

Council

28 September 2021

Review of Overview and Scrutiny

Recommendation

That Council approves the proposals for scrutiny reform as set out in Appendix 2

1. Background

- 1.1. The purpose of scrutiny is to provide a means to hold decision makers to account and to investigate and inquire into issues of interest and relevance to local people.
- 1.2. In light of the Government publishing statutory guidance on overview and scrutiny and the Centre for Public Scrutiny (now the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (“CfGS”) updating its “Good Scrutiny Guide” in 2019, the Council invited Dr Jane Martin CBE to review how the Council currently operates scrutiny and to advise on improvements that would build on the statutory guidance and assist the Council to deliver on its objectives.
- 1.3. The review was commissioned in February 2020 and during subsequent months was conducted via a series of remote interviews with members and officers, and included a desk top analysis of past agendas, minutes and Task and Finish Group outputs. The review covered the following themes:
 - Culture and behaviours;
 - Reinforcing the value and importance of challenge;
 - Ownership of recommendations and actions;
 - Support for scrutiny members;
 - Aligning scrutiny more effectively to our Council Plan objectives; and
 - How to involve the public in scrutiny more effectively.
- 1.4. At its meeting of 9 September 2021, Cabinet agreed to recommend to Council the proposals for scrutiny reform as set out in Appendix 2. The Report will also be considered by the Audit and Standards Committee at its meeting on 24 September 2021.

2. Report Findings

2.1. Overall, the feedback from the review was positive and highlighted several areas of good practice, particularly around the use of member working groups during Covid. However, it also concluded that the scrutiny function would benefit from reinvigoration. A principles-based approach was recommended to drive scrutiny forward, reflecting the principles embedded in statutory guidance, being:

- independent ownership;
- driving improvement;
- critical friend challenge; and
- public voice.

2.2. The review outlined a number of opportunities to strengthen the overview and scrutiny function. These were:

- **Parity of esteem:** Scrutiny must have an authoritative voice and support to enhance executive policy development and decision-making.
- **Scrutinising performance:** Scrutiny discussions should be clearly led so that presentations add value, there is a clear line of sight to corporate success indicators and interpretation of the data is usefully aligned to risk.
- **Build a corporate partnership:** Scrutiny should hold the executive to account where necessary. Scrutiny members own the process recognising the wider public interest for Warwickshire. The agenda should be focused on corporate business with purposeful evidence-based discussion.
- **Work smarter:** Meetings should be more flexible, proactive and responsive to corporate priorities. Meetings should be collegiate, constructive and challenging.
- **Member support and training:** Members and officers involved in scrutiny should be supported and provided with appropriate training to maximise the benefit from their roles in the scrutiny process.
- **Develop external focus:** Imaginative thinking to reach local people is needed. Scrutiny should be aligned with public consultation exercises to inform executive strategy.

2.3. The report also focussed on a series of principles that would drive the refreshed approach. These were:

- **Partnership:** The scrutiny function is an integral, authoritative corporate partner with the executive in policy development and

decision-making. This partnership is focused and aligned with the Council's strategic objectives, corporate performance indicators, and the corporate business and planning cycle. Whilst the function is independent of Cabinet and owned by scrutiny members it will be flexible, dynamic and pro-active in support of the executive decision-making process.

- **Purposeful:** The scrutiny function is focused on making an impact and exerting influence on corporate policy and practice to develop learning and improvement. Its main aim is to ensure Warwickshire County Council can be the best it can be by building corporate experience and expertise based on a sense of place, especially in a fast-paced transformational change environment.
- **Challenging:** The scrutiny function will provide constructive cross-party challenge to hold the executive to account based on evidence and reflecting the views of local people. This includes both internal and external scrutiny. As 'critical friends', scrutiny members should respectfully ask the tough questions of the executive and professional officers of the Council, as well as external partners and providers, from an informed perspective and expect considered and informative answers.
- **Transparent:** The scrutiny function should shine a light internally and externally. It is an important vehicle for public consultation which should engage external partners, local people, and service users, and represent their views. Overview and Scrutiny should provide open and transparent scrutiny in the public interest to enhance the legitimacy of the local authority and build public trust and confidence.

