are fit for purpose.

1. Introduction and Context

1. Overview and scrutiny committees were introduced in 2000 as part of new executive governance arrangements to ensure that members of an authority who were not part of the executive could hold the executive to account for the decisions and actions that affect their communities.
2. Overview and scrutiny committees have statutory powers² to scrutinise decisions the executive is planning to take, those it plans to implement, and those that have already been taken/implemented. Recommendations following scrutiny enable improvements to be made to policies and how they are implemented. Overview and scrutiny committees can also play a valuable role in developing policy.

Effective overview and scrutiny should:

- Provide constructive 'critical friend' challenge;
- Amplify the voices and concerns of the public;
- Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role; and
- Drive improvement in public services.

3. The requirement for local authorities in England to establish overview and scrutiny committees is set out in sections 9F to 9FI of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended by the Localism Act 2011.
4. The Localism Act 2011 amended the Local Government Act 2000 to allow councils to revert to a non-executive form of governance - the 'committee system'. Councils who adopt the committee system are not required to have overview and scrutiny but may do so if they wish. The legislation has been strengthened and updated since 2000, most recently to reflect new governance arrangements with combined authorities. Requirements for combined authorities are set out in Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.
5. Current overview and scrutiny legislation recognises that authorities are democratically-elected bodies who are best-placed to determine which overview and scrutiny arrangements best suit their own individual needs, and so gives them a great degree of flexibility to decide which arrangements to adopt.
6. In producing this guidance, the Government fully recognises both authorities' democratic mandate and that the nature of local government has changed in recent years, with, for example, the creation of combined authorities, and councils increasingly delivering key services in partnership with other organisations or outsourcing them entirely.

² Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000; paragraph 1 of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

2. Culture

7. The prevailing organisational culture, behaviours and attitudes of an authority will largely determine whether its scrutiny function succeeds or fails.
8. While everyone in an authority can play a role in creating an environment conducive to effective scrutiny, it is important that this is led and owned by members, given their role in setting and maintaining the culture of an authority.
9. Creating a strong organisational culture supports scrutiny work that can add real value by, for example, improving policy-making and the efficient delivery of public services. In contrast, low levels of support for and engagement with the scrutiny function often lead to poor quality and ill-focused work that serves to reinforce the perception that it is of little worth or relevance.
10. Members and senior officers should note that the performance of the scrutiny function is not just of interest to the authority itself. Its effectiveness, or lack thereof, is often considered by external bodies such as regulators and inspectors, and highlighted in public reports, including best value inspection reports. Failures in scrutiny can therefore help to create a negative public image of the work of an authority as a whole.

How to establish a strong organisational culture

11. Authorities can establish a strong organisational culture by:

- a) **Recognising scrutiny's legal and democratic legitimacy** – all members and officers should recognise and appreciate the importance and legitimacy the scrutiny function is afforded by the law. It was created to act as a check and balance on the executive and is a statutory requirement for all authorities operating executive arrangements and for combined authorities.

Councillors have a unique legitimacy derived from their being democratically elected. The insights that they can bring by having this close connection to local people are part of what gives scrutiny its value.

- b) **Identifying a clear role and focus** – authorities should take steps to ensure scrutiny has a clear role and focus within the organisation, i.e. a niche within which it can clearly demonstrate it adds value. Therefore, prioritisation is necessary to ensure the scrutiny function concentrates on delivering work that is of genuine value and relevance to the work of the wider authority – this is one of the most challenging parts of scrutiny, and a critical element to get right if it is to be recognised as a strategic function of the authority (see chapter 6).

Authorities should ensure a clear division of responsibilities between the scrutiny function and the audit function. While it is appropriate for scrutiny to pay due regard to the authority's financial position, this will need to happen in the context of the formal audit role. The authority's section 151 officer should advise scrutiny on how to manage this dynamic.

While scrutiny has no role in the investigation or oversight of the authority's whistleblowing arrangements, the findings of independent whistleblowing investigations might be of interest to scrutiny committees as they consider their wider implications. Members should always follow the authority's constitution and associated Monitoring Officer directions on the matter. Further guidance on whistleblowing can be found at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415175/bis-15-200-whistleblowing-guidance-for-employers-and-code-of-practice.pdf.

- c) **Ensuring early and regular engagement between the executive and scrutiny** – authorities should ensure early and regular discussion takes place between scrutiny and the executive, especially regarding the latter's future work programme. Authorities should, though, be mindful of their distinct roles:

In particular:

- The executive should not try to exercise control over the work of the scrutiny committee. This could be direct, e.g. by purporting to 'order' scrutiny to look at, or not look at, certain issues, or indirect, e.g. through the use of the whip or as a tool of political patronage, and the committee itself should remember its statutory purpose when carrying out its work. All members and officers should consider the role the scrutiny committee plays to be that of a 'critical friend' not a de facto 'opposition'. Scrutiny chairs have a particular role to play in establishing the profile and nature of their committee (see chapter 4); and
- The chair of the scrutiny committee should determine the nature and extent of an executive member's participation in a scrutiny committee meeting, and in any informal scrutiny task group meeting.

- d) **Managing disagreement** – effective scrutiny involves looking at issues that can be politically contentious. It is therefore inevitable that, at times, an executive will disagree with the findings or recommendations of a scrutiny committee.

It is the job of both the executive and scrutiny to work together to reduce the risk of this happening, and authorities should take steps to predict, identify and act on disagreement.

One way in which this can be done is via an 'executive-scrutiny protocol' (see annex 1) which can help define the relationship between the two and mitigate any differences of opinion before they manifest themselves in unhelpful and unproductive ways. The benefit of this approach is that it provides a framework for disagreement and debate, and a way to manage it when it happens. Often,

the value of such a protocol lies in the dialogue that underpins its preparation. It is important that these protocols are reviewed on a regular basis.

Scrutiny committees do have the power to 'call in' decisions, i.e. ask the executive to reconsider them before they are implemented, but should not view it as a substitute for early involvement in the decision-making process or as a party-political tool.

- e) **Providing the necessary support** – while the level of resource allocated to scrutiny is for each authority to decide for itself, when determining resources an authority should consider the purpose of scrutiny as set out in legislation and the specific role and remit of the authority's own scrutiny committee(s), and the scrutiny function as a whole.

Support should also be given by members and senior officers to scrutiny committees and their support staff to access information held by the authority and facilitate discussions with representatives of external bodies (see chapter 5).

