

9 December 2020		ITEM: 10 Decision: 110537
Cabinet		
Overview and Scrutiny at Thurrock: A Review		
Wards and communities affected: All	Key Decision: Key	
Report of: Councillor Oliver Gerrish, Chair of Corporate O&S and the Scrutiny Review		
Accountable Assistant Director: Ian Hunt, Assistant Director Law and Governance, and Monitoring Officer		
Accountable Director: Sean Clark, Corporate Director Finance, Governance and Property		
This report is public		

Executive Summary

This report details the Task and Finish Review that was undertaken in order to focus on overview and scrutiny, and the motions process at Thurrock Council. The outcome of the review is to ensure scrutiny works for all Members, and the function meets national guidelines and frameworks.

1. Recommendation(s)

- 1.1 That Cabinet approve the recommendations as set out in Appendix 1 as they relate to Cabinet functions, and to note those that pertain to the Overview and Scrutiny Function.**
- 1.2 That Cabinet approve the draft Executive-Scrutiny Protocol, as attached at Appendix 1.**

2. Introduction and Background

- 2.1 This review began due to a number of factors, including Members wish to have a detailed look into the process, and a motion raised at October 2018 Full Council by Councillor Spillman who questioned the effectiveness of motions, and the overview and scrutiny process across Thurrock.
- 2.2 Members undertook a number of meetings and events, as well as detailed research to look into the current state of scrutiny at Thurrock and how the

function currently works well, and what areas could be improved by the work of the review.

2.3 The Committee's findings are attached at Appendix 1 of this report.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

3.1 The issues and options relating to the report are contained at Appendix 1 of this report.

3.2 Members are asked to be mindful of the meaningful balance required to deliver an effective scrutiny function alongside the resources available to support its work and aspirations. The recommendations in the review represent a refocus of current resources rather than a call for additional financial support or officer resource.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

4.1 This report has been agreed by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and has now progressed to Cabinet in order they may note the important findings of the Review, but also to approve any recommendations relating to them, most notably the Executive-Scrutiny Protocol.

4.2 The recommendations will allow for scrutiny committees and the Executive to have an enhanced working relationship and to improve practices in the scrutiny function in line with evidenced findings led by Members.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

5.1 Members of overview and scrutiny committees and the Executive, have been consulted on the findings laid out in this report, through the comments made at the scrutiny symposium and the Executive-Scrutiny Workshop.

5.2 This report has also gone through internal processes such as Directors Board, and governance procedures.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 Delivery of successful, high-quality governance has a significant impact on all of Thurrock Council's priorities. Specifically, on including the community in governance procedures such as Committee meetings and asking questions of Members.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Dammy Adewole**

Senior Management Accountant

There are no financial implications attached to this report.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Courage Emovon**
AG Strategic Lead, Deputy Head of Legal Services, and Deputy Monitoring Officer

This report ensures that Thurrock Council meets the Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local Combined Authorities, published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in May 2019. It also ensures that the Council is meeting its overview and scrutiny function as provided by the Local Government Act 2000, and the Localism Act 2011.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Rebecca Lee**
Community Development Team Manager

This report helps Thurrock Council meet its diversity and equality requirements by allowing greater input into the decision-making and governance processes by Members and officers, which leads to increased accountability and access for members of the public.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder, and Impact on Looked After Children)

There are no other implications attached to this report.

8. Background papers used in preparing the report (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- None

9. Appendices to the report

- Appendix 1: Overview and Scrutiny at Thurrock Council – A Review

Report Author:

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Democratic Services

Finance, Governance and Property