2.4. The recommendations reached in the review can be seen in the full report at Appendix 1. In summary these included:

- 2.4.1. Relaunch the scrutiny function, championed by the Leader and Cabinet, with a corporate "common purpose" County Council scrutiny guide setting out the ambition and expectations for the function based on a partnership of mutual respect, transparency and constructive challenge.
- 2.4.2. Create greater alignment with corporate objectives by restructuring scrutiny committees in parallel to foster greater scrutiny of corporate themes and objectives and corporate performance.
- 2.4.3. Provide recognised authoritative leadership and direction for the scrutiny function by creating a new role of Chair of Overview and Scrutiny to chair a new Overview and Scrutiny Panel comprising all scrutiny Chairs.
- 2.4.4. Greater use of virtual meetings technology and, where appropriate, social media to engage the public, service providers and external partners and encourage elected member active participation.

- 2.4.5. Consider creating a dedicated team of Overview & Scrutiny (O&S) officers resourced adequately to provide data (particularly performance data) and information, advice and support to O&S Chairs and members, including liaison with strategic directors and senior staff.
- 2.4.6. Review the timetable for scrutiny committees to ensure meetings are held at the optimum time alongside the corporate business cycle and Cabinet meetings. Allow for greater meeting and agenda flexibility and greater use of Task and Finish Groups for scrutiny work, from single issue to corporate strategic themes, conducted to a strict brief and timescale with a project planning methodology. Dynamic Task and Finish Groups should be able to conduct a review in as little as one day where appropriate. But also conduct in-depth longer pieces of work.
- 2.4.7. Make use of virtual technology, in-house training and briefings should be provided for scrutiny Chairs and members on appointment and on-going, including subject updates as required and skills development. Committees should conduct an annual self-evaluation. A suite of scrutiny questions may be a good prompt to build confidence

3. Supporting Information

- 3.1. The recommendations from the Report were considered by the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees during the period March 2021 – July 2021.
- 3.2. The feedback from members was considered in light of Dr Martin's report and additional guidance from Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) and has resulted in the proposals recommended within this report.
- 3.3. The key recommendation was that the Council develop a principles-based approach to reset and drive scrutiny, reflecting the principles of good scrutiny embedded in statutory guidance:
 - 3.3.1. independent ownership;
 - 3.3.2. driving improvement;
 - 3.3.3. critical friend challenge and
 - 3.3.4. public voice
- 3.4. Members favoured most but not all of the recommendations made. On balance members did not universally favour the idea of an OSC 'Chair of Chairs' to provide a coordinating role across the overview and scrutiny committees. Nor was there a consensus in favour of a bespoke team of scrutiny officers, and differing views were expressed in respect of greater use of virtual meetings and also the proposal to increase the number/ frequency of OSC meetings per year.

- 3.5. Officers identified some practical challenges with implementation of some of the recommendations, notably;
- 3.5.1. realignment of OSCs to Council Plan outcomes – whilst this would focus attention on delivery of objectives it risks being at the expense of other matters that the Council has a statutory duty to consider
 - 3.5.2. proposal for more virtual formal meetings of scrutiny - whilst attractive this would require legislative change as following the repeal of the changes permitted during the pandemic, all formal committee meetings must be held in person
 - 3.5.3. dedicated team of OSC officers – as it was considered this would have a negative impact on deployment of resources and recruitment and retention
- 3.6. In order to ensure continued delivery, the proposals also recommend a cap on the number of active Task & Finish Groups at any one time. This will assist in managing resource and the quality/ level of officer support available.
- 3.7. The proposals cover three areas to meet the themes of the recommendations in the Independent Report. These are Cultural, Planning and Agility. A “Miscellaneous” heading is also included to cover issues arising from the recommendations.
- 3.8. The tables in Appendix 2 summarise the proposals and the timetables for implementation of each recommendation.
- 3.9. At its meeting of 9 September 2021, Cabinet agreed to recommend to Council the proposals for scrutiny reform as set out in Appendix 2. The recommendations will also be considered by the Audit and Standards Committee at its meeting on 24th September 2021 and any feedback shared with members separately as necessary.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications of this report.
- 4.2. The proposals are intended to be implemented within the current budgetary envelope of Legal and Democratic Services. There is a recommendation that resource levels within Democratic Services are reviewed after 6 – 9 months of implementation to ensure that the recommended outcomes of the scrutiny review are being delivered.

