

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda

Wednesday, 23 May 2018

**7.50 pm**, or upon the rising of the Council AGM, whichever is the later  
Civic Suite  
Lewisham Town Hall  
London SE6 4RU

For more information contact: Charlotte Dale (020 8314 8286)

This meeting is an open meeting and all items on the agenda may be audio recorded and/or filmed.

## Part 1

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# Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members

Members of the committee, listed below, are summoned to attend the meeting to be held on Wednesday, 23 May 2018.

Ian Thomas, Chief Executive  
Tuesday, 15 May 2018

Councillor Alan Hall

Councillor Obajimi Adefiranye

Councillor Abdeslam Amrani

Councillor Peter Bernards

Councillor Andre Bourne

Councillor Bill Brown

Councillor Suzannah Clarke

Councillor Liam Curran

Councillor Colin Elliott

Councillor Carl Handley

Councillor Sue Hordijkeno

Councillor Mark Ingleby

Councillor Liz Johnston-Franklin

Councillor Jim Mallory

Councillor Hilary Moore

Councillor Pauline Morrison

Councillor John Muldoon

Councillor Olurotimi Ogunbadewa

Councillor Jacq Paschoud

Councillor John Paschoud

Councillor Luke Sorba

Councillor Eva Stamirowski

Councillor James-J Walsh

Councillor Susan Wise

Councillor Tauseef Anwar

Councillor Juliet Campbell

Councillor Patrick Codd

Councillor Tom Copley

Councillor Sophie Davis

Councillor Alex Feis-Bryce

Councillor Aisling Gallagher

Councillor Leo Gibbons

Councillor Octavia Holland

Councillor Caroline Kalu

Councillor Silvana Kelleher

Councillor Louise Krupski

Councillor Stephen Penfold

Councillor James Rathbone

Councillor Sakina Sheikh

Councillor Coral Howard

Councillor Paul Maslin

Councillor Joan Millbank

Councillor Alan Smith

# Agenda Item 1

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE		
<b>Report Title</b>	Election of Chair and Vice Chair	
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	Item No. 1
<b>Ward</b>		
<b>Contributors</b>	Chief Executive (Head of Business & Committee)	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 23 May 2018

## Recommendation

To elect a Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee for the municipal year 2018/19

# Agenda Item 2

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE		
<b>Report Title</b>	Chairs and Vice Chairs of Select Committees	
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	Item No.
<b>Ward</b>		
<b>Contributors</b>	Chief Executive (Head of Business & Committee)	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 23 May 2018

## 1. Chairs and Vice Chairs of Select Committees

The constitution requires that the Chairs and Vice Chairs of scrutiny select committees are allocated on a proportional basis based on party strength on the Council.

The party composition of the Council is:

<b><u>Lab.</u></b>
55 (100%)

There are currently six permanent select committees. The option previously applied was to make two separate allocations of the six Chair and Vice-Chair positions.

### ALLOCATION

The Council's previous practice has been to make two separate allocations

The allocation for both Chairs and Vice-Chairs now would be as follows:

<b><u>Lab.</u></b>
6

Based on these figures the option to be applied to both Chair and Vice Chair allocations should be:

Proposed Allocation

<u>Lab.</u>
6

**RECOMMENDATION** that the Committee approves the current proportional allocation of Chairs and Vice-Chairs of select committees.

# Agenda Item 3

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE		
<b>Report Title</b>	Appointments to Sub-Committees	
<b>Key Decision</b>	No	Item No. 2
<b>Ward</b>		
<b>Contributors</b>	Chief Executive (Head of Business & Committee)	
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	Date: 23 May 2018

## 2. Appointments to Select Committees

**RECOMMENDATION** That the Committee appoints members to serve on the following:-

- (a) Healthier Communities Select Committee
- (b) Children & Young People Select Committee
- (c) Public Accounts Select Committee
- (d) Safer & Stronger Communities Select Committee
- (e) Sustainable Development Select Committee
- (f) Housing Select Committee

**NOTE:** In accordance with Section J: Committee General Rules paragraph 13, the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee serve as ex-officio members of each Select Committee. The custom of the council has been to regard these ex-officio members as being additional to the proportional political allocation of committee places. This practice requires the unanimous consent of this committee

- (g) Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel

**NOTE:** In accordance with Article 6 of the Constitution, this will consist of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Chair of each of the select committees appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and 3 or the smallest number higher of Councillors required to ensure the political composition of the Council is reflected.

