

## **30 Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules**

### **STATUTORY SCRUTINY OFFICER**

1. As required under Section 9FB Local Government Act 2000, the Council will appoint a Statutory Scrutiny Officer whose role is to oversee the arrangements for the Overview and Scrutiny function.
2. The Statutory Scrutiny Officer shall be the officer holder of the following post:
  - Divisional Director, Strategy, Policy and Performance.

### **THE ARRANGEMENTS FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

3. Council will appoint an Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to discharge the functions conferred by sections 9F to 9FI of the Local Government Act 2000; section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 (local authority scrutiny of crime and disorder matters); or any functions which may be conferred on it by virtue of regulations under section 244(2ZE) of the National Health Service Act 2006 (local authority scrutiny of health matters).
4. There will be one standing Scrutiny Sub-Committee to discharge the Council's functions under the National Health Service Act 2006 and OSC may also appoint such other Sub-Committees as the Committee considers appropriate to carry out its work programme.
5. The role of Overview and Scrutiny is to:
  - (i) Review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken in connection with the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the Executive.
  - (ii) Make reports or recommendations to Council and/or the Mayor or the Executive in connection with the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the Executive.
  - (iii) Review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are not the responsibility of the Executive.
  - (iv) Make reports or recommendations to Council and/or the Mayor or the Executive with respect to the discharge of any functions which are not the responsibility of the Executive.
  - (v) Make reports or recommendations to Council and/or the Mayor or the Executive on matters affecting the Council's area or its inhabitants.
  - (vi) Exercise the right to call in for reconsideration decisions made but not yet implemented.
  - (vii) Refer any report it receives with implications for ethical standards to the Standards Advisory Committee for its consideration.
  - (viii) Consider any local matters referred to the Committee by a Councillor in accordance with the Council's Councillor Call for Action procedure.

## **THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

6. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will comprise nine Members of the Council and up to two co-opted members. Up to three substitutes per political group may be appointed. Its terms of reference are set out in detail in Section 19 of the Constitution but they include:
  - (a) The performance of all overview and scrutiny functions on behalf of the Council.
  - (b) The appointment of such Scrutiny Sub-Committees as it considers appropriate to fulfil those functions; determining those Sub-Committees' composition (including any co-opted Members); and the terms of reference of those Sub-Committees.
  - (c) To have a strategic and co-ordinating role over the Council's scrutiny function and to approve an annual overview and scrutiny work programme including the work programme of any Scrutiny Sub-Committees it appoints to ensure that there is efficient and effective use of the Committee's time and the time of its Scrutiny Sub-Committees.
  - (d) To advise the Mayor and Cabinet of key issues/questions to be considered in relation to reports due to be considered by the Executive.
  - (e) To exercise the right to call in for reconsideration any executive decisions taken but not yet implemented.
  - (f) To determine whether to request Council to review or scrutinise any decision called in, where considered contrary to the budget and policy framework and whether to recommend that the decision be reconsidered.
  - (g) To receive and consider requests from the Executive for scrutiny involvement in the annual budget process.
  - (h) To monitor the Executive's forward plan to ensure that appropriate matters are subject to scrutiny.
  - (i) To consider any local matter referred to the Committee by a Councillor in accordance with section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and S.9 FC of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended (set out in the Councillor Call for Action guide in Part D, Section 53 of the Constitution)..
  - (j) To discharge the functions conferred by the Police and Justice Act 2006 as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee.