- f) **Ensuring impartial advice from officers** – authorities, particularly senior officers, should ensure all officers are free to provide impartial advice to scrutiny committees. This is fundamental to effective scrutiny. Of particular importance is the role played by 'statutory officers' – the monitoring officer, the section 151 officer and the head of paid service, and where relevant the statutory scrutiny officer. These individuals have a particular role in ensuring that timely, relevant and high-quality advice is provided to scrutiny.
- g) **Communicating scrutiny's role and purpose to the wider authority** – the scrutiny function can often lack support and recognition within an authority because there is a lack of awareness among both members and officers about the specific role it plays, which individuals are involved and its relevance to the authority's wider work. Authorities should, therefore, take steps to ensure all members and officers are made aware of the role the scrutiny committee plays in the organisation, its value and the outcomes it can deliver, the powers it has, its membership and, if appropriate, the identity of those providing officer support.
- h) **Maintaining the interest of full Council in the work of the scrutiny committee** – part of communicating scrutiny's role and purpose to the wider authority should happen through the formal, public role of full Council – particularly given that scrutiny will undertake valuable work to highlight challenging issues that an authority will be facing and subjects that will be a focus of full Council's work. Authorities should therefore take steps to ensure full Council is informed of the work the scrutiny committee is doing.

One way in which this can be done is by reports and recommendations being submitted to full Council rather than solely to the executive. Scrutiny should decide when it would be appropriate to submit reports for wider debate in this way, taking into account the relevance of reports to full Council business, as well as full Council's capacity to consider and respond in a timely manner. Such

reports would supplement the annual report to full Council on scrutiny's activities and raise awareness of ongoing work.

In order to maintain awareness of scrutiny at the Combined Authority and provoke dialogue and discussion of its impact, the business of scrutiny should be reported to the Combined Authority board or to the chairs of the relevant scrutiny committees of constituent and non-constituent authorities, or both. At those chairs' discretion, particular Combined Authority scrutiny outcomes, and what they might mean for each individual area, could be either discussed by scrutiny in committee or referred to full Council of the constituent authorities.

- i) **Communicating scrutiny's role to the public** – authorities should ensure scrutiny has a profile in the wider community. Consideration should be given to how and when to engage the authority's communications officers, and any other relevant channels, to understand how to get that message across. This will usually require engagement early on in the work programming process (see chapter 6).
- j) **Ensuring scrutiny members are supported in having an independent mindset** – formal committee meetings provide a vital opportunity for scrutiny members to question the executive and officers.

Inevitably, some committee members will come from the same political party as a member they are scrutinising and might well have a long-standing personal, or familial, relationship with them (see paragraph 25).

Scrutiny members should bear in mind, however, that adopting an independent mind-set is fundamental to carrying out their work effectively. In practice, this is likely to require scrutiny chairs working proactively to identify any potentially contentious issues and plan how to manage them.

Directly-elected mayoral systems

12. A strong organisational culture that supports scrutiny work is particularly important in authorities with a directly-elected mayor to ensure there are the checks and balances to maintain a robust democratic system. Mayoral systems offer the opportunity for greater public accountability and stronger governance, but there have also been incidents that highlight the importance of creating and maintaining a culture that puts scrutiny at the heart of its operations.
13. Authorities with a directly-elected mayor should ensure that scrutiny committees are well-resourced, are able to recruit high-calibre members and that their scrutiny functions pay particular attention to issues surrounding:
 - rights of access to documents by the press, public and councillors;
 - transparent and fully recorded decision-making processes, especially avoiding decisions by 'unofficial' committees or working groups;
 - delegated decisions by the Mayor;
 - whistleblowing protections for both staff and councillors; and
 - powers of Full Council, where applicable, to question and review.

14. Authorities with a directly-elected mayor should note that mayors are required by law to attend overview and scrutiny committee sessions when asked to do so (see paragraph 44).

3. Resourcing

15. The resource an authority allocates to the scrutiny function plays a pivotal role in determining how successful that function is and therefore the value it can add to the work of the authority.
16. Ultimately it is up to each authority to decide on the resource it provides, but every authority should recognise that creating and sustaining an effective scrutiny function requires them to allocate resources to it.
17. Authorities should also recognise that support for scrutiny committees, task groups and other activities is not solely about budgets and provision of officer time, although these are clearly extremely important elements. Effective support is also about the ways in which the wider authority engages with those who carry out the scrutiny function (both members and officers).

When deciding on the level of resource to allocate to the scrutiny function, the factors an authority should consider include:

- Scrutiny's legal powers and responsibilities;
- The particular role and remit scrutiny will play in the authority;
- The training requirements of scrutiny members and support officers, particularly the support needed to ask effective questions of the executive and other key partners, and make effective recommendations;
- The need for ad hoc external support where expertise does not exist in the council;
- Effectively-resourced scrutiny has been shown to add value to the work of authorities, improving their ability to meet the needs of local people; and
- Effectively-resourced scrutiny can help policy formulation and so minimise the need for call-in of executive decisions.

Statutory scrutiny officers

18. Combined authorities, upper and single tier authorities are required to designate a statutory scrutiny officer,³ someone whose role is to:
 - promote the role of the authority's scrutiny committee;
 - provide support to the scrutiny committee and its members; and
 - provide support and guidance to members and officers relating to the functions of the scrutiny committee.

³ Section 9FB of the Local Government Act 2000; article 9 of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017

19. Authorities not required by law to appoint such an officer should consider whether doing so would be appropriate for their specific local needs.

Officer resource models

20. Authorities are free to decide for themselves which wider officer support model best suits their individual circumstances, though generally they adopt one or a mix of the following:

- Committee – officers are drawn from specific policy or service areas;
- Integrated – officers are drawn from the corporate centre and also service the executive; and
- Specialist – officers are dedicated to scrutiny.

21. Each model has its merits – the committee model provides service-specific expertise; the integrated model facilitates closer and earlier scrutiny involvement in policy formation and alignment of corporate work programmes; and the specialist model is structurally independent from those areas it scrutinises.

22. Authorities should ensure that, whatever model they employ, officers tasked with providing scrutiny support are able to provide impartial advice. This might require consideration of the need to build safeguards into the way that support is provided. The nature of these safeguards will differ according to the specific role scrutiny plays in the organisation.

4. Selecting Committee Members

23. Selecting the right members to serve on scrutiny committees is essential if those committees are to function effectively. Where a committee is made up of members who have the necessary skills and commitment, it is far more likely to be taken seriously by the wider authority.
24. While there are proportionality requirements that must be met,⁴ the selection of the chair and other committee members is for each authority to decide for itself. Guidance for combined authorities on this issue has been produced by the Centre for Public Scrutiny⁵.

Members invariably have different skill-sets. What an authority must consider when forming a committee is that, as a group, it possesses the requisite expertise, commitment and ability to act impartially to fulfil its functions.

