


<p><b>OSC</b></p> <p>26<sup>th</sup> November 2024</p>	 <p><b>TOWER HAMLETS</b></p>
<p><b>Report of:</b> Afazul Hoque, Head of Service, Corporate Strategy and Communities</p>	<p><b>Classification:</b> Unrestricted</p>
<p><b>Scrutiny Executive Protocol</b></p>	

### **Executive Summary**

The proposed Scrutiny Executive Protocol sets out the terms of reference and applies to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and all Members of the Cabinet. The protocol aims to assist an open and transparent culture as it sets clear expectations on the working relationship between scrutiny and executive members. It fosters and encourages accountability, compliance, performance improvement, managing risk and conflicts and builds stakeholder relationships. The proposed Scrutiny Executive Protocol is part of the wider work to support the Committee's existing improvement programme

### **Recommendations:**

OSC is recommended to:

1. Approve the new Scrutiny Executive Protocol

## **1 DETAILS OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Executive Protocol (appended) supports a wider work of the Overview and Scrutiny's improvement programme and is also guided by the council's ambition to achieve exemplar status for its Scrutiny function.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Executive Protocol focuses its attention on the improvement agenda in enhancing governance and accountability with a view to fostering stronger relationship for better collaboration between the Council's Executive and Scrutiny bodies for improved results. The protocol will also adopt best practices to become a leading example of good governance.
- 1.3 The Scrutiny Executive Protocol will aim to increase an open and transparent culture, behaviour and attitude whilst fostering an effective and constructive working relationship with stakeholders in the scrutiny process.

1.4 This includes:

- Developing Trust and between scrutiny members and Cabinet members.
- Access to information
- Policy Development and Pre-Decision Scrutiny
- Holding the Executive to account
- Scrutiny work planning
- Scrutiny Recommendations to the Executive
- Call-in
- Scrutiny consideration of confidential decisions
- Ensuring Compliance with the Protocol.

## **2 COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

2.1 There are no financial implications of approving the new Scrutiny Executive Protocol.

## **3 COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES**

3.1 Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000 requires councils to establish an overview and scrutiny committee, in order to scrutinise, review and comment on actions of the executive. The committee is also required to report on actions which are not the responsibility of the executive.

3.2 Statutory guidance 'Overview and scrutiny: statutory guidance for councils, combined authorities and combined county authorities' (April 2024) sets out guidance on establishing an effective overview and scrutiny committee, and explains the importance for this committee to be effective to ensure that the council has good governance.

3.3 The Guidance recommends that councils should create an 'executive-scrutiny protocol' as a way of promoting positive and effective working, clarifying relationships and mitigating differences of opinion before they create difficulties.

3.4 The matters set out in this report comply with the above legislation and guidance.

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