## **SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEES**

7. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may establish such Sub-Committee as it considers appropriate. At this time the following sub-committees have been established:

- Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee
  - Health and Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee
  - Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee
8. The Health and Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee will undertake the Council's functions under the National Health Service Act 2006 and consider matters relating to the local health service as provided by the NHS and other bodies including the Council:
- (a) To review and scrutinise matters relating to the health service within the Council's area and make reports and recommendations in accordance with any regulations made thereunder;
  - (b) To respond to consultation exercises undertaken by an NHS body; and
  - (c) To question appropriate officers of local NHS bodies in relation to the policies adopted and the provision of the services.
9. The membership of individual Scrutiny Sub-Committees and their terms of reference will be determined by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. They will include the following:
- (a) To investigate, scrutinise, monitor and advise in relation to:
    - (i) How services are being delivered and the Council's functions discharged.
    - (ii) How policies have been implemented and their effect on the Council's corporate strategies (i.e. equal opportunities, antipoverty and crime and disorder).
    - (iii) The development of relevant policy.
    - (iv) How resources are being used, spent and managed.
    - (v) Any other matter, relevant to the specific remit of the Scrutiny Sub-Committees, which affects the Council's area or any of its inhabitants.
10. it is expected that Scrutiny Sub-Committees would meet at least five times a year.

#### **WHO CHAIRS THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND THE SCRUTINY SUB-COMMITTEES**

11. The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Chairs of the Scrutiny Sub-Committees will be drawn from among the Councillors sitting on the Committee.
12. Council shall appoint a Member to serve as Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. If Council does not, and subject to the requirement at 11. above, the Committee may appoint such a person as it considers appropriate as Chair.

13. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will appoint the Chair and Members of any Sub-Committees. The Vice-Chair of each Committee and Sub-Committee shall be appointed by the Committee or Sub-Committee itself.

### **SCRUTINY LEAD MEMBERS**

14. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will select from among its Councillor Members lead Scrutiny Members, one for each of the following portfolios:-

Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Chair's Portfolio  
Children & Education\*  
Community Safety and Environment  
Health & Adults\*  
Housing & Regeneration\*  
Resources and Finance

\*To Chair the related Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

These themes may be subject to change from time to time and will be agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **WHO MAY SIT ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY?**

15. All Councillors except Members of the Executive may be Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Sub-Committees. However, no Member may be involved in scrutinising a decision in which they have been directly involved.

### **CO-OPTees**

16. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be responsible for approving co-opted Members for the Scrutiny Sub-Committees. Co-opted Members will be non-voting except in relation to Education matters only (see 'Education Representatives' below).

### **EDUCATION REPRESENTATIVES**

17. The Children and Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee must include in its membership the following voting representatives in respect of education matters:
  - (a) 1 Church of England diocese representative;
  - (b) 1 Roman Catholic diocese representative; and
  - (c) 3 parent governor representatives elected under the procedures contained in the Parent Governor Representatives (England) Regulations 2001.

18. The Committee may also include a Muslim representative who can also vote in respect of education matters.
19. These Members may speak but not vote on any other (i.e. non educational) matters.
20. Rules 16 to 18 also apply to any other Scrutiny meeting where an education matter is to be discussed.
21. These Members may also receive the same Executive unrestricted and restricted agenda papers in relation to executive decision making as the Councillor Members of the Committee/Sub-Committee to which they are appointed.

### **MEETINGS**

22. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall meet in accordance with the calendar of meetings approved by Council. The Chair of the Committee may call an extraordinary meeting of the Committee at any time subject to the ordinary rules on the convening of meetings and the Access to Information Procedure Rules (see Section 27 of the Constitution).
23. The Scrutiny Sub-Committees shall meet in accordance with a timetable agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, but will establish their own pattern of meetings within this framework and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may decide to lead any Scrutiny Sub-Committees.
24. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Sub-Committees will generally meet in public and will conduct their proceedings in accordance with these procedure rules and the Access to Information Rules at Section 27.

### **QUORUM**

25. The quorum for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Sub-Committees shall be three voting Members.

### **WORK PROGRAMME**

26. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be responsible for agreeing the overview and scrutiny work programme for the year.

### **AGENDA ITEMS**

27. Any Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and/or any Scrutiny Sub-Committee shall be entitled to give notice to the Statutory Scrutiny Officer that they wish an item relevant to the functions of the Committee to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting. On receipt of such a request the Statutory Scrutiny Officer will ensure that it is included on the next

available agenda provided that it is relevant to the Committee work programme.

28. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall also respond, as soon as its work programme permits, to requests from Council and if it considers it appropriate the Mayor or Executive to review particular areas of Council activity. Where they do so, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall report their findings and any recommendations back to the Mayor/Executive and/or Council. The Executive shall consider the matter at one of its next two meetings following receipt of the report. If the matter is relevant to the Council only then will they consider the report at their next meeting.
29. Any Council Member may refer to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee a local government matter in accordance with section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. In relation to any matter referred under this provision, the Committee shall consider whether or not to exercise its powers under section 21B of the Local Government Act 2000 to make a report or recommendation(s) to Council or the Executive on the matter.
30. A “local government matter” at 28 above is one that:
  - (a) relates to the discharge of any function of the authority;
  - (b) affects all or part of the Member’s electoral area or any person who lives or works in that area; and
  - (c) is not an excluded matter.

Excluded matters are:

  - any matter relating to a planning decision;
  - any matter relating to a licensing decision;
  - any matter relating to an individual in respect of which the individual has a right of appeal; and
  - any matter which is vexatious, discriminatory or not reasonable to be included in the agenda for, or disclosed at, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committee.
31. If the Committee decides not to exercise any of its powers in relation to a matter referred to it under 28 above, it shall notify the Member who referred the matter of its decision and the reasons for it. If the Committee does make any report or recommendation(s) to the authority or the executive on the matter referred, it shall provide the Member with a copy of that report or recommendation(s), subject to the provisions of section 21D of the Local Government Act 2000 regarding confidential or exempt information.

## **SPECIFIC ROLE OF THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

- a) Review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives and performance targets and/or particular service areas.
- b) Question the Mayor, members of the Executive and/or Committees and chief officers about their decisions and performance whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects.
- c) Make recommendations to the Mayor/Executive as well as appropriate Committees and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process.
- d) Review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the relevant scrutiny body and local people about their activities and performance.
- e) Question and gather evidence from any person.
- f) **Pre-Scrutiny.** The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may consider a matter prior to its consideration and make comments in connection with the issue so that such comments can be taken into account by the decision maker when making the decision on the matter.
- g) **Finance.** The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may exercise overall responsibility for the finances made available to it.
- h) **Petitions.** The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider requests for reviews on petitions as set out in the Council's Petitions Scheme.
- i) **Annual Report.** The Overview and Scrutiny Committee must report annually to Council on its work.

## **POLICY REVIEW AND DEVELOPMENT**

32. The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the development of the Council's budget and policy framework is set out in detail in the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules (see Part B Section 28 of the Constitution). A summary is set out below:
- (i) Assist the Council and the Executive in the development of its budget and policy framework by in depth analysis of policy issues.
  - (ii) Conduct research, consultation with the community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options.
  - (iii) Consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options.
  - (iv) Question members of the Executive and/or Committees and chief officers about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area.
  - (v) Liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working.

33. In relation to the development of the Council's approach to other matters not forming part of its policy and budget framework, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may make proposals to the Mayor or Executive for developments in so far as they relate to matters within its terms of reference.
34. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee or any Scrutiny Sub-Committee established for this purpose may hold enquiries and investigate the available options for future direction in policy development and may appoint advisers and assessors to assist them in this process. They may go on site visits, conduct public surveys, hold public meetings, commission research and do all other things that they reasonably consider necessary to inform their deliberations. They may ask witnesses to attend to address them on any matter under consideration and may pay to any advisers, assessors and witnesses a reasonable fee and expenses for doing so.

### **REPORTS FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY**

35. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will report to Council, Cabinet or the Mayor or appropriate Cabinet Member and make recommendations as appropriate. All reports from Scrutiny Sub-Committees will be agreed by the relevant sub-committee and the Chair of that Committee will provide an update at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. If the report cannot be agreed by the Sub-Committee, or if there are not any meetings of Sub-Committee, and in other exceptional circumstances, the report can be agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Once it has formed recommendations on proposals for development, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will prepare a formal report and submit it to the Executive Mayor and relevant Cabinet Member and Senior Officers for consideration and a formal response (if the proposals are consistent with the existing budgetary and policy framework) or to Council as appropriate (e.g. if the recommendation would require a departure from or a change to the agreed budget and policy framework).
36. The Executive shall consider the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and/or Sub-Committee at one of its future meetings setting out its response to any recommendations. The Council will consider the report at its next ordinary meeting if appropriate.