25. Authorities are reminded that members of the executive cannot be members of a scrutiny committee.⁶ Authorities should take care to ensure that, as a minimum, members holding less formal executive positions, e.g. as Cabinet assistants, do not sit on scrutinising committees looking at portfolios to which those roles relate. Authorities should articulate in their constitutions how conflicts of interest, including familial links (see also paragraph 31), between executive and scrutiny responsibilities should be managed, including where members stand down from the executive and move to a scrutiny role, and vice-versa.
26. Members or substitute members of a combined authority must not be members of its overview and scrutiny committee.⁷ This includes the Mayor in Mayoral Combined Authorities. It is advised that Deputy Mayors for Policing and Crime are also not members of the combined authority's overview and scrutiny committee.

Selecting individual committee members

27. When selecting individual members to serve on scrutiny committees, an authority should consider a member's experience, expertise, interests, ability to act impartially, ability to work as part of a group, and capacity to serve.

⁴ See, for example, regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Committee System) (England) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/1020) and article 4 of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017 (S.I. 2017/68).

⁵ See pages 15-18 of 'Overview and scrutiny in combined authorities: a plain English guide': <https://www.cfps.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Overview-and-scrutiny-in-combined-authorities-a-plain-english-guide.pdf>

⁶ Section 9FA(3) of the Local Government Act 2000.

⁷ 2(3) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

28. Authorities should not take into account a member's perceived level of support for or opposition to a particular political party (notwithstanding the wider legal requirement for proportionality referred to in paragraph 24).

Selecting a chair

29. The Chair plays a leadership role on a scrutiny committee as they are largely responsible for establishing its profile, influence and ways of working.

30. The attributes authorities should and should not take into account when selecting individual committee members (see paragraphs 27 and 28) also apply to the selection of the Chair, but the Chair should also possess the ability to lead and build a sense of teamwork and consensus among committee members.

Chairs should pay special attention to the need to guard the committee's independence. Importantly, however, they should take care to avoid the committee being, and being viewed as, a de facto opposition to the executive.

31. Given their pre-eminent role on the scrutiny committee, it is strongly recommended that the Chair not preside over scrutiny of their relatives⁸. Combined authorities should note the legal requirements that apply to them where the Chair is an independent person⁹.

32. The method for selecting a Chair is for each authority to decide for itself, however every authority should consider taking a vote by secret ballot. Combined Authorities should be aware of the legal requirements regarding the party affiliation of their scrutiny committee Chair¹⁰.

Training for committee members

33. Authorities should ensure committee members are offered induction when they take up their role and ongoing training so they can carry out their responsibilities effectively. Authorities should pay attention to the need to ensure committee members are aware of their legal powers, and how to prepare for and ask relevant questions at scrutiny sessions.

34. When deciding on training requirements for committee members, authorities should consider taking advantage of opportunities offered by external providers in the sector.

Co-option and technical advice

35. While members and their support officers will often have significant local insight and an understanding of local people and their needs, the provision of outside expertise can be invaluable.

⁸ A definition of 'relative' can be found at section 28(10) of the Localism Act 2011.

⁹ See article 5(2) of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017 (S.I. 2017/68).

¹⁰ Article 5(6) of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

36. There are two principal ways to procure this:

- Co-option – formal co-option is provided for in legislation¹¹. Authorities must establish a co-option scheme to determine how individuals will be co-opted onto committees; and
- Technical advisers – depending on the subject matter, independent local experts might exist who can provide advice and assistance in evaluating evidence (see annex 2).

¹¹ Section 9FA(4) Local Government Act 2000

5. Power to Access Information

37. A scrutiny committee needs access to relevant information the authority holds, and to receive it in good time, if it is to do its job effectively.
38. This need is recognised in law, with members of scrutiny committees enjoying powers to access information¹². In particular, regulations give enhanced powers to a scrutiny member to access exempt or confidential information. This is in addition to existing rights for councillors to have access to information to perform their duties, including common law rights to request information and rights to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.
39. When considering what information scrutiny needs in order to carry out its work, scrutiny members and the executive should consider scrutiny's role and the legal rights that committees and their individual members have, as well as their need to receive timely and accurate information to carry out their duties effectively.
40. Scrutiny members should have access to a regularly available source of key information about the management of the authority – particularly on performance, management and risk. Where this information exists, and scrutiny members are given support to understand it, the potential for what officers might consider unfocused and unproductive requests is reduced as members will be able to frame their requests from a more informed position.
41. Officers should speak to scrutiny members to ensure they understand the reasons why information is needed, thereby making the authority better able to provide information that is relevant and timely, as well as ensuring that the authority complies with legal requirements.

While each request for information should be judged on its individual merits, authorities should adopt a default position of sharing the information they hold, on request, with scrutiny committee members.

42. The law recognises that there might be instances where it is legitimate for an authority to withhold information and places a requirement on the executive to provide the scrutiny committee with a written statement setting out its reasons for that decision¹³. However, members of the executive and senior officers should take particular care to avoid refusing requests, or limiting the information they provide, for reasons of party political or reputational expediency.

¹² Regulation 17 - Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10 Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

¹³ Regulation 17(4) – Local Government (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10(4) Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

Before an authority takes a decision not to share information it holds, it should give serious consideration to whether that information could be shared in closed session.

43. Regulations already stipulate a timeframe for executives to comply with requests from a scrutiny member¹⁴. When agreeing to such requests, authorities should:

- consider whether seeking clarification from the information requester could help better target the request; and
- Ensure the information is supplied in a format appropriate to the recipient's needs.

44. Committees should be aware of their legal power to require members of the executive and officers to attend before them to answer questions¹⁵. It is the duty of members and officers to comply with such requests.¹⁶

Seeking information from external organisations

45. Scrutiny members should also consider the need to supplement any authority-held information they receive with information and intelligence that might be available from other sources, and should note in particular their statutory powers to access information from certain external organisations.

46. When asking an external organisation to provide documentation or appear before it, and where that organisation is not legally obliged to do either (see annex 3), scrutiny committees should consider the following:

- a) **The need to explain the purpose of scrutiny** – the organisation being approached might have little or no awareness of the committee's work, or of an authority's scrutiny function more generally, and so might be reluctant to comply with any request;
- b) **The benefits of an informal approach** – individuals from external organisations can have fixed perceptions of what an evidence session entails and may be unwilling to subject themselves to detailed public scrutiny if they believe it could reflect badly on them or their employer. Making an informal approach can help reassure an organisation of the aims of the committee, the type of information being sought and the manner in which the evidence session would be conducted;

¹⁴ Regulation 17(2) – Local Government (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10(2) Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

¹⁵ Section 9FA(8) of the Local Government Act 2000; paragraph 2(6) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

¹⁶ Section 9FA(9) of the Local Government Act 2000; paragraph 2(7) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

- c) **How to encourage compliance with the request** – scrutiny committees will want to frame their approach on a case by case basis. For contentious issues, committees might want to emphasise the opportunity their request gives the organisation to ‘set the record straight’ in a public setting; and
- d) **Who to approach** – a committee might instinctively want to ask the Chief Executive or Managing Director of an organisation to appear at an evidence session, however it could be more beneficial to engage front-line staff when seeking operational-level detail rather than senior executives who might only be able to talk in more general terms. When making a request to a specific individual, the committee should consider the type of information it is seeking, the nature of the organisation in question and the authority’s pre-existing relationship with it.

