

Template Scoping Document

Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
Scrutiny Review Title:	Scrutiny of SBC Scrutiny Arrangements
Background issues to review – rationale for scrutinising this issue:	Scrutiny Members have raised the issue of reviewing the Council’s Scrutiny arrangements for the last two years. It was agreed that a review should wait until the Sickness review was complete as that was a strategic priority for the council, and also until Statutory Government Guidance was published.
Is this issue covered by the Future Town Future Council Programme?	Reviewing the Council’s Scrutiny Function does not have any direct links to the Council’s Corporate Plan - Future Town Future Council. However, broadly the review is in line with the Council having transparent and accessible processes that provide residents with a function that adequately holds the Executive to account and helps improve local services via its reviews and recommendations.
Is this issue one that raises interest with the public via complaints or Members’ surgeries or with Officers?:	The Council’s Scrutiny function is not an issue that has raised any complaints.
Focus of the review: (State what the review focus will be)	<p><i>The Scrutiny Officer has discussed with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Senior Leadership Team the approach for the review. It was agreed that the review should use the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) Self Evaluation Framework Document as the starting point for the review alongside the Housing, Communities and Local Government Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities.</i></p> <p><i>Based on the issues raised by Members, officers have suggested that the following issues could provide a focus for the review by the Committee:</i></p> <p><u><i>Undertake a self evaluation of SBC’s current scrutiny arrangement (using the CfPS self-evaluation framework as a guide to this process) with O&S Committee Members and the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the two Select Committees.</i></u></p>

	<p><u>Once the self-evaluation module is complete the findings can be sent to the CfPS who have said that an LGA funded (free to the Council) review can be undertaken by the CfPS</u> <u>Consider agreeing a Scrutiny & Executive Protocol</u></p> <p>Aims/Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That, where possible, the Scrutiny and Executive Members and Senior Officers of the Council have an opportunity to reflect on the current arrangements, where possible identify good practise, and make recommendations for areas that could be improved upon. • That, where there are found to be areas for improvement, Members make SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time Bound) recommendations to improve the function • That, resource permitting, the review delivers those improvements to how it conducts scrutiny
<p><u>Timing issues:</u> Are there any timing constraints to when the review can be carried out?</p>	<p>Officers will advise at the meeting if there are any timing issues to consider. The review will have to fit in with the timing of the other Select Committee review work programme items. It would be hoped that most of the work could be conducted outside of formal committee meetings and concluded by the end of the 2019 calendar year.</p>
<p>The Committee will meet on (provide <u>dates</u> if known):</p>	<p>Dates: Day/Month/Time/Venue</p>
<p><u>SBC Leads</u> (list the Executive Portfolio Holders and SD's Heads of Service who should be engaged as part of the process):</p>	<p><i>Officers have suggested the following people:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The Leader</i> • <i>C.E. Matt Partridge</i> • <i>Strategic Director, Tom Pike (Lead Strategic Director who has overall responsibility for the scrutiny function)</i> • <i>Interim Strategic Director, Richard Protheroe (SD that line manages Constitutional Services)</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Chair & Vice-Chair of the three scrutiny committees</i> • <i>Seeking wider Member input</i> • <i>Some 4th tier Managers who have gone through a scrutiny review</i>
Any <u>other witnesses</u> (external persons/critical friend)?:	<p>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting. <i>Possible options identified by officers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Critical Friend – Would it be appropriate for this review to invite an officer/Member from another local authority to speak as a “critical friend”? Invite a Scrutiny Officer/Chair from another authority to review evidence and come to a meeting to provide a view on the Council’s arrangements</i> • <i>CfPS to act as an independent third party organisation to provide a view on the Council’s arrangements</i> • <i>Local residents/stakeholders who have taken part in previous reviews</i>
Site Visits	<p>Site visit to District Council(s) (x2 if they can be identified and arranged); also that those Council(s) have some similarity with SBC and operate a similar meeting structure (like a select committee).</p>
<p><u>Allocation of lead Members</u> on specific individual issues/questions:</p> <p>Any other Questions Members wish to cover:</p>	<p>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting.</p> <p>Members will ask questions on the following areas (list the issues to address during the interviews):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work programming 2. Scoping 3. Evidence 4. Final reports/recommendations 5. Monitoring outcomes 6. Council Priorities <p><i>Depending on what major strands are identified in the scope these can be allocated to lead Members.</i></p>