### **SCRUTINY REVIEW GROUPS**

37. The following rules apply to reports prepared by Scrutiny Review Groups replacing the general rules set out above. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee or its Sub-Committee may set up a 'Review Group' to examine a particular service or issue. The Review Group will comprise Scrutiny Members and internal and external experts as required. At the conclusion of its work the Review Group will report back to its parent Committee/Sub-Committee with its findings and recommendations.

38. The parent Committee/Sub-Committee will then consider those findings and recommendations. It may, should it wish then refer those recommendations to the Mayor and Executive or the Council for a response.
39. If, following consultation with the Mayor and Executive, officers are in agreement with the proposed recommendations set out, then the report shall be accepted by the relevant Corporate Director under delegated authority. This determination must take place within one month of receipt of the report.
40. If no decision under 38 is taken, there is a challenge to the recommendations, or the Mayor and Executive specifically wish to comment on the report, then the Executive shall consider the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at one of its future meetings following submission of the report. The Council will consider the report at its next ordinary meeting if appropriate.

### **MAKING SURE THAT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REPORTS ARE CONSIDERED BY THE EXECUTIVE**

41. Once the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has completed its deliberations on any matter it will forward a copy of its final report to the Statutory Scrutiny Officer who will allocate it to either the Executive or the Council for consideration in accordance with the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations 2000 (as amended) and the Local Authorities (arrangements for the Discharge of Functions) Regulations 2000.
42. If the Statutory Scrutiny Officer, following consultation with the Monitoring Officer, refers the matter to Council, they may first refer it to the Mayor or Executive, who will have two weeks in which to consider the Overview and Scrutiny report and formulate any additional comments or recommendations.
43. For the avoidance of doubt, the Mayor or Executive shall not alter or amend any Overview and Scrutiny Committee report before referring it to Council, but shall only make additional comments or recommendations (including any corporate, financial or legal implications) as may be appropriate. However, if Council does not agree with the Mayor's or Executive's recommendations, the disputes resolution procedure in Rule 2 of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules (see Section 28 of the Constitution) will apply.
44. If the contents of the report would not have implications for the Council's budget and policy framework, and is thus not referred to Council by the Monitoring Officer, the Mayor or Executive will have two weeks in which to consider the matter and respond to the overview and scrutiny report.
45. Where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee makes a report or recommendations to the authority or the Mayor or Executive in accordance with section 21B of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended, the Committee shall by notice in writing require the authority or Mayor or Executive:-

(a) to consider the report or recommendations;

- (b) to respond to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee indicating what (if any) action the authority propose, or the Mayor or Executive proposes, to take;
- (c) if the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has published the report or recommendations, to publish the response,
- (d) if the Overview and Scrutiny Committee provided a copy of the report or recommendations to a Member of the Authority under paragraph 9.4 of these Procedure Rules then it is to provide that Member with a copy of the response, and to do so within two months beginning with the date on which the authority or Mayor or Executive received the report or recommendations or (if later) the notice.

46. It is the duty of the authority or Mayor or Executive to which a notice is given under 45 above to comply with the requirements specified in the notice.

### **RIGHTS OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS TO DOCUMENTS**

- 47. In addition to their rights as Councillors, Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or a Scrutiny Sub-Committee have such additional rights to documents, and to notice of meetings as may be set out in the Access to Information Procedure Rules (see Part B Section 27 of the Constitution).
- 48. Nothing in this paragraph prevents more detailed liaison between the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate depending on the particular matter under consideration.