Following ‘the Council Pound’

Scrutiny committees will often have a keen interest in ‘following the council pound’, i.e. scrutinising organisations that receive public funding to deliver goods and services.

Authorities should recognise the legitimacy of this interest and, where relevant, consider the need to provide assistance to scrutiny members and their support staff to obtain information from organisations the council has contracted to deliver services. In particular, when agreeing contracts with these bodies, authorities should consider whether it would be appropriate to include a *requirement* for them to supply information to or appear before scrutiny committees.

6. Planning Work

47. Effective scrutiny should have a defined impact on the ground, with the committee making recommendations that will make a tangible difference to the work of the authority. To have this kind of impact, scrutiny committees need to plan their work programme, i.e. draw up a long-term agenda and consider making it flexible enough to accommodate any urgent, short-term issues that might arise during the year.
48. Authorities with multiple scrutiny committees sometimes have a separate work programme for each committee. Where this happens, consideration should be given to how to co-ordinate the various committees' work to make best use of the total resources available.

Being clear about scrutiny's role

49. Scrutiny works best when it has a clear role and function. This provides focus and direction. While scrutiny has the power to look at anything which affects 'the area, or the area's inhabitants', authorities will often find it difficult to support a scrutiny function that carries out generalised oversight across the wide range of issues experienced by local people, particularly in the context of partnership working. Prioritisation is necessary, which means that there might be things that, despite being important, scrutiny will not be able to look at.
50. Different overall roles could include having a focus on risk, the authority's finances, or on the way the authority works with its partners.
51. Applying this focus does not mean that certain subjects are 'off limits'. It is more about looking at topics and deciding whether their relative importance justifies the positive impact scrutiny's further involvement could bring.
52. When thinking about scrutiny's focus, members should be supported by key senior officers. The statutory scrutiny officer, if an authority has one, will need to take a leading role in supporting members to clarify the role and function of scrutiny, and championing that role once agreed.

Who to speak to

53. Evidence will need to be gathered to inform the work programming process. This will ensure that it looks at the right topics, in the right way and at the right time. Gathering evidence requires conversations with:
 - *The public* – it is likely that formal 'consultation' with the public on the scrutiny work programme will be ineffective. Asking individual scrutiny members to have conversations with individuals and groups in their own local areas can work better. Insights gained from the public through individual pieces of scrutiny work can be fed back into the work programming process. Listening to and participating in conversations in places where local people come together, including in online forums, can help authorities engage people on their own terms and yield more positive results.

Authorities should consider how their communications officers can help scrutiny engage with the public, and how wider internal expertise and local knowledge from both members and officers might make a contribution.

- *The authority's partners* – relationships with other partners should not be limited to evidence-gathering to support individual reviews or agenda items. A range of partners are likely to have insights that will prove useful:
 - Public sector partners (like the NHS and community safety partners, over which scrutiny has specific legal powers);
 - Voluntary sector partners;
 - Contractors and commissioning partners (including partners in joint ventures and authority-owned companies);
 - In parished areas, town, community and parish councils;
 - Neighbouring principal councils (both in two-tier and unitary areas);
 - Cross-authority bodies and organisations, such as Local Enterprise Partnerships¹⁷; and
 - Others with a stake and interest in the local area – large local employers, for example.
- *The executive* – a principal partner in discussions on the work programme should be the executive (and senior officers). The executive should not direct scrutiny's work (see chapter 2), but conversations will help scrutiny members better understand how their work can be designed to align with the best opportunities to influence the authority's wider work.

Information sources

54. Scrutiny will need access to relevant information to inform its work programme. The type of information will depend on the specific role and function scrutiny plays within the authority, but might include:

- Performance information from across the authority and its partners;
- Finance and risk information from across the authority and its partners;
- Corporate complaints information, and aggregated information from political groups about the subject matter of members' surgeries;
- Business cases and options appraisals (and other planning information) for forthcoming major decisions. This information will be of particular use for pre-decision scrutiny; and
- Reports and recommendations issued by relevant ombudsmen, especially the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

¹⁷ Authorities should ensure they have appropriate arrangements in place to ensure the effective democratic scrutiny of Local Enterprise Partnerships' investment decisions.

As committees can meet in closed session, commercial confidentiality should not preclude the sharing of information. Authorities should note, however, that the default for meetings should be that they are held in public (see 2014 guidance on ‘*Open and accountable local government*’:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/343182/140812_Openness_Guide.pdf).

55. Scrutiny members should consider keeping this information under regular review. It is likely to be easier to do this outside committee, rather than bringing such information to committee ‘to note’, or to provide an update, as a matter of course.

Shortlisting topics

Approaches to shortlisting topics should reflect scrutiny’s overall role in the authority. This will require the development of bespoke, local solutions, however when considering whether an item should be included in the work programme, the kind of questions a scrutiny committee should consider might include:

- Do we understand the benefits scrutiny would bring to this issue?
- How could we best carry out work on this subject?
- What would be the best outcome of this work?
- How would this work engage with the activity of the executive and other decision-makers, including partners?

56. Some authorities use scoring systems to evaluate and rank work programme proposals. If these are used to provoke discussion and debate, based on evidence, about what priorities should be, they can be a useful tool. Others take a looser approach. Whichever method is adopted, a committee should be able to justify how and why a decision has been taken to include certain issues and not others.

57. Scrutiny members should accept that shortlisting can be difficult; scrutiny committees have finite resources and deciding how these are best allocated is tough. They should understand that, if work programming is robust and effective, there might well be issues that they want to look at that nonetheless are not selected.

Carrying out work

58. Selected topics can be scrutinised in several ways, including:

- a) **As a single item on a committee agenda** – this often presents a limited opportunity for effective scrutiny, but may be appropriate for some issues or where the committee wants to maintain a formal watching brief over a given issue;
- b) **At a single meeting** – which could be a committee meeting or something less formal. This can provide an opportunity to have a single public meeting about a

given subject, or to have a meeting at which evidence is taken from a number of witnesses;

- c) **At a task and finish review of two or three meetings** – short, sharp scrutiny reviews are likely to be most effective even for complex topics. Properly focused, they ensure members can swiftly reach conclusions and make recommendations, perhaps over the course of a couple of months or less;
- d) **Via a longer-term task and finish review** – the ‘traditional’ task and finish model – with perhaps six or seven meetings spread over a number of months – is still appropriate when scrutiny needs to dig into a complex topic in significant detail. However, the resource implications of such work, and its length, can make it unattractive for all but the most complex matters; and
- e) **By establishing a ‘standing panel’** – this falls short of establishing a whole new committee but may reflect a necessity to keep a watching brief over a critical local issue, especially where members feel they need to convene regularly to carry out that oversight. Again, the resource implications of this approach means that it will be rarely used.