5. Environmental Implications

- 5.1. There are no direct environmental implications of the proposal

6. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

6.1. The timescales for each proposal are included within the tables at Appendix 2 below. This decision, if approved by Council, will be effective with immediate effect.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Report of Dr Jane Martin OBE
Appendix 2 - Scrutiny Review Proposals

Background Papers

None

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): Not applicable

Other members: Appendices and recommendations previously published with Cabinet Paper

Appendix 1

**Review of the Overview and Scrutiny Function
Warwickshire County Council**

FINAL REPORT

**Dr Jane Martin CBE
October 2020**

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The Brief

WCC (consistent with revised statutory guidance May 2019) believe effective overview and scrutiny should:

- Provide constructive ‘critical friend’ challenge;
 - Amplify the voices and concerns of the public;
 - Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role; and
 - Drive improvement in public services.
-
- Scrutiny will not be effective unless an organisation’s culture, behaviours and attitudes support it
 - Resourcing of scrutiny is critical to its long-term success and to embedding the culture within any authority
 - Effective scrutiny requires good planning. The recommendations of scrutiny should make a tangible difference to the work of the authority and, in order to do so, require a long-term agenda and forward plan that is flexible enough to accommodate any matters of urgency that may crop up.
 - Warwickshire’s model of specialist OSCs supported by Democratic Services Officers and with expert input from specialist officers is a valid model, provided it is adequately resourced but there are other models and approaches which may provide a greater level of benefit in the new landscape we are operating in

Corporate Board agreed that now is an appropriate time to review the approach to scrutiny. The Leader of the Council is fully supportive of this review.

A final report will present recommendations to Corporate Board and subsequently members on:

- (a) appropriate principles for scrutiny (considering the challenges above and in light of the statutory guidance),
- (b) feedback on key opportunities to improve upon our current ways of operating scrutiny, and
- (c) a recommendation as to how WCC might move forward to develop its scrutiny approach to deliver on the Council Plan and objectives.

Methodology

In order to gain a broad insight into the current arrangements, challenges and opportunities of the overview and scrutiny function, telephone interviews were conducted with 27 participants during June, July and August. These included:

The Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council
Cabinet Portfolio Holders
Chair of Scrutiny Committees
Representatives from each of the political parties
The Chief Executive
Strategic Directors
Democratic Services Officers

The interviews were confidential and no interviewee will be quoted. The interviewer took written notes of the discussions for the sole purpose of this report which will be destroyed when the report is received and signed off.

Interviews were based on questions organised around the following themes:

1. How do we embed scrutiny in the DNA of the organisation and drive the necessary culture and behaviours required to ensure scrutiny adds value to delivery of our organisational priority outcomes?
2. How do we give voice to and drive a change in the approach/attitude to scrutiny by members and officers; i.e. Reinforce the value and importance of challenge, remove the perception that it is “fault finding”, and drive an effective and collaborative approach to scrutiny which is impactful?
3. How do we manage disagreements in approach - i.e. executive-scrutiny protocols etc.?
4. How do we embed ownership with members and officers of recommendations from scrutiny, and ensure that the actions that arise are followed through and monitored?
5. How do we ensure scrutiny members are supported in having an independent and open mind-set and have the right skills set to fulfil their role?
6. How do we align scrutiny more effectively to our Council Plan objectives – including commitments to climate change and commercial approach to problem solving?

7. How do involve the public in scrutiny more effectively?

Desk-based background review of relevant corporate documents including minutes of scrutiny meetings was also undertaken.

Throughout this report the overview and scrutiny function will be referred to as the scrutiny function or scrutiny.

Overview

Warwickshire County Council currently operates with four Overview and Scrutiny Committees: Resources and Fire & Rescue; Communities; Children & Young People; Adult Social Care and Health with an additional joint Health Committee. The Council has a Conservative majority group of 33 elected members with small opposition groups formed by 7 Labour, 8 Liberal Democrat and 2 Green Party representatives. In addition, there are 4 Independents. There are 3 vacant seats at the current time. The Council has in the past often had no political party in overall control. The ways of working from this tradition seem to have coloured a consensus approach and some deference to officers which persists. Reflecting the current political environment, members of the majority group have been nominated for the Chairs of all Scrutiny committees. The Leader of the Council and her Deputy both value the importance of an effective scrutiny function and want to encourage a more impactful role.