### **MEMBERS AND OFFICERS GIVING ACCOUNT**

- 49. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee may scrutinise and review decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any Council function. As well as reviewing documentation, in fulfilling their role, they may require the Mayor, any other Member of the Executive, a Councillor, the Head of Paid Service and/or any senior officer to attend before it to explain in relation to matters within their remit:
  - (a) any particular decision or series of decisions;
  - (b) the extent to which the actions taken implement Council policy; and/or
  - (c) their performance, within their area of responsibility; and it is the duty of those persons to attend as so required.
  - (d) any function exercisable by a Councillor in accordance with any delegation made by the Council under section 236 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.
- 50. Where the Mayor, any Member or officer is required to attend the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or a Scrutiny Sub-Committee under this provision, the Chair of the Committee or Sub-Committee will inform the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive shall inform the Mayor, Member or officer in writing giving

at least fifteen working days' notice of the meeting at which they are required to attend. The notice will state the nature of the item on which they are required to attend to give account and whether any papers are required to be produced for the Committee or Sub-Committee. Where the account to be given to the Committee will require the production of a report, then the Mayor, Member or officer concerned will be given sufficient notice to allow for preparation of that documentation.

51. Where, in exceptional circumstances, the Mayor, Member or officer is unable to attend on the required date, then the Committee or Sub-Committee shall in consultation with the Mayor, Member or officer arrange an alternative date for attendance, to take place within a maximum of twenty-one working days from the date of the original request.
52. Except in exceptional circumstances, any failure by the Mayor or Member to attend the Committee or Sub-Committee will be considered a breach of the Code of Conduct for Members and investigated accordingly. Any failure by an Officer to attend will be dealt with under the appropriate disciplinary procedure.

#### **ATTENDANCE BY OTHERS**

53. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee or a Scrutiny Sub-Committee may invite people other than those people referred to in 'Members and Officers Giving Account' above to address it, discuss issues of local concern and/or answer questions. It may for example wish to hear from residents, stakeholders and Members and officers in other parts of the public sector and shall invite such people to attend.

#### **CALL-IN**

54. When a decision is made by the Mayor, the Cabinet, an individual Member of the Executive, a Committee of the Executive, or a key decision is made by an officer with delegated authority or under joint arrangements, the decision shall be published on the Council's website. Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be sent an alert when all such decisions within the same timescale, by the person responsible for publishing the decision.
55. The decision publication and call-in deadlines are all published in advance on the Council's website. Decisions will come into force, and may then be implemented at 5pm on the fifth clear working day, after the publication of the decision unless, after receiving a written request to do so, the Monitoring Officer calls the decision in.
56. During that period, the Monitoring Officer shall call-in a decision for scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee if so requested by:
  - (a) Not fewer than five Members of the Council; or

- (b) Two voting church, faith or parent governor representative in respect of any education matters only;
  - (c) The request for a call-in must give reasons in writing and outline an alternative course of action. In particular, the request must state whether or not those Members believe that the decision is outside the policy or budget framework.
57. The Monitoring Officer shall call-in a decision within twenty-four hours of receiving a written request to do so and shall place it on the agenda of the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on such a date as they may determine, where possible after consultation with the Chair of the Committee, and in any case within five clear working days of the decision to call-in. However, the Monitoring Officer will not call-in:
- (a) Any decision which has already been the subject of call-in;
  - (b) A decision which is urgent as defined in Rule 64 below and has to be implemented prior to the completion of any review. In such circumstances the decision-taker(s) shall give reasons to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
  - (c) Decisions by regulatory and other Committees discharging non-executive functions;
  - (d) Day to day management and operational decisions taken by officers;
  - (e) A resolution which merely notes the report or the actions of officers;
  - (f) A resolution making recommendations to Council.
58. Where the matter is in dispute, both the Chief Executive and the Monitoring Officer should be satisfied that one of the above criteria applies.
59. The Monitoring Officer shall then notify the decision taker of the call-in, who shall suspend implementation of the decision.
60. If, having considered the decision, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is still concerned about it, then it may refer it back to the Mayor or Executive for reconsideration, setting out in writing the nature of its concerns or if the matter should properly be considered by Council refer the matter to Council. If referred to the decision-maker they shall then reconsider within a further five clear working days or as soon as is reasonably practical thereafter, amending the decision or not, before adopting a final decision.
61. For the avoidance of doubt, if the Overview and Scrutiny Committee refers a matter back to the decision-making person or body, the implementation of that decision shall be suspended until such time as the decision-making person or body reconsiders and either amends or confirms that decision.
62. If following an objection to the decision, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee does not meet in the period set out above, or does meet but does not refer the

matter back to the decision-making person or body, the decision shall take effect on the date of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting, or the expiry of that further five working day period, whichever is the earlier.