7. Evidence Sessions

59. Evidence sessions are a key way in which scrutiny committees inform their work. They might happen at formal committee, in less formal ‘task and finish’ groups or at standalone sessions.

Good preparation is a vital part of conducting effective evidence sessions. Members should have a clear idea of what the committee hopes to get out of each session and appreciate that success will depend on their ability to work together on the day.

How to plan

60. Effective planning does not necessarily involve a large number of pre-meetings, the development of complex scopes or the drafting of questioning plans. It is more often about setting overall objectives and then considering what type of questions (and the way in which they are asked) can best elicit the information the committee is seeking. This applies as much to individual agenda items as it does for longer evidence sessions – there should always be consideration in advance of what scrutiny is trying to get out of a particular evidence session.

Chairs play a vital role in leading discussions on objective-setting and ensuring all members are aware of the specific role each will play during the evidence session.

61. As far as possible there should be consensus among scrutiny members about the objective of an evidence session before it starts. It is important to recognise that members have different perspectives on certain issues, and so might not share the objectives for a session that are ultimately adopted. Where this happens, the Chair will need to be aware of this divergence of views and bear it in mind when planning the evidence session.
62. Effective planning should mean that at the end of a session it is relatively straightforward for the chair to draw together themes and highlight the key findings. It is unlikely that the committee will be able to develop and agree recommendations immediately, but, unless the session is part of a wider inquiry, enough evidence should have been gathered to allow the chair to set a clear direction.
63. After an evidence session, the committee might wish to hold a short ‘wash-up’ meeting to review whether their objectives were met and lessons could be learned for future sessions.

Developing recommendations

64. The development and agreement of recommendations is often an iterative process. It will usually be appropriate for this to be done only by members, assisted by co-optees where relevant. When deciding on recommendations, however, members should have due regard to advice received from officers, particularly the Monitoring Officer.

65. The drafting of reports is usually, but not always, carried out by officers, directed by members.

66. Authorities draft reports and recommendations in a number of ways, but there are normally three stages:

- i. the development of a 'heads of report' – a document setting out general findings that members can then discuss as they consider the overall structure and focus of the report and its recommendations;
- ii. the development of those findings, which will set out some areas on which recommendations might be made; and
- iii. the drafting of the full report.

67. Recommendations should be evidence-based and SMART, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed. Where appropriate, committees may wish to consider sharing them in draft with interested parties.

68. Committees should bear in mind that often six to eight recommendations are sufficient to enable the authority to focus its response, although there may be specific circumstances in which more might be appropriate.

Sharing draft recommendations with executive members should not provide an opportunity for them to revise or block recommendations before they are made. It should, however, provide an opportunity for errors to be identified and corrected, and for a more general sense-check.

Annex 1: Illustrative Scenario – Creating an Executive-Scrutiny Protocol

An executive-scrutiny protocol can deal with the practical expectations of scrutiny committee members and the executive, as well as the cultural dynamics.

Workshops with scrutiny members, senior officers and Cabinet can be helpful to inform the drafting of a protocol. An external facilitator can help bring an independent perspective.

Councils should consider how to adopt a protocol, e.g. formal agreement at scrutiny committee and Cabinet, then formal integration into the Council's constitution at the next Annual General Meeting.

The protocol, as agreed, may contain sections on:

- The way scrutiny will go about developing its work programme (including the ways in which senior officers and Cabinet members will be kept informed);
- The way in which senior officers and Cabinet will keep scrutiny informed of the outlines of major decisions as they are developed, to allow for discussion of scrutiny's potential involvement in policy development. This involves the building in of safeguards to mitigate risks around the sharing of sensitive information with scrutiny members;
- A strengthening and expansion of existing parts of the code of conduct that relate to behaviour in formal meetings, and in informal meetings;
- Specification of the nature and form of responses that scrutiny can expect when it makes recommendations to the executive, when it makes requests to the executive for information, and when it makes requests that Cabinet members or senior officers attend meetings; and
- Confirmation of the role of the statutory scrutiny officer, and Monitoring Officer, in overseeing compliance with the protocol, and ensuring that it is used to support the wider aim of supporting and promoting a culture of scrutiny, with matters relating to the protocol's success being reported to full Council through the scrutiny Annual Report.

Annex 2: Illustrative Scenario – Engaging Independent Technical Advisers

This example demonstrates how one Council's executive and scrutiny committee worked together to scope a role and then appoint an independent adviser on transforming social care commissioning. Their considerations and process may be helpful and applicable in other similar scenarios.

Major care contracts were coming to an end and the Council took the opportunity to review whether to continue with its existing strategic commissioning framework, or take a different approach – potentially insourcing certain elements.

The relevant Director was concerned about the Council's reliance on a very small number of large providers. The Director therefore approached the Scrutiny and Governance Manager to talk through the potential role scrutiny could play as the Council considered these changes.

The Scrutiny Chair wanted to look at this issue in some depth, but recognised its complexity could make it difficult for her committee to engage – she was concerned it would not be able to do the issue justice. The Director offered support from his own officer team, but the Chair considered this approach to be beset by risks around the independence of the process.

She talked to the Director about securing independent advice. He was worried that an independent adviser could come with preconceived ideas and would not understand the Council's context and objectives. The Scrutiny Chair was concerned that independent advice could end up leading to scrutiny members being passive, relying on an adviser to do their thinking for them. They agreed that some form of independent assistance would be valuable, but that how it was provided and managed should be carefully thought out.

With the assistance of the Governance and Scrutiny Manager, the Scrutiny Chair approached local universities and Further Education institutions to identify an appropriate individual. The approach was clear – it set out the precise role expected of the adviser, and explained the scrutiny process itself. Because members wanted to focus on the risks of market failure, and felt more confident on substantive social care matters, the approach was directed at those with a specialism in economics and business administration. The Council's search was proactive – the assistance of the service department was drawn on to make direct approaches to particular individuals who could carry out this role.

It was agreed to make a small budget available to act as a 'per diem' to support an adviser; academics were approached in the first instance as the Council felt able to make a case that an educational institution would provide this support for free as part of its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility.

Three individuals were identified from the Council's proactive search. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee had an informal discussion with each – not so much to establish their skills and expertise (which had already been assessed) but to give a sense about

their 'fit' with scrutiny's objectives and their political nous in understanding the environment in which they would operate, and to satisfy themselves that they will apply themselves even-handedly to the task. The Director sat in on this process but played no part in who was ultimately selected.

The independent advice provided by the selected individual gave the Scrutiny Committee a more comprehensive understanding of the issue and meant it was able to offer informed advice on the merits of putting in place a new strategic commissioning framework.

