

## **Draft Scrutiny Committee Operating Principles 2018/19**

### **Meeting Arrangements**

1. At least 10 Committee meetings will be scheduled each year to match the City Executive Board meeting cycle. This is to enable pre-decision scrutiny of decision to be taken at the next Board meeting.
2. All public addresses and councillor contributions will be directed through the Chair.
3. The Scrutiny Committee will hold the City Executive Board and Senior Officers to account publicly at committee meetings.
4. The Chair will report regularly to Council on the work of the Scrutiny Committee. The Committee may also produce an annual report.

### **Standing Panels and Review Groups**

5. The Scrutiny Committee will set Standing Panels and Review Groups each year to consider selected issues in more detail.
6. Standing Panels will hold meetings throughout the year, and consider quarterly performance reports, Executive decisions and other issues within their remit.
7. Review Groups will be formed to undertake issue led and time bound 'task and finish' reviews of specific issues, before concluding their work with a report and recommendations, usually to the City Executive Board.
8. Review Group and Standing Panel meetings will be held in public or private as the meeting business dictates.
9. Standing Panel and Review Group Chairs must be members of the Scrutiny Committee and can be from any political group. Panel Chairs will be elected at the first meeting of the Committee in the municipal year. Review Group Chairs will be elected by the Committee when the groups are established.
10. Standing Panels will meet approximately 5 times each year to consider items and decisions that fall within their remit. Review Groups will meet as often as is required for them to conclude their work. The Scrutiny Committee will oversee the work of Review Groups to ensure they do not overrun unduly.
11. The Scrutiny Committee will commission and scope the work of Standing Panels and Review Groups and therefore has final agreement on their recommendations. With the Chair's agreement, there may be occasions where this is not possible and reports will go directly to the City Executive Board.
12. In any given year, the organisation has capacity to support either:
  - a) 2 Standing Panels and 3 Review Groups; or
  - b) 3 Standing Panels and 2 Review Groups
13. No substitutions will be allowed on Standing Panels or Review Groups. This is to provide continuity of membership given the focused nature of their work.

14. Chairs of Standing Panels and Review Groups will report back to the Committee on progress and outcomes. They will also be invited to present their reports and recommendations to the City Executive Board.

### **Political Balance**

15. The Chair of the Scrutiny Committee must be a member of the opposition, and the Vice-Chair can be from any political group.
16. The membership of Standing Panels and Review Groups will be set by the Scrutiny Committee and drawn from all non-executive members. Group secretaries will be asked to nominate members to any such groups for agreement by the Committee.
17. Standing Panels and Review Groups do not have to be politically balanced and the Committee will use the following guide for appointment:
- 4 members – 1 from each political group plus another administration member.
  - 5 members – 1 from each political group plus another 2 administration members.
  - 6 members - 1 from each political group plus another 2 administration members. The sixth member will be agreed by the Committee.
18. Where a political group is unable to take up a seat, or decides that it will waive the seat, the Committee will agree the new appointment.

### **The Scrutiny Work Plan**

19. The [Work Plan](#) will consist of a number of issues for consideration informed by consultation with all councillors and Senior Officers. Guidance criteria for prioritising work will be provided by the Scrutiny Officer, but the Committee are responsible for agreeing their Work Plan.
20. The Work Plan will be reviewed at every meeting and adjusted to reflect the wishes of the Committee and take account of changes to the [Forward Plan](#) of executive decisions.
21. Items will be taken forward as resources allow and scoped before Review Groups are commissioned.
22. The management of the Work Plan will be with the whole Committee, with the Chair and Vice-Chair taking an “organisational role” between meetings.
23. Individual scrutiny members, or any 4 other members of the Council, will be able to put an item on the agenda of a Scrutiny Committee. All Councillor Calls for Action and Call-Ins will be considered at a public meeting of the Committee.
24. Members of the public can also suggest a topic for the Work Plan. Suggestions can be submitted via the Council’s [Work Plan Suggestion Form](#), or at a meeting of the Committee.
25. The Scrutiny Committee and its Panels will provide as much notice as is possible when commissioning reports from council officers (minimum 6 weeks).

## **Co-option**

26. At the discretion of the Committee, residents and other specialists may be co-opted as non-voting members of the Committee, Standing Panels and Review Groups, as the subject matter dictates for a period ending no later than the day of the first meeting of the next council year. The Committee may discontinue an appointment at any time.

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