Across all interviewees there was clear support for developing an effective scrutiny function. In most cases, from a range of perspectives, interviewees were positive about the work carried out and felt that the Cabinet were open to different views, ideas and challenge. But there is inconsistency between committees and the contribution of committee members, sometimes coloured by party politics, and often a general lack of constructive challenge. Reasons for this are not entirely clear, but it is certainly felt that scrutiny members need to be fully supported, with clearly presented information; that they need to keep their knowledge base up to date; and fully understand the role they can play and the influence that can be brought to bear on corporate policy development and decision. Frustration expressed around some of these issues demonstrates the need for change, and the willingness to change. The potential of the scrutiny function is not currently being developed or harnessed to support the strategic ambition of the Council.

There is, however, much good practice. Some Chairs are particularly mentioned for their skilled chairing and effective approach to reviews which have been greatly valued. For example, the cross-party work of the Climate Change Working Group; external scrutiny of GP provision; and the scrutiny review of Home/School Transport.

The Council clearly fosters good relationships. There is good cross-party working and a good working relationship between executive and scrutiny. Although scrutiny appears to make few recommendations back to the executive, when they do these are fairly considered. It is notable that although not formally scrutiny groups, the cross-party Cabinet Working Groups for post-Covid strategy development have been universally welcomed, not least for the clear focus and deadlines. The regular agenda setting meetings between scrutiny committee Chairs and their portfolio holder counterparts (spokes and chairs meetings) supported by officers are clearly very effective. It must be said, however, that although Council officers

are supportive of scrutiny, scrutiny committee members expressed a sense that they felt the needs of executive members were usually prioritised.

All concerned were positive about the support from Democratic Services Officers and valued the role they played. But it was acknowledged that resources had been pared back over recent years and the department was mainly focused on administration. The lack of resources was most acute in limiting the number of task and finish scrutiny groups. These groups were regarded as the most effective way of working but required proper resourcing which was now lacking. Resourcing may also have a knock-on effect on public engagement arrangements and there could be opportunities to build on the corporate 'Let's Talk' public consultation exercise. In any event, there is potential for more imaginative thinking on public involvement in scrutiny, which is often best tapped into in a task and finish group environment. Whilst there are some very good examples of external scrutiny which involve external partners and user groups, there is more that could be done. It was acknowledged that the geography of the County could mitigate against participation and that the use of technology for more remote engagement could be an opportunity

In the main, however, the scrutiny function seems to be 'stuck in a rut' and needs to be reinvigorated. Routine scrutiny committee meetings are in danger of losing their way based on a formulaic cycle with the addition of members' topics of interest. Indeed the balance currently being struck is between review of individual scrutiny members' special interests which motivate engagement, and effective scrutiny of corporate business (especially performance) and good overview of policy development which is not yet seen as meaningful by some members. There is also frustration on the part of many members at the length of some agendas, and the way business is conducted which can stifle robust discussion. Scrutiny business needs to be much more purposeful and prioritised in relation to the Council corporate cycle and forward plan. Across the piece scrutiny members need to be better engaged in this regard and scrutiny Chairs need to be both supported and more open to achieving this. The routinised approach to committee meetings with a set timetable is frustrating for many, including the executive, and means that scrutiny is not timely and too slow. Indeed, many interviewees were critical of the lack of flexibility and pro-activity. This devalues the role of scrutiny. The Council's ambitious plans for transformational change only highlights the lack of dynamism.

Appropriate principles for scrutiny

The following principles should be adopted to reset and drive a refreshed approach to the overview and scrutiny function. They reflect the principles of good scrutiny embedded in statutory guidance: independent ownership; driving improvement; critical friend challenge and public voice.