- (h) Overview & Scrutiny (Education) Business Panel

**NOTE:** In accordance with Article 6 of the Constitution, this will consist of those members of the Council appointed to the Business Panel plus 2 Diocesan Representatives and 3 Parent Governor representatives.

<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>			
<b>Title</b>	Update: Communities and Local Government Committee – the effectiveness of Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees	<b>Item No</b>	
<b>Contributors</b>	Executive Director for Resources and Regeneration		
<b>Class</b>	Part 1	<b>Date</b>	May 23 2018

## 1. Purpose of Update

- 1.1 The Government has published its response to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee’s report into the effectiveness of Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees. This paper provides a summary.

## 2. Recommendation

- 2.1. To note the update.

## 3. Update

- 3.1 The UK Parliament’s Communities and Local Government Select Committee published a report into the effectiveness of Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees on 15 December 2017. The main message of the report was that local government scrutiny plays an important role in ensuring accountability although there are sometimes barriers stopping scrutiny from being as effective as it can be.
- 3.2 The report suggested that parity of esteem between the executive and scrutiny was very important, alongside access to information and adequate resourcing. It also suggested that the scrutiny of commercial partners needs proper attention to ensure public accountability. It made a number of recommendations that it felt would address the issues raised by the investigation.
- 3.3 The Government’s response to the report was published on 5 March 2018. The response emphasised the Government’s view that the key requirement for effective scrutiny was a positive council culture. “Where councils recognise the benefits effective scrutiny can bring, and put in place suitable arrangements, it is working well”.
- 3.4 A number of recommendations put forward by the Committee were accepted by the Government. Key messages included:
- A commitment to ensuring that councils are aware of Scrutiny’s importance, understand its benefits and have access to best practice.
  - A recommendation that Scrutiny committees should report to the Full Council - updated guidance would be issued making this recommendation.

- An acknowledgement that the Executive’s involvement in the scrutiny should be limited - updated guidance would make it clear that members of the executive should not participate in scrutiny other than as witnesses.
- A suggestion that councils should judge each scrutiny request to access sensitive documents on its merits and not refuse such requests as a matter of course.
- An acknowledgement that scrutiny support officers should be able to operate independently and provide impartial advice.
- A recommendation that scrutiny committees should actively encourage public participation.
- An acknowledgement that the chair of a scrutiny committee can have a great impact on its effectiveness and that he or she needs to have the requisite skills, knowledge and acumen to take on the functions and achieve the outcomes that the scrutiny committee needs to achieve. In some instances, the election, rather than the appointment, of a chair might help ensure that the right individual is ultimately selected, although the Government feels that this is a decision for every council to make for itself.
- A suggestion that when councils are tendering contracts with external bodies they should carefully consider including requirements to ensure they are as open and transparent as appropriate, although it is up to each council to decide how best to hold to account those who run its services.

3.5 A number of recommendations put forward by the Committee were not accepted, mainly around resourcing. “The Government firmly believes that each individual authority is best-placed to decide for itself how to support scrutiny most effectively”. Key messages included:

- Each council should decide for itself how to resource scrutiny committees, including how much access to senior officers is appropriate to enable them to function effectively.
- Councils should not be required to publish a summary of resources allocated to scrutiny, using expenditure on executive support as a comparator. (The justification being that many councils do not have dedicated scrutiny support staff so this would make quantifying the support that scrutiny committees receive very difficult. In the Government’s view, the quality of the support is the more important issue.)
- The role of the Statutory Scrutiny Officer should not be enhanced as decisions about the allocation of resources for the scrutiny function are best made at a local level and each council is best-placed to know which arrangements will suit its own individual circumstances.

3.6 The Government response also included a commitment that it would ensure that scrutiny training provided by the Local Government Association was effective and relevant; and responsive to feedback.

3.7 A further update will be provided to Members once updated guidance from the Government has been published.

#### **4. Further implications**

4.1 The implications of any updated guidance issued as a result of the Government response will be assessed once the guidance is issued.

For further information please contact Charlotte Dale, Interim Overview and Scrutiny Manager on 020-8314-8286

**Background Paper**

[Government Response to the Communities and Local Government Committee First Report of Session 2017-19 on the Effectiveness of Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees](#)