Annex 3: Illustrative Scenario – Approaching an External Organisation to Appear before a Committee

This example shows how one council ensured a productive scrutiny meeting, involving a private company and the public. Lessons may be drawn and apply to other similar scenarios.

Concerns had been expressed by user groups, and the public at large, about the reliability of the local bus service. The Scrutiny Chair wanted to question the bus company in a public evidence session but knew that she had no power to compel it to attend. Previous attempts to engage it had been unsuccessful; the company was not hostile, but said it had its own ways of engaging the public.

The Monitoring Officer approached the company's regional PR manager, but he expressed concern that the session would end in a 'bunfight'. He also explained the company had put their improvement plan in the public domain, and felt a big council meeting would exacerbate tensions.

Other councillors had strong views about the company – one thought the committee should tell the company it would be empty-chaired if it refused to attend. The Scrutiny Chair was sympathetic to this, but thought such an approach would not lead to any improvements.

The Scrutiny Chair was keen to make progress, but it was difficult to find the right person to speak to at the company, so she asked council officers and local transport advocacy groups for advice. Speaking to those people also gave her a better sense of what scrutiny's role might be.

When she finally spoke to the company's network manager, she explained the situation and suggested they work together to consider how the meeting could be productive for the Council, the company and local people. In particular, this provided her with an opportunity to explain scrutiny and its role. The network manager remained sceptical but was reassured that they could work together to ensure that the meeting would not be an 'ambush'. He agreed in principle to attend and also provide information to support the Committee's work beforehand.

Discussions continued in the four weeks leading up to the Committee meeting. The Scrutiny Chair was conscious that while she had to work with the company to ensure that the meeting was constructive – and secure their attendance – it could not be a whitewash, and other members and the public would demand a hard edge to the discussions.

The scrutiny committee agreed that the meeting would provide a space for the company to provide context to the problems local people are experiencing, but that this would be preceded by a space on the agenda for the Chair, Vice-chair, and representatives from two local transport advocacy groups to set out their concerns. The company were sent in

advance a summary of the general areas on which members were likely to ask questions, to ensure that those questions could be addressed at the meeting.

Finally, provision was made for public questions and debate. Those attending the meeting were invited to discuss with each other the principal issues they wanted the meeting to cover. A short, facilitated discussion in the room led by the Chair highlighted the key issues, and the Chair then put those points to the company representatives.

At the end of the meeting, the public asked questions of the bus company representative in a 20-minute plenary item.

The meeting was fractious, but the planning carried out to prepare for this – by channelling issues through discussion and using the Chair to mediate the questioning – made things easier. Some attendees were initially frustrated by this structure, but the company representative was more open and less defensive than might otherwise have been the case.

The meeting also motivated the company to revise its communications plan to become more responsive to this kind of challenge, part of which involved a commitment to feed back to the scrutiny committee on the recommendations it made on the night.

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Report to: **SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD**

Relevant Officer: Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager.

Date of Meeting: 19 September 2019

SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD WORKPLAN

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To review the work of the Scrutiny Leadership Board and the Scrutiny Committees and to approve the Channel Shift Scrutiny Review Scoping Document and establish the review panel.

2.0 Recommendations:

2.1 To approve the Scrutiny Leadership Board (SLB) Workplan, taking into account any suggestions for amendment or addition.

2.2 To monitor the workplans of the three Scrutiny Committees and consider any issues the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of each Committee may wish to escalate to the SLB.

2.3 To approve the Channel Shift Scrutiny Review Scoping Document and appoint members of the Committee to carry out the review.

2.4 To progress the review of the new Executive/Scrutiny Protocol by appointing a small working group to develop the new protocol.

2.5 To receive any referrals from the Audit Committee for scrutiny consideration.

3.0 Reasons for recommendations:

3.1 To ensure the Board is carrying out its work efficiently and effectively.

3.2a Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.2b Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? N/A

3.3 Other alternative options to be considered:

None.

4.0 Council Priority:

4.1 The relevant Council priorities are:

- The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool
- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

5.0 Background Information

5.1 Scrutiny Leadership Board Workplan

The Board's Workplan is attached at Appendix 5(a). The Workplan is a flexible document that sets out the work that will be undertaken by the Board over the course of the year, both through scrutiny review, informal meetings and formal, committee meetings.

Board Members are invited to suggest topics at any time that might be suitable for scrutiny review through completion of the Scrutiny Review Checklist which is attached at Appendix 5(b). The checklist forms part of the mandatory scrutiny procedure for establishing review panels and must therefore be completed and submitted for consideration by the Committee, prior to a topic being approved for scrutiny.

Consideration may also be given to appointing reviews stemming from previous committee items and referrals from Audit Committee.

5.2 Scrutiny Committee Workplans

A key role of the Scrutiny Leadership Board is to co-ordinate the scrutiny function and keep a watching brief on the work of all the Committees. The three Scrutiny Committee workplans are attached at Appendix 5(c) for consideration by the Scrutiny Leadership Board.

Chairs and Vice Chairs will be asked to provide a brief overview of the work of their committee verbally at the meeting.

5.3 New Executive/Scrutiny Protocol

As requested at the previous, informal meeting of the Board, the existing protocol and some examples from other authorities were circulated to all scrutiny members for comments with some questions to prompt thoughts regarding the appropriate content for such a protocol. Very few responses were received and Members are requested to consider the appointment of a small working group in order to progress development of the new protocol consisting of one Executive Member (to be

appointed by the Leader) and three Scrutiny Members (to be appointed by the Scrutiny Leadership Board).

5.4 **Channel Shift Scrutiny Review Scoping Document**

At the informal Board meeting, the workplan was discussed and a referral from Audit Committee received to carry out a scrutiny review of the Channel Shift programme. A draft scoping document is attached at Appendix 5(d) for approval and the Board is asked to appoint the Panel to carry out the review. A tentative date for the first meeting has been set as Tuesday 29 October 2019, immediately before the next informal Scrutiny Leadership Board meeting.

Does the information submitted include any exempt information?