- 1. Partnership: The scrutiny function is an integral, authoritative corporate partner with the executive in policy development and decision-making.** This partnership is focused and aligned with the council's strategic objectives, corporate performance indicators, and the corporate business and planning cycle. Whilst the function is independent of Cabinet and owned by scrutiny members it will be flexible, dynamic and pro-active in support of the executive decision-making process.
- 2. Purposeful: The scrutiny function is focused on making an impact and exerting influence on corporate policy and practice to develop learning and improvement.** Its main aim is to ensure WCC can be the best it can be by building corporate experience and expertise based on a sense of place, especially in a fast-paced transformational change environment.
- 3. Challenging: The scrutiny function will provide constructive cross-party challenge to hold the executive to account based on evidence and reflecting the views of local people.** This includes both internal and external scrutiny. As 'critical friends', scrutiny members should respectfully ask the tough questions of the executive and professional officers of the Council, as well as external partners and provider, from an informed perspective and expect considered and informative answers.
- 4. Transparent: The scrutiny function should shine a light internally and externally.** It is an important vehicle for public consultation which should engage external partners, local people and service users, and represent their views. O&S should provide open and transparent scrutiny in the public interest to enhance the legitimacy of the local authority and build public trust and confidence.

Key opportunities to improve

There are a number of key areas where there are significant opportunities to improve.

Parity of esteem: Scrutiny should not be seen as a second-class function. It must have an authoritative voice. This means that all members and officers should demonstrate in their day to day practice how best to realise the potential for an effective scrutiny function to enhance executive policy development and decision-making.

Scrutinising performance: The way in which corporate performance is scrutinised is not yet satisfactory. The way in which performance data is presented to scrutiny has been carefully considered and reviewed recently, and the general view is that this is now better, but there is still room for improvement so that scrutiny members make the best use of the data. Scrutiny discussions should be clearly led so that presentations add value, there is a clear line of sight to corporate success indicators and interpretation of the data is usefully aligned to risk. Effort put into this by both officers and members will pay dividends

Build a corporate partnership: From a strong base of good working relationship and mutual member and officer respect there must be more rigorous challenge from scrutiny and acknowledgement that the scrutiny function should hold the executive to account where necessary: a 'one Council' model. The executive and senior management are open and welcome the challenge from scrutiny. It is notable that scrutiny is rarely the theatre for oppositional politics but scrutiny members must collectively own the process and not depend on officers. This means more rigour but best behaviour. It is also importance that members get the balance right between representing the views of their constituents and recognising the wider public interest for Warwickshire. They should set the agenda but be focused on corporate business with purposeful evidence -based discussion. All scrutiny members from all parties have a role to play in this endeavour.

It is also notable that the recent opportunity to work together to develop common aims in Cabinet cross-party working groups post-Covid has been universally welcomed. To build this partnership in practice, scrutiny needs to work cross-boundaries and not be silo focused. Scrutiny chairs and members should be thinking of how they can impact constructively on policy development and decisions. This does not mean routinely 'clearing' executive decisions but prioritising and acknowledging where challenge and accountability is most needed. It also means working with senior management and portfolio-holders but also holding them to account. Scrutiny needs to understand the evidence-base for policy and decisions and the impact on local people but recognise corporate objectives and understand that the executive has to work effectively and often quickly to respond to local issues and/or government initiatives. The overview function of policy is equally important in driving

transformation, improvement and learning by shaping policy throughout the annual corporate planning cycle.

Work smarter: Scrutiny meetings vary in their practice and impact but there is much potential for improvement. The 'chairs and spokes' meetings work well but still agendas can be too long and packed with pet topics. Meetings must be more flexible, pro-active and responsive to corporate priorities. The respectful environment must not be cosy but nor should it be confrontational. Behaviour in meetings should follow 3 C's: collegiate, constructive and challenging. The development of virtual meetings using remote technology has shown that more efficient use of time can be made. Many interviewees said this should be continued not least to avoid travel time and costs.

Member support and training: Scrutiny members need adequate support from officers across the Council so they are properly informed and advised. This is especially the case for scrutiny Chairs. This review presents an opportunity to redefine 'what good looks like' for scrutiny and agree how best to achieve this. It seems that resources for training and support is lacking but virtual technology provides a cost-effective opportunity for in-house briefings and scrutiny skills development. The in-committee member training initiated in the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee was acknowledged as effective and helpful

Develop external focus: There are some very good examples of external scrutiny reviews including transport providers and Academy Trusts, but this requires sufficient resources. Scrutiny is the Council function designed to gather the views and experiences of service users and providers to feed into the corporate cycle. Imaginative thinking to reach local people and not just known activists is needed. A one Council approach means that scrutiny should be aligned with and can often lead public consultation exercises to inform executive strategy.

