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## 1. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1.1 The functions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall be as follows:

- (a) to review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
- (b) to make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council and/or the executive in connection with the discharge of any functions;
- (c) to review corporate strategies;
- (d) to ensure that the decisions/actions of the Cabinet accord with the Council's policies and budget;
- (e) to monitor and scrutinise the financial performance of the Council and making recommendations to the Cabinet in relation to annual revenue and capital guidelines, bids and submissions;
- (f) when required, to question members of the Cabinet or other Committees and officers about their decisions and performance whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects;
- (g) to make recommendations to Cabinet and appropriate Committees and the Council arising from the outcome of the overview and scrutiny process;
- (h) to consider any matter affecting the Epping Forest District or its residents
- (i) to review, scrutinise and monitor the performance of other public bodies active in the District;
- (j) to question and gather evidence from any person (including members, officers and others) on issues falling within the functions of the Committee;
- (k) to determine terms of reference, memberships (including the appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman) and work programmes for all Select Committees and Task and Finish Panels;
- (l) to scrutinise executive decisions;
- (m) to exercise the right to call-in, for reconsideration of decisions made but not yet implemented by the Executive;
- (n) to consider and make responses to executive decisions which are called in either as a Committee or through referral to a Select Committee or Task and Finish Panel;
- (o) to monitor the effectiveness of the call-in procedure, reviewing the number and reasons for call-in and making recommendations to the Council on any changes required to improve operation of the process;

- (p) to monitor and scrutinise the Cabinet Forward Plan (the Key Decision List);
- (q) to review the implications of Government consultation documents where requested by members;
- (r) to receive presentations from the Leader of the Council outlining plans for the year ahead and reporting performance in the previous Council year;
- (s) to consider requests from the Cabinet for scrutiny involvement in policy development and determining appropriate action;
- (t) to consider petitions where the number of signatures meets or exceeds the trigger level contained in the Council's Petitions Scheme and make recommendations as appropriate; and
- (u) to review, when requested by the petition organiser, the Council's response to any petition which they consider has not been dealt with properly including, if appropriate, investigating, making recommendations to the Council or Executive or arranging for the matter to be considered at a meeting of the full Council;

## **2. SELECT COMMITTEES**

- 2.1 Select committees may be established on an annual basis by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.2 Select committee status will generally be restricted to those activities of a recurring or cyclical character which require a longer term involvement by members.
- 2.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall determine the number and terms of reference of the select committees and shall review whether they should continue in being at the first meeting of each municipal year.
- 2.4 Select Committees will:
  - (a) adhere to an annual work programme agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
  - (b) have a chairman and vice-chairman appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
  - (c) have memberships which reflect pro-rata requirements and the lowest number of members required to achieve cross-party representation, whilst allowing the inclusion of members who are not members of a political group or are not members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
  - (d) have memberships which represent the minimum number necessary to adhere to their work programmes;

- (e) be able to seek delegated authority from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to vary their terms of reference and work programme according to circumstances;
  - (f) report (through the chairman of the select committee) to each meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress with the respective work programme and on any recommendations for consideration;
  - (g) consider any matter referred by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Cabinet or a relevant Portfolio Holder, and report and make recommendations directly to the Committee, the Cabinet or relevant Portfolio Holder when appropriate;
  - (h) in the circumstances set out in (f) above, the report shall be submitted in the name of the select committee and presented by its chairman, unless the work of more than one select committee is involved, in which case any report to another Council body will be in the name of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and presented by its Chairman;
  - (i) in the event that the submission of a select committee report to another Council body is required such that it cannot be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with paragraph (h) above, the select committee report may proceed for consideration subject to prior consultation with the Chairman of that Committee as to the reasons for urgency;
  - (j) extend a standing invitation to relevant portfolio holder(s) to attend select committee meetings to answer questions and provide information on any matters affecting their portfolios which are under consideration; and
  - (k) hear questions and presentations by members of the public or external organisations which are relevant to the work of the select committee concerned.
- 2.5 Any member of the Council may be a member of a select committee, save that any Cabinet member may not be a member of a select committee which deals directly with matters within the responsibilities of their portfolio.
- 2.6 Any member of the Council shall be able to attend any meeting of a select committee and be notified of the publication of the agenda.
- 2.7 The provisions of Operational Standing Order 14 shall apply to the select committees.

### **3. TASK AND FINISH PANELS**

- 3.1 Task and Finish Panels may be established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in order to deal with ad-hoc projects or reviews included in the annual work programme for overview and scrutiny.
- 3.2 Task and Finish Panel status will be restricted to those activities which are issue-based, time limited and non-cyclical in character and have clearly defined objectives.
- 3.3 Task and Finish Panels will:

- (a) have terms of reference, membership and a work programme approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
  - (b) have a Chairman and Vice-Chairman appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
  - (c) have memberships which need not be based on pro-rata rules and be flexible as to the number of Councillors appointed to membership. There will be no restriction on the numbers appointed;
  - (d) have memberships which represent the minimum number necessary to adhere to their work programmes;
  - (e) be able to make proposals to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the variation of their terms of reference or work programme;
  - (f) be able to seek delegated authority from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the variation of their terms of reference and work programmes according to circumstances;
  - (g) report through the Panel Chairman at each meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress with their work programme and on any recommendations for consideration;
  - (h) be able, after consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to report to the Council, the Cabinet, a Cabinet Committee, a Portfolio Holder or any other Council body;
  - (i) in the circumstances set out in (h), the report shall be submitted in the name of the Panel and presented by its Chairman, unless the work of more than one Panel is involved, in which case any report to another Council body will be in the name of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and presented by its Chairman;
  - (j) in the event that the submission of a Panel report to another Council body is required such that it cannot be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with paragraph (h) above, the Panel report may proceed for consideration subject to prior consultation with the Chairman of the Committee as to the reasons for urgency;
  - (k) extend a standing invitation to relevant portfolio holder(s) to attend Panel meetings to answer questions and provide information on any matters affecting their portfolios which are under consideration; and
  - (l) hear questions and presentations by members of the public or external organisations which are relevant to the work of the Panel concerned.
- 3.4 Any member of the Council may be a member of a Task and Finish Panel, save that a member of the Cabinet may not be a member of any Panel which deals directly with matters within the responsibilities of their portfolio.
- 3.5 No Task and Finish Panel shall be comprised of members of a single political group only.

- 3.6 Any member of the Council shall be able to attend any meeting of a Task and Finish Panel.

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