<p><u>Process</u></p>	<p>It is recommended that having agreed a scope that a locally devised self-evaluation framework scoring matrix be used to score the current arrangements (the matrix has used the characteristics of the CfPS Self-Evaluation Framework but focused on 6 key areas of (1) work programming (2) scoping (3) evidence (4) reports & recommendations (5) monitoring and (6) Council priorities. The scoring matrix may need to be used over 2 meetings to gather evidence alongside these meetings some case studies/visits to other authorities could be undertaken; following this the findings should be shared with Executive Members and SLT to reach an agreed position. Once this is agreed a session could be held with CfPS to share the results and to receive their input if it is agreed to pursue this element.</p>
<p><u>Site visits and evidence gathering in the Community</u></p>	<p>As above – some Members and officers to visit other authorities to see how they undertake scrutiny.</p>
<p><u>Equalities and Diversity issues:</u> The review will consider what the relevant equalities and diversity issues are regarding the Scrutiny subject that is being scrutinised</p>	<p>To be identified by the lead Member –</p> <p><u>Equalities & Diversity Issues</u> – Are there any E&D issues to consider in this review? –</p> <p>Yes, the review could consider whether the current arrangements for addressing equality and diversity issues in the way scrutiny is undertaken are adequate?</p>
<p><u>Constraints</u> (Issues that have been highlighted at the scoping stage but are too broad/detailed to be covered by the review):</p>	<p><i>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting 23 September 2019</i> (These issues can be captured and dealt with via other means – Briefings/email/officer action etc)</p> <p>The style and tone of this review should be that it focuses on getting the approach and focus right rather than focusing on being prescriptive about changes to committee structures. The outcomes should focus on: how we do it; what we do; skills & capacity; how improved outcomes are achieved.</p> <p>If the review agrees to undertake a Scrutiny and Executive Protocol that this be considered following the review as a possible outcome.</p>
<p><u>Background Documents/data</u> that can be provided to the review</p>	<p><i>As identified by the Committee at the draft scoping meeting 23 September 2019:</i> Evidence requested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined

	<p>Authorities https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/overview-and-scrutiny-statutory-guidance-for-councils-and-combined-authorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notes from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS), Government Scrutiny Guidance Symposium (attached) • CfPS Scrutiny Evaluation Framework (https://www.cfps.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/CfPS-Scrutiny-Evaluation-v2-SINGLE-PAGES.pdf) • Current Scrutiny Committees Terms of Reference and Work Programmes http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/content/committees/96416/Part4E-Overview-and-Scrutiny-Procedure-Rules-updated-October-2016.pdf <p>Work Programmes -</p> <p>https://democracy.stevenage.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=151&MId=4388&Ver=4</p> <p>https://democracy.stevenage.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=154&MId=4389&Ver=4</p> <p>https://democracy.stevenage.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=4268&Ver=4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LGA Guidance - https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/tomorrows-people-guide-ov-f48.pdf
<p><u>Agreed Milestones and review sign off</u> -To be agreed by Members and officers</p>	<p><i>Formal response from Executive Portfolio Holder (Executives have a Statutory requirement to respond to Scrutiny review recommendations two months after receiving a final report and recommendations of a review: Date Executive Portfolio responses are expected (dependent on the final report & executive portfolio response template publishing date): DD MM YY</i></p> <p><i>Date for monitoring implementation of recommendations – final sign off (typically one year from completion of the review): DD MM YY</i> (Close to this date the Select Committee will receive a report at a Committee meeting to agree the final sign off of the review recommendations)</p>