Recommendations to develop WCC approach to scrutiny

1. The Council should relaunch the scrutiny function, championed by the Leader and Cabinet, with a corporate 'common purpose' WCC scrutiny guide setting out the ambition and expectations for the function based on a partnership of mutual respect, transparency and constructive challenge. This should highlight a behaviour code based on the 3 C's: collegiate, constructive and challenging.
2. Provide recognised authoritative leadership and direction for the scrutiny function by creating a new role of Chair of Overview and Scrutiny to chair a new Overview and Scrutiny Panel comprised all scrutiny Chairs. This post could be an elected position by all council members.
3. Create greater alignment with corporate objectives by restructuring scrutiny committees in parallel to foster greater scrutiny of corporate themes and objectives and corporate performance. In the current circumstances, restructuring to follow the four change portfolio themes; Place, Economy and Climate; Community; Health and Wellbeing and Social Care; and Organisation could be an effective way forward. Any restructure would have to take into account statutory requirements.
4. Review the timetable for scrutiny committees to ensure meetings are held at the optimum time alongside the corporate business cycle and Cabinet meetings. Allow for greater meeting and agenda flexibility and greater use of Task and Finish Groups for scrutiny work, from single issue to corporate strategic themes, conducted to a strict brief and timescale with a project planning methodology. Dynamic Task and Finish Groups should be able to conduct a review in as little as one day where appropriate. But also conduct in-depth longer pieces of work.
5. Create a dedicated team of O&S officers resourced adequately to provide data (particularly performance data) and information, advice and support to O&S Chairs and members, including liaison with strategic directors and senior staff.
6. Greater use of virtual meetings technology and, where appropriate, social media to engage the public, service providers and external partners and encourage elected member active participation.
7. Making use of virtual technology, in-house training and briefings should be provided for scrutiny Chairs and members on appointment and on-going, including subject updates as required and skills development. The Adult Health and Social Care Committee model of in-committee member briefings should be rolled out further.

Committees should conduct an annual self-evaluation. A suite of scrutiny questions may be a good prompt to build confidence.

Dr Jane Martin CBE 2 October 2020

Appendix 1

List of interviewees

1. Councillor Adrian Warwick
(Chair of Resources and Fire & Rescue OSC)
2. Councillor Alan Cockburn
(Chair of Communities OSC)
3. Councillor Andy Crump
(Portfolio Holder for Fire & Rescue and Community Safety)
4. Councillor Colin Hayfield
(Portfolio Holder for Education and Learning)
5. Councillor Heather Timms
(Portfolio Holder for Environment and Heritage & Culture)
6. Councillor Izzi Seccombe
(Leader of the Council and Conservative Group and Portfolio Holder for Economic Development)
7. Councillor Jeff Clarke
(Portfolio Holder for Transport & Planning)
8. Councillor Jeff Morgan
(Portfolio Holder for Children's Services)
9. Councillor Jerry Roodhouse
(Leader of the Liberal Democrats)
10. Councillor John Holland
(Labour member)
11. Councillor Jonathan Chilvers
(Leader of the Green Party)
12. Councillor Kam Kaur
(Portfolio Holder for Customer and Transformation)
13. Councillor Keith Kondakor

(Green Party Member)

14. Councillor Les Caborn
(Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care & Health)

 15. Councillor Peter Butlin
(Deputy Leader of the Council and Conservative Group and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property)

 16. Councillor Wallace Redford
(Chair of Adult Social Care & Health OSC)

 17. Councillor Yousef Dahmash
(Chair of Children and Young People's OSC)
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18. Helen Barnsley – Democratic Services Officer

