

ANNUAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REPORT TO COUNCIL

BY

COUNCILLOR FIONA MARTIN
CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

Foreword by the Chair



It has been my pleasure to Chair the Overview Committee again this past year. The members of this committee have always engaged fully in scrutiny, with debates that are lively & detailed. The Council's performance has been diligently scrutinised.

The Overview Committee worked closely with the Executive and all Elected Members to act as a focus for constructive challenge in order to maintain the drive to improve public services, reflect public concerns, and enable improvements to be made to policies and their implementation.

New Councillors have received training to enable them to help continue the important work of this committee.

Introduction to Scrutiny

On the implementation of the Local Government Act 2000, a new political system was introduced which allowed Councils to have a separate 'executive' rather than just the committee system: a Cabinet model which is similar to central Government.

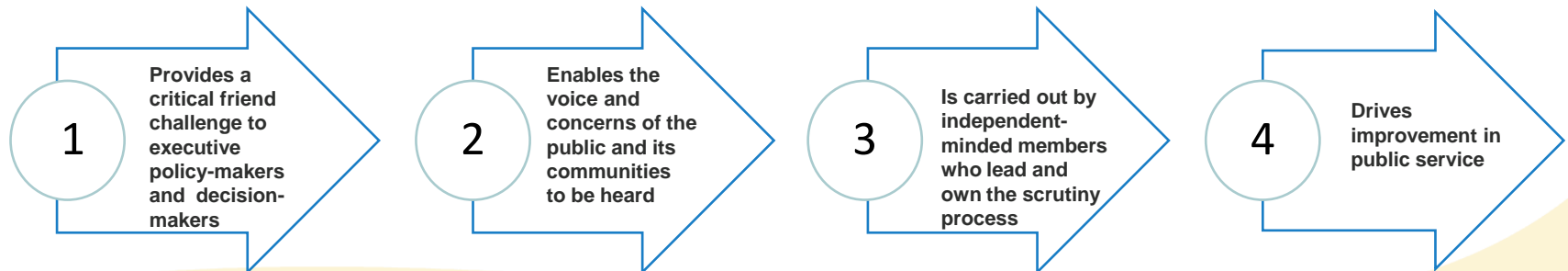
To balance the Executive and monitor its decision-making, the function of Overview and Scrutiny was introduced requiring all Councils to have at least one Scrutiny Committee. The committee(s) would be similar to a select committee with back benchers acting as critical friends.

Scrutiny can look at:

- Decisions by the Executive
- External Partners
- Public Services
- Performance
- Budget
- Health

Scrutiny cannot look at:

- Any legal proceedings
- Individual complaints
- Licensing decisions
- Planning decisions
- Ombudsman



Overview Committee Agenda

The Overview Committee continues to consider regular items as well as one-off reports as follows:

Regular items:

- Health scrutiny updates
- Performance and governance framework (quarterly)
- Overview and Scrutiny recommendation tracker
- Executive / council forward plan
- Scrutiny topic submissions
- Updates from scrutiny and policy panels
- Annual scrutiny programme
- Scoping of scrutiny topics
- Overview annual programme (annually)
- Budget setting (annually)
- Rough Sleeping in East Lindsey (annual report)

Overview Committee Agenda

Topics considered during the year:

- Update on Markets
- Update on the twin-streaming / commercial waste service
- Q&A session with John Turner, Chief Executive of NHS Lincs CCG
- Sustainable Products Policy
- Update on Towns Fund projects
- South & East Lincolnshire community safety strategy
- Planning Service update
- Enforcement update – enviro-crime, caravans, other developments
- Budget Training Update
- Budget 22/23
- Draft Litter and Fly-Tipping Strategy
- Framework for keeping ward members informed
- Budget overview 23/24 (including consultation)
- First draft S&ELCP Asset Management Strategy
- Partnership Policy Alignment
- Update on Community Support and Network Hubs
- Lincolnshire Districts Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Scrutiny Heritage Briefing Report
- Enviro-crime contract progress

Contributors to the work of the Overview Committee

The Overview Committee is always keen to engage with Executive Board members, and we invite them to attend Overview Committee to contribute to agenda items on a regular basis.

Officers often attend Overview Committee to provide updates and detail on agenda items; and provide support, information, and evidence to Scrutiny & Policy Panels.

The Committee is also grateful to external witnesses who attend Scrutiny & Policy Panels to support their work, and/or respond to questionnaires.

Annual Scrutiny Programme

Each year, the Overview Committee puts an Annual Scrutiny Programme in place, which sets out a proposed schedule of Scrutiny & Policy Panels.

The Scrutiny & Policy Panels are task and finish groups which report to either Executive Board or Full Council. The Annual Scrutiny Programme may also include Working Groups which may either be very short pieces of work (one meeting) reporting back to Overview Committee; or ongoing pieces of work where it is not possible to set a definite deadline for conclusion due to outside influences.

Only two planned Panels should run concurrently, but a third Panel may be set up in-year if an important and/or urgent topic is identified. Planned panels may be moved to accommodate urgent scrutiny topics if necessary.

Scrutiny & Policy Panels

The Overview Committee commissions Scrutiny & Policy Panels and Working Groups to consider agreed topics. This provides time for topics to be considered in more detail, and also provides opportunities for all non-executive Councillors to get involved in the scrutiny process. Councillors have considered some interesting topics that have involved quite detailed consideration. These have included:

- How ELDC can respond to the post-covid impact on our communities (part 3)
- To monitor the implementation of Magna Vitae's 5-year plan, including Key Performance Indicators
- How can ELDC help improve the design, quality, and choice of new and existing housing in the district?
- To explore the issues surrounding caravan licensing and enforcement
- SRG – Campus for Future Living
- SRG – Broadway Car park
- SRG – Mobi-Hub project



Joint Scrutiny Programme

We have developed a joint scrutiny programme for the year ahead to support the partnership's work programme. The joint task & finish groups will look at key areas of common strategic interest and panel members will be taken from councillors across the partnership. It has been agreed there will be no more than 4 joint scrutiny panels per year. The topics chosen for this year are:

- Health & Wellbeing Action Plan
- Housing Strategy
- Enviro-crime Enforcement Contract review



Also, the Annual Joint Scrutiny of the Partnership will take place between September and November of this year, as per the commitment made in the Memorandum of Understanding when the Partnership was formed.

Influencing & Monitoring

Influencing Decisions

In the past year, 90% of scrutiny recommendations were accepted by the Executive Board/Portfolio Holders. We expect this to continue as we aim to play a positive role in improving the achievements and outputs of the Council.

Monitoring

All recommendations from Scrutiny & Policy Panels are considered by the relevant Portfolio Holder, with the response recorded in the Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker, and then monitored through to conclusion at each Overview Committee.

Upcoming activity for 23/24

Members have recently been invited to submit a scrutiny topic form to suggest new areas of scrutiny for the current year. Topics already agreed for this year are:

- To review and monitor the implementation of the Community Safety Strategy approved in 2022
- To review the running of Invest East Lindsey Limited, with a particular focus on Kingfisher Caravan Park
- To review the Carbon Reduction Plan and also the Council's position on the Climate Emergency
- Review of the provision of public conveniences in East Lindsey

Topics considered at Overview Committee meetings are added throughout the year.