No

List of Appendices:

Appendix 5(a): Scrutiny Leadership Board Workplan

Appendix 5(b): Scrutiny Review Checklist

Appendix 5(c): Scrutiny Committee Workplans

Appendix 5(d): Channel Shift Scrutiny Review Scoping Document

6.0 Legal considerations:

6.1 None.

7.0 Human Resources considerations:

7.1 None.

8.0 Equalities considerations:

8.1 None.

9.0 Financial considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Ethical considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Internal/ External Consultation undertaken:

12.1 None.

13.0 Background papers:

13.1 None.

Scrutiny Leadership Board Workplan

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>11 July 2019 Informal meeting</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Meeting with the Leader/Deputy Leaders to discuss Forward Plan of work and Policy Development</i> 2. <i>Committee and Board Workplanning</i> 3. <i>Refresh Executive/Scrutiny Protocol – start process</i> |
| 19 September 2019 Formal Committee meeting 6pm | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New Statutory Guidance and actions for Blackpool 2. Council Plan Performance Proposal including Council Plan 3. Workplan Report covering SLB, Committees, Audit. Item will allow all Chairs/VCs to raise specific issues from their Committee, make referrals from Audit etc. Also include recommendations from committees and task groups. 4. Channel Shift Scoping Document approval and establish members for review |
| 29 October 2019 (immediately prior/after informal meeting) | Scrutiny Review – Channel Shift |
| <i>29 October 2019 Informal meeting</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Workshop item on Executive/Scrutiny Protocol Development</i> 2. <i>Review Scrutiny Training and Development</i> 3. <i>Public Speaking procedure</i> 4. <i>Meeting with any senior officers/Executive Members if required</i> |
| 21 November 2019 Formal Committee meeting 6pm | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual Council Corporate Complaints 2. Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy Implementation 3. Workplan Report |
| December/January | Scrutiny Review – tbc, subject to identification of topic |
| <i>6 February 2020 Informal meeting</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Meeting with the Executive (Leader and Deputies issued invites) to review forward plan of work and policy development</i> 2. <i>Scrutiny guide development</i> |
| 5 March 2020 Formal Committee meeting 6pm | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Executive/Scrutiny Protocol Approval 2. Workplan Report |
| <i>2 April 2020 Informal meeting</i> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Meeting with any senior officers if required</i> 2. <i>Review Scrutiny Training and Development</i> |
| 21 May 2020 Formal Committee meeting 6pm | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workplan Report 2. Scrutiny Annual Report for approval |

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SCRUTINY SELECTION CHECKLIST**Title of proposed Scrutiny:**

The list is intended to assist the relevant scrutiny committee in deciding whether or not to approve a topic that has been suggested for scrutiny.

Whilst no minimum or maximum number of 'yes' answers are formally required, the relevant scrutiny committee is recommended to place higher priority on topics related to the performance and priorities of the Council.

| | Yes/No |
|--|--------|
| The review will add value to the Council and/or its partners overall performance: | |
| The review is in relation to one or more of the Council's priorities: | |
| The Council or its partners are not performing well in this area: | |
| It is an area where a number of complaints (or bad press) have been received: | |
| The issue is strategic and significant: | |
| There is evidence of public interest in the topic: | |
| The issue has potential impact for one or more sections of the community: | |
| Service or policy changes are planned and scrutiny could have a positive input: | |
| Adequate resources (both members and officers) are available to carry out the scrutiny: | |

Please give any further details on the proposed review:

Completed by:

Date:

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| Adult Social Care And Health Scrutiny Committee Work Plan 2019-2020 | |
|--|---|
| 16 October 2019 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Financial Sustainability of Adult Social Care with increasing levels of demand 2 Director of Public Health's Annual Report 3 Mental Health Service Provision – update from all partners led by Lancashire Care Foundation Trust on progress against NWT Action Plan and provision in Blackpool, CQC inspection update and specific analysis of Psynergy pilot and the urgent care pathway. 4 Integrated Care Partnership Development to include consideration of five year plan and progress with delivering the improvement/transformation agenda, including succession planning. |
| 11 December 2019 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Blackpool Safeguarding Adult Board Annual Report 2018/2019 2 Healthwatch Progress Report 2018/2019, including 2019/2020 priorities 3 Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group Mid-Year Performance Report attendance requested from partners in ICP. 4 Provision of Supported Accommodation specifically through the housing benefit route |
| 12 February 2020 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Deprivation of Liberty Standards key changes 2 Community Engagement in Public Health to consider the topic referred from Audit Committee 3 Smoking Cessation evaluation of initiatives and impact on smoking levels, has the council's priority been achieved 4 Fulfilling Lives Success of the project and legacy planning for support for people with multiple complex needs |
| 29 April 2020 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 North West Ambulance Service detailed annual performance report 2 Screening and Vaccination Uptake to request NHS England attendance to consider uptake levels in Blackpool 3 Breastfeeding Support to consider the support on offer and the impact on the number of mothers choosing to breastfeed. 4 Mental Health Services to continue to monitor and evaluate the impact of changes in mental health service provision. |
| TBC June 2020 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Blackpool Clinical Commissioning Group End of Year Performance attendance requested from partners in ICP. |

| Scrutiny Review Work | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| November 2019 | Task and Finish Scrutiny review of Healthy Weight . |
| TBC | Scrutiny review of Drug and Alcohol Related Early Deaths . Numbers have increased in both young and older people that misuse substances. To also look at preventing drug use (uptake of Hope and Wish). Potential to include a look at possible minimum price per unit of alcohol. |
| TBC | Scrutiny review of one key theme identified from the ICP five year strategy . Possible items include population health management, health inequalities, planned care and urgent and emergency care. To be identified at October 2019 Committee meeting. |
| TBC | Proposed joint piece of work with Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee: Child and Adolescent Mental Health to include prevalence, performance of CAMHS, emotional health, looked after children and additional educational needs. |

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| Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee - Work Plan 2019-2020 | |
|---|---|
| 10 October 2019 | <p>1. Youth Offending Team Improvement - To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p>2. Children's Social Care Improvement – To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p>3. Education/SEND – To receive an overview of results data.</p> <p>4. BSCB Final Annual Report – To receive the final annual update from the BSCB.</p> <p>5. Scrutiny Review of Recruitment and Retention – To receive an update on the Scrutiny work undertaken.</p> |
| 5 December 2019 | <p>1. Youth Offending Team Improvement - To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p>2. Children's Social Care Improvement – To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p>3. Education/SEND – To receive an overview of results data.</p> <p>4. Corporate Parent Panel – To receive the annual report from the CPP.</p> |
| 13 February 2020 | <p>1. Youth Offending Team Improvement - To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p>2. Children's Social Care Improvement – To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p>3. Education/SEND – To receive a full report of confirmed results data.</p> <p>4. Pan-Lancashire Partnership – To receive an update on the new safeguarding partnership arrangements.</p> |
| 23 April 2020 | <p>1. Youth Offending Team Improvement - To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p>2. Children's Social Care Improvement – To receive an update in relation to key performance indicators and any risk areas identified.</p> <p>3. Education/SEND – To receive an overview of results data.</p> |

| Scrutiny Review Work | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| TBC | Scrutiny review of Inclusion in Education to include issues faced by parents of children with SEND, schools' procedures to ensure children's needs are being met and the associated impact on numbers of children being home educated. |
| TBC | Scrutiny review of Partnership Arrangements focusing on monitoring the outcomes of the new partnership arrangements implemented in September 2019, with an emphasis on Early Help provision. |
| TBC | Proposed joint piece of work with Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee: Child and Adolescent Mental Health to include prevalence, performance of CAMHS, emotional health, looked after children and additional educational needs. |