19. Mark Ryder – Strategic Director (Communities)

20. Monica Fogarty – Chief Executive

21. Nic Vine - Strategy and Commissioning Manager (Legal and Democratic)

22. Nigel Minns – Strategic Director (People)

23. Paul Spencer – Senior Democratic Services Officer

24. Paul Williams – Democratic Services Team Leader

25. Rob Powell– Strategic Director (Resources)

26. Sarah Duxbury - Assistant Director (Governance & Policy)

Appendix 2

Proposals - Cultural	Timeframe
Agree a Statement of Behaviours drafted by OSC members and officers, based on the principles identified in the independent report; Collegiate, Constructive, Challenging	September 21 – January 22
Annual Training for Members	Already in member training plan
OSC Chairs to discuss with Cabinet and Corporate Board matters where it is considered Scrutiny could add value to the decision-making process, and to liaise with other OSC Chairs to ensure that such matters can be considered in an efficient and effective way without causing undue delay to any proposal. Chair and Party Spokes with Strategic Directors to consider which upcoming projects, programmes or decisions would benefit from pre-Cabinet engagement with Scrutiny. Also opportunity for greater involvement of OSC in considering the development of new policies as part of Forward Plan programme prior to Cabinet.	Work could begin in September meeting cycle
Updates not requiring input or decision to be dealt with electronically to free agendas for those matters intended to result in recommendations to decision making bodies	September 21 onwards
Proposals Planning	Timeframe
The OSC Committee cycle should be driven by the work programme but as a matter of principle each OSC Committee should meet between 5 and 6 times a year	Start from next Municipal Year

<p>The OSCs will remain at 4 with the same Terms of Reference for the remainder of the municipal year. Climate change to be factored into the current work programme of either Communities OSC or as a cross cutting theme. Wider review of remit of OSCs to take place in advance of May 2022 Annual Council with any changes approved by Council.</p>	<p>Focus on climate change from September.</p> <p>Other changes from May 2022</p>
<p>All OSCs to consider the key themes arising from the Council Plan and agreed priorities, including cross cutting themes such as wellbeing, climate and tackling inequalities when undertaking their role.</p>	<p>From September cycle</p>
<p>Regular Chair, Vice Chair and Spokes meetings to specifically focus on the Forward Plan for decision making and scrutiny activity over coming months</p>	<p>From September cycle</p>
<p>The Chief Executive and Leader meet with Chairs and Vice Chairs of OSC's on a 6 monthly basis to consider potential future themes to assist the committees with consideration of work programmes.</p>	<p>From new municipal year</p>

<p>Proposals Planning</p>	<p>Timeframe</p>
<p>The OSC Committee cycle should be driven by the work programme but as a matter of principle each OSC Committee should meet between 5 and 6 times a year</p>	<p>Start from next Municipal Year</p>
<p>The OSCs will remain at 4 with the same Terms of Reference for the remainder of the municipal year. Climate change to be factored into the current work programme of either Communities OSC or as a cross cutting theme. Wider review of remit of OSCs to take place in advance of May 2022 Annual Council with any changes approved by Council.</p>	<p>Focus on climate change from September.</p> <p>Other changes from May 2022</p>

All OSCs to consider the key themes arising from the Council Plan and agreed priorities, including cross cutting themes such as wellbeing, climate and tackling inequalities when undertaking their role.	From September cycle
Regular Chair, Vice Chair and Spokes meetings to specifically focus on the Forward Plan for decision making and scrutiny activity over coming months	From September cycle
The Chief Executive and Leader meet with Chairs and Vice Chairs of OSC's on a 6 monthly basis to consider potential future themes to assist the committees with consideration of work programmes.	From new municipal year

Proposals - Agility	Timeframe
Task and Finish Groups will be used in a dynamic fashion and will be cross party. Task and Finish Groups are encouraged to seek public input into the matters under discussion where appropriate as part of their process of review. There will be a ceiling agreed on the numbers of TFGs that can be undertaken at any one time to manage officer support /capacity	From September 2021
Chairs of individual OSCs will be encouraged to agree joint Overview and Scrutiny activity with another chair if that is considered the most effective use of resources in respect of any topic.	From September 2021
Resource requirements within Democratic Services will be reviewed within 6 – 9 months of the proposals being implemented	June 2022

Proposals - Miscellaneous	Timeframe
There will be no separate Scrutiny Team within Resources Directorate as it is felt this will undermine work of current Democratic Services Team and has not proved effective in the past	September 2021

Technology will be used where it can be – current legislation does not permit public meetings to be virtual or hybrid. Until this changes OSC meetings will need to be held in public and in person (although they will be streamed also)	September 2021
Legal attendance will become more common at OSCs to provide support to Democratic Services and enable succession planning/skills development	September 2021
We will work to align Scrutiny more closely with Integrated Planning and encourage public engagement, including use of the Voice of Warwickshire to identify suitable T&F topics.	September 2021