

Article 7 – Overview and Scrutiny Committees

7.01 General Role

The general role for the overview and scrutiny function is set out in Section 21 Local Government Act 2000.

Overview and Scrutiny should be carried out in a constructive way and should aim to contribute to the delivery of efficient and effective services that meet the needs and aspirations of local inhabitants. The Committees should also be prepared to challenge and question decisions and made constructive criticism.

The Council has split its overview and scrutiny responsibilities across three Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Two policy-focused Committees, which undertake forward looking, policy development work and pre-decision scrutiny, relevant to their specific areas. These are the Business and Housing Policy Committee and the Health and Environment Policy Committee.

A Scrutiny Committee (which holds the Cabinet to account, has a strategic outlook and solely holds the power of Call-In).

The detailed definitive Terms of Reference are listed in Part 4 of the Constitution – Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

7.02 Terms of Reference

In general the two Policy Committees will:

- a) Assist the Council, Leader and Cabinet in the development of its budget and policy framework by in depth analysis of the policy issues within the priority areas allocated to them in the Council strategy.
- b) Conduct research, as well as community and other consultation, for the analysis of policy issues, the identification of possible options and to make recommendations to Cabinet or Council. They will consider the impact of policies to assess if they have made a difference
- c) Question the Leader and other Members of the Cabinet and/or Committees and senior officers of the Council about their views and issues of proposals affecting the delegated priority of the Council strategy in each Committee's remit.
- d) May ensure that the Council adopts an entrepreneurial approach in achieving all the outcomes in the Council strategy.

The two policy Committees' broad terms of reference are as follows:

Business and Housing Policy Committee

To maintain a strategic overview of the progress towards the achievement of the first two priorities in the Council strategy namely:

- a) Making the District a premier business location
- b) Delivering quality housing options

Health and Environment Policy Committee

To maintain a strategic overview of the following priorities:

- a) Improving the quality of the District's environment
- b) Improving the health and happiness of the community

The Principal Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The broad terms of reference are as follows:

- a) It will hold the Cabinet to account by reviewing and scrutinising executive decisions.
- b) Reviewing and scrutinising the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives and performance targets
- c) Exercise the right to Call-In for reconsideration of decisions made but not yet implemented by the Leader, the Cabinet and Portfolio Holders and Officers

Matters in the remit of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee procedure rules in Part 4 sets out rules for the operation of these Committees and includes provision for resolving overlapping jurisdictions. In the first instance it is intended that the chairs of each Committee will meet to agree a solution in such situations.