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| Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee - Work Plan 2019-2020 | |
|--|--|
| 9 October 2019 | <p>1. Car Parking Annual Performance 2018/2019</p> <p>2. Town Centre Regeneration Update – To include information on the progress and forecast for current and planned regeneration projects and to include economic development and links to the private sector.</p> <p>3. New Telecoms Technologies including the most effective way the council can utilise the new fibre optic networks, aqua cable etc in Blackpool</p> <p>4. Blackpool Community Safety Partnership Task and Finish Group Report. – To update members on the outcomes of the September 2019 meeting with representatives of the CSP.</p> |
| 4 December 2019 | <p>1. Tourism Performance Update - To include a representative of a Blackpool Tourist attraction and details of Business Tourism.</p> <p>2. Engagement of Consultants Annual Report</p> <p>3. Investments outside of the borough introduction report with potential for further task and finish group work</p> <p>4. Waste Services and Street Cleansing update on domestic waste collection new company performance, however, focus on services still provided by the Council such as street cleansing to prevent duplication with the work of the Shareholder’s Advisory Board</p> <p>5. Report back from input into Libraries Ambition Plan and update on scrutiny review on Housing and Homelessness contained within the Scrutiny Workplan Report</p> |
| 5 February 2020 | <p>1. Flood Risk Management and Drainage Annual Report including input into revision of Flood Risk Strategy</p> <p>2. Bathing Water Quality Annual Report</p> <p>3. Single Use Plastics and Climate Emergency Update – To include information on implementation of the SUP Action Plan and steps taken following declaration of Climate Emergency in Full Council July 2019.</p> <p>4. Report back from input into Sports and Physical Activity Strategy</p> |
| 22 April 2020 | <p>1. Tourism Performance Update - To include a representative of a Blackpool Tourist attraction and details of Business Tourism.</p> <p>2. Illuminations Report with a view to determining whether to pursue a more in depth review.</p> <p>3. Town Centre Regeneration Update – To include information on the progress and forecast for current and planned regeneration projects. To consider value for money and cost to the council.</p> <p>4. Housing and Homelessness Scrutiny Review Final Report to consider and approve the findings of the review</p> |
| TBC June 2020 | <p>1. Provisional Revenue Outturn Strategy</p> <p>2. Treasury Management Strategy</p> <p>3. Leisure Services to update on annual performance of the leisure centres and maintenance of facilities, to cover financial performance of the service.</p> <p>4. Parks and Green Environment</p> |

| Scrutiny Review Work | |
|--|---|
| September 2019 | Task and Finish Scrutiny review of Community Safety Partnership looking at the performance of the partnership in 2018/2019 and priorities for 2019/2020. |
| Commencing September 2019 | Full scrutiny review of Housing Strategy/Homelessness . To have a look at the impact of strategy and policy on homelessness levels and prevention of homelessness. |
| TBC | In a day review of the Illuminations impact and sustainability. Future plans. |
| Libraries in September 2019 SPA tbc | Input into policy development – Sports and Physical Activity Strategy and Libraries Ambition Plan |
| TBC | Potential piece of Task and Finish work considering Investments Outside of the Borough including a look at work on commercialisation. |

| Scrutiny Review Scope | |
|---|---------------------|
| Proposed Title | Scoping Date |
| Channel Shift Scrutiny Review | September 2019 |
| Criteria and reasons for selecting topic | |
| <p>Following a review of the annual governance statement on 17 January 2019 by the Audit Committee, significant progress was identified in delivering the Channel Shift agenda especially in areas such as Leisure services. It was, however, thought appropriate that a scrutiny review be established to see what other areas of the council, Channel Shift could be improved, these could include but are not limited to Children's and Adult Services.</p> | |
| Which priority within the Council Plan does this topic address? | |
| <p>The review covers both council priorities.</p> | |
| What are the main objectives of the scrutiny? | |
| <p>To come up with a series of recommendations that will improve the delivery of services, whilst building resilience with residents. The review should look at existing methods of channel shift and then look at departments where Channel Shift doesn't exist in the council and identify recommendations for those area.</p> | |
| What specific issues will be addressed as part of the scrutiny? | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can Channel Shift be expanded to cover more council services. • How effective the process of channel shift is. • Whether there is enough focus on the user. Has there been any user evaluation testing – is it effective from the public's point of view? • Has Channel Shift ensured that getting in touch with the Council is cheaper and more accessible for both residents and the Council. • How does it actually save money? How can be evidenced? • Does Channel Shift help deal with demand that there is other resource to support? • Can we compare the Blackpool approach to best practice standard? | |
| What possible outcomes are envisaged in terms of service improvements / benefits to the community? | |
| <p>It has the potential to improve service delivery whilst improving the mental health of residents.</p> | |
| How will the public be involved? (consider invitations / press releases for meetings, consultation with community groups / clubs, etc) | |
| <p>Partners from the NHS should be included as Channel Shift borders on emerging social prescription practices. Potential consultation with service users to ensure their views on the use of electronic means to contact the council and carry out jobs and requests is reflected in the review – potential use of social media to be explored in doing this.</p> | |
| How will the scrutiny achieve value for money for the Council / Council Tax payers? | |
| <p>By improving services for service users whilst reducing costs of services.</p> | |
| What primary / new evidence is needed for the scrutiny? | |
| <p>Analysis of cost and evidence of changes to the way in which members of the public are accessing services. I.e. for</p> | |

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| <p>each service with an online presence the number of service users accessing services online versus other means and how this has changed for each service over the Channel Shift period. Examples from other authorities.</p> |
| <p>What secondary / existing information will be needed? (include background information / existing reports (consider Internal Audit) / legislation / central government information and reports, etc.</p> |
| <p>Annual Governance Statement, Audit Committee reports and minutes.</p> |
| <p>Which Council officers / departments will provide information, advice and assistance for the scrutiny?</p> |
| <p>Corporate Marketing and PR, Communications Head of Benefits and Customer Services and Head of ICT Representatives of Children's, Highways and Adult services, Leisure Services and Registrars</p> |
| <p>What expert witnesses will the panel request input from outside of the Council?</p> |
| <p>CCG and NHS Transformation officers including Jamie Sweet.</p> |
| <p>What type of meetings (e.g. fact finding, evidence gathering, consultations, questioning, site visits), and how many in number are envisaged for the scrutiny?</p> |
| <p>Fact finding and evidence gathering.</p> |
| <p>Timescales / likely duration of enquiry</p> |
| <p>Two meetings are envisaged.</p> |
| <p>Lead Scrutiny Officer</p> |
| <p>Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager</p> |
| <p>Scrutiny Panel Members</p> |
| <p>TBC, expressions of interest requested from Members.</p> |