63. If the matter was referred to Council and Council does not object to a decision which has been made, then no further action is necessary and the decision will be effective in accordance with the provision below. However, if Council does object, then Council will refer any decision to which it objects back to the decision-making person or body together with Council's views on the decision. That decision-making person or body shall decide whether to amend the decision or not before reaching a final decision and implementing it. Where the decision was taken by the Executive as a whole or a Committee of the Executive, a meeting will be convened to reconsider within five clear working days of the request. Where the decision was made by an individual, the individual will also reconsider within five clear working days of the request.
64. If Council does not meet, or it does but does not refer the decision back to the decision-making body or person, the decision will become effective on the date of Council or expiry of the period in which the meeting should have been held, whichever is the earlier.

#### **CALL-IN AND URGENCY**

65. The call-in procedure set out above shall not apply where the decision being taken by the Mayor, the Executive or a Committee of the Executive, or the key decision being made by an officer with delegated authority from the Executive or under joint arrangements is urgent. A decision will be urgent if any delay likely to be caused by the call-in process would seriously prejudice the Council's or the public's interests.
66. The record of the decision and notice by which it is made public shall state whether in the opinion of the decision making person or body, the decision is an urgent one, and therefore not subject to call-in.
67. The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee must agree both that the decision proposed is reasonable in all the circumstances and to it being treated as a matter of urgency. In the absence of the Chair, the Speaker's consent shall be required. In the absence of both, the consent of the Deputy Speaker or the Head of Paid Service or her/his nominee shall be required.
68. Decisions taken as a matter of urgency must be reported to the next available meeting of Council, together with the reasons for urgency.
69. The operation of the provisions relating to call-in and urgency shall be monitored annually, and a report submitted to Council with proposals for review if necessary.

#### **THE PARTY WHIP**

70. The use of the party whip to influence decisions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or one of its Sub-Committees is inappropriate and should not be used.
71. In this rule “a party whip” means any instruction given by or on behalf of a political group to any Councillor who is a Member of that group as to how that Councillor shall speak or vote on any matter before Council or any Committee, or the application or threat to apply any sanction by the group in respect of that Councillor should they speak or vote in any particular manner.

## **PROCEDURE AT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

72. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Panels shall consider the following business:
  - (a) Minutes of the last meeting;
  - (b) Declarations of interest;
  - (c) Consideration of any matter referred to the Committee for a decision in relation to call-in;
  - (d) Responses of the Executive to reports of Overview and Scrutiny;
  - (e) The business otherwise set out on the agenda for the meeting.
73. Where the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or a Scrutiny Sub-Committee conducts investigations (e.g. with a view to policy development), the body may also ask people to attend to give evidence at meetings of the body. Such meetings are to be conducted in accordance with the following principles:
  - (a) that the investigation be conducted fairly and all Members of the Committee be given the opportunity to ask questions of attendees, and to contribute and speak;
  - (b) that those assisting the Committee by giving evidence be treated with respect and courtesy; and
  - (c) that the investigation be conducted so as to maximise the efficiency of the investigation or analysis.
74. Following any investigation or review, the Committee or Sub-Committee shall prepare a report, for submission to the Mayor/Executive and/or Council as appropriate by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and shall make its report and findings public in so far as the report does not contain exempt or confidential information.

## **SUSPENSION**

75. Any part of these Rules may be suspended in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 23 of Part B Section 26 of this Constitution provided such suspension is not contrary to the law.