

Terms of Reference

Finance and Performance Working Group (of the Scrutiny Committee)

1. Purpose

The Finance and Performance Working Group is a sub-group of the Scrutiny Committee, established to support the Committee in carrying out its responsibilities by examining financial matters and performance outcomes across the Council and its wholly or partly owned companies.

2. Status

The Working Group is an informal, non-decision-making body created by the Scrutiny Committee. It operates under the authority of the Committee and report its findings and recommendations for formal consideration.

3. Scope of Work

The Finance and Performance Working Group will:

- Review the Council's financial and budgetary issues and decisions
- Review and provide input into the development of the Council's annual budget
- Monitor the Council's financial performance and data on a quarterly basis, identifying areas of underperformance
- Review the finance and performance of the Council-owned companies
- Scrutinise executive decisions relating to any companies wholly or partly owned by the Council

4. Membership

Membership will be set by the Scrutiny Committee and drawn from all non-executive members. It will not be required to reflect the Council's make up. The Finance and Performance Working Group will comprise four councillors or up to one member from each political group.

The quorum shall be 2 members. Substitution will be allowed.

5. Chairing

The Chair shall be elected by the Scrutiny Committee at the first meeting of the municipal year, or at the time of the group's formation.

The Chair will be responsible for leading meetings and reporting the Group's findings and recommendations back to the Scrutiny Committee. They may also be invited to present these outcomes to Cabinet or the Shareholder and Joint Venture Group.

In the absence of the Chair, members present shall elect an acting chair for that meeting.

6. Meetings and ways of working

- The Scrutiny Committee will commission and scope the work of the Finance and Performance Working Group and therefore has final agreement on its recommendations.
- The agenda will be issued in advance, however the usual requirement for 7 days' notice do not apply.
- Meetings will be held 6 times each year. Additional meetings must be approved by the Monitoring Officer.
- Members are expected to review papers in advance and contribute constructively to discussions with a focus on evidence-based scrutiny.
- Meetings are not legally required to be held in-person and are not subject to the Local Government Act 1972 requirement to be held in public.

7. Attendees

Officers or cabinet members shall attend the meetings from time to time where their attendance is required as a result of an item on the agenda.

Directors and Company Secretaries of Council-owned companies may be invited to attend meetings for businesses relating to their companies.

External guests or other members of the council may be invited to meetings where their input is required to inform the work of the Working Group.

8. Access to information

Members of the Finance and Performance Working Group will have access to relevant papers, including those concerning Council-owned companies. It may request additional information as necessary to support its work.

9. Confidentiality

Meetings and agendas of the Working Group may involve the consideration of information that is personal, confidential or commercially sensitive. All such information must be treated confidential by those in attendance unless otherwise agreed in advance with the Chief Executive or the Monitoring Officer, following a request to share information outside of the meeting.

10. Relationship with Scrutiny

The Finance and Performance Working Group supports the broader work of the Scrutiny committee. It acts in an advisory and investigative capacity, with its outputs feeding into the formal scrutiny process via reports and recommendations for the Committee's consideration.