

Introduction to scrutiny

Overview & Scrutiny Committee
June 2023

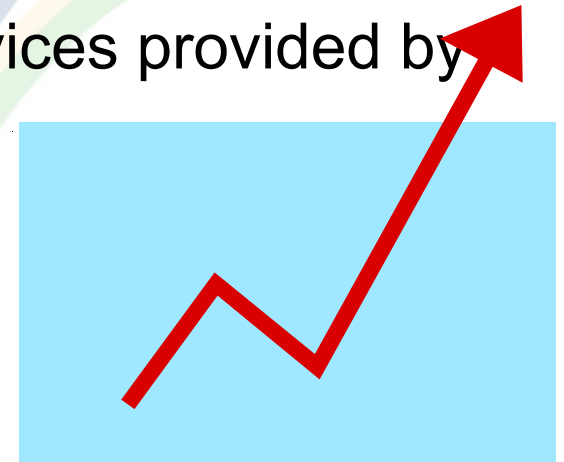
Background

- Executive and scrutiny governance model introduced by Local Government Act 2000 (as amended)/Localism Act 2011
- Under this model, Council must have Overview & Scrutiny Committee
- Committee is also the Council's designated
 - Crime & Disorder Committee
 - It is not a decision-making Committee but can make recommendations to Executive
 - Good scrutiny = Good governance



Purpose of scrutiny

- Assist the work of the Leader/Executive and the Council as a whole in order to improve the services provided by the Council or other external providers:
 - Monitor Budget
 - Influence Policy development
 - Monitoring performance of Council services
- Review and scrutinise decisions and performance of the Leader, Executive, and Committees
- Reflecting the public's views



Reigate & Banstead - Our approach

- Balanced approach
 - Focus on adding value to Council activities
 - Acting as critical friend to the Executive
- Scrutiny Panels to undertake detailed work on:
 - the Budget
 - the Local Plan
- Opportunities to scrutinise external matters – i.e. annual review of the Community Safety Partnership.
- Member Working Groups, Briefings etc

Work programme

- Council agrees the Overview & Scrutiny work programme each year, following consultation with Executive. 2023/24 programme includes:
 - Leader and Executive Member presentations
 - Budget Scrutiny
 - Local Plan Scrutiny
 - Annual Crime & Disorder meeting
 - Service and financial performance
 - Treasury Management

Any Committee member can refer a relevant matter to the committee

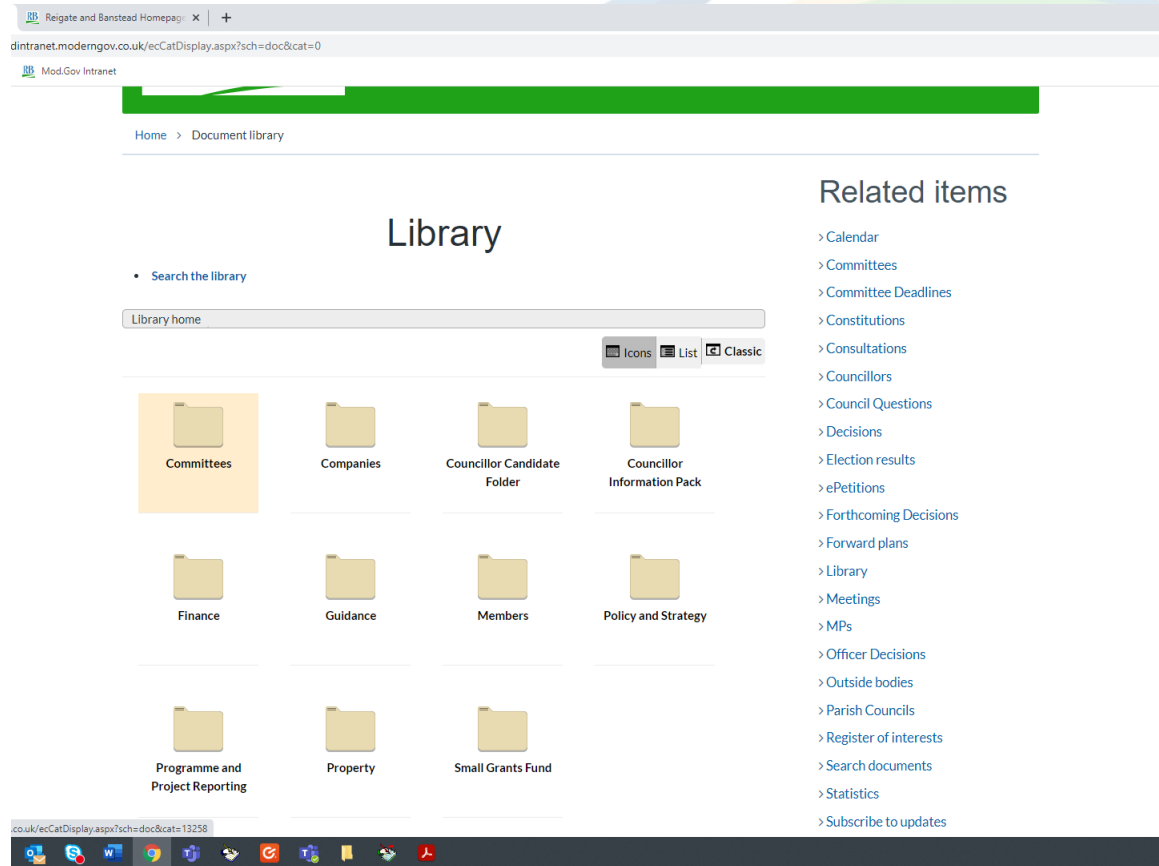


Other work

- Call-in
 - Request to review an Executive decision
 - 5 Councillors
 - Must state reasons – not just that decision is disliked
- Councillor call for action
 - Request to consider a Ward matter (local government issues only)
 - Last resort – all other channels must be exhausted
- Other requests should be made to the Chair

The Library

- Lots of information in the Library
 - Performance information/ dashboards
- Advance questions to support scrutiny
 - Information considered in advance of meetings
 - Questions received
 - Written responses can be provided
- Follow on questions
 - Questions asked at meetings requiring a written response from officers



Committee Members

- Committee Members are expected to contribute to discussion and debate, including:
 - Following Executive business / decisions
 - Reading reports in advance of meetings
 - Using support resources – i.e. the Library
 - Submitting advance questions where relevant
- The scrutiny process should be positive and non-political - party whip should not apply

Making a difference

Curious minds

Develop solid lines of enquiry

Focus on outcomes – what difference will the change make to the resident?

Focus on value – are the plans economic, efficient and effective?

Focus on risk and ensuring that there is resilience – are you assured?

Good scrutiny characteristics. Your key skills as scrutiny members

Focus on the system and the organisational development – what needs to change to make this work?

Focus on the performance and quality – how will you know its working?



Things to avoid

Stay out	Stay out of the weeds – keep high level
Stay on	Stay on task in hand
Avoid	Avoid clutter and repetition
Leave out	Leave out party politics
Prepare	Always prepare
Ask	Ask if unsure – seek advice
Enjoy	Enjoy making a difference

Conclusions

- Overview & Scrutiny Committee is an important part of the Council's decision making structure
- Wide ranging remit and workload
- Opportunity to make recommendations and support improvements to public services – Council and external



Questions?

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