

## Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Improvement Plan 2022-23

<b>RAG Status</b>	Missed target requires action	On target but with minor issues	Completed action
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<b>A. Aims &amp; Objectives:</b> All Members, officers and residents in Rutland to understand the role of scrutiny and what it aims to achieve						
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner(s)</b>	<b>Delivery</b>	<b>RAG</b>	<b>Comments</b>
1. O&S has a clearly defined and valued role in the Council's improvement and governance arrangements and includes prioritising to ensure that the scrutiny function concentrates on delivering work that is of genuine value and relevance to the work of the wider authority	Establish engagement dialogue between scrutiny lead with Cabinet portfolio holders and senior council officers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quarterly meetings with relevant officers and Cabinet members</li> </ul>				
	Create comms plan and public user guide and publicity of O&S meetings via to various comms channel	What does this look like? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicise committee meetings via Council comms and partner channels</li> <li>Create channel mechanism to update and feedback to residents on activity, outcomes etc.</li> <li>Publicise one-off scrutiny review and challenge sessions</li> <li>Publicise scrutiny</li> </ul>				

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		reports via social media channels – both comms and Members <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Build a high-level one-page summary template for committee meeting activities i.e. topic discussed, KLE’s actions/recs to inform residents.</li> <li>• Members also to create interest via their social media feeds such as videos</li> <li>• Comms support to help resident engagement better with scrutiny – (options)</li> </ul>				
	Create separate plan for the publication of the Committees Work					
	Scrutiny to get involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the 1-2-1 with</li> </ul>				

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	earlier in policy development and pre-decision scrutiny	Cabinet Member and officers to raise this as an item of discussion				
2. O&S Members have the training and development opportunities they need to undertake their roles effectively	<p>Establish an annual training package for Scrutiny Members to aid them with developing key skills required to fulfil their roles</p> <p>Include internal training options where possible such as briefing sessions for finance and audit, risk management, performance,</p> <p>Developing better understanding of financial and policy context</p> <p>Members' understanding of the range of service areas within the portfolio</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Put likely briefing dates in diary.</li> <li>Need to undertake a skills audit of Scrutiny members to understand training needs and develop programme.</li> <li>Create training need matrix.</li> <li>Working with CfPS to ensure Members development.</li> <li>Members induction with specific portfolio areas.</li> <li>Members undertaking site visits where applicable to develop their</li> </ul>				Target next municipal year for comprehensive training programme

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	Developing learning in key areas which will help strengthen scrutiny's role and impact	knowledge base. • Source training to help understand Council finances i.e. Pensions Fund, Treasury, Management, Acquisitions & Disposals, Budget Setting, Councils Reserves & Outturn Monitoring, and Risk Management.				

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<b>B. Meeting Administration:</b> All scrutiny meetings to be run in a professional and highly efficient way to enable effective scrutiny to take place						
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3. O&S meetings and activities are well-planned, chaired effectively and make best use of the resources available to it	Scrutiny chair delegating to committee members to take on a more active role for the next scrutiny meeting topic leading to better engagement and ownership from members and more robust research and evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutiny members to meet informally once a month to discuss priorities for committee agendas and report development.</li> </ul>				
	All papers to be shared with Members (a week in advance of the committee meeting) to allow Members sufficient time to review the papers and establish key lines of enquiry for the item.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information and themes to be requested at beginning of calendar month before committee.</li> <li>Have the information well before the meeting so that they are well prepared what needs to be asked and what needs to be done.</li> </ul>				

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Objectives	Priority	Action	Owner(s)	Delivery	RAG	Comments
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Committees could use more case studies and open to more community members and group involvement.</li> <li>• Scrutinise decisions based on clear set of factors e.g. finances, risk, impact.</li> <li>• Scoping out agenda items for committee meetings to help better use of time / questioning with more focus and purpose.</li> <li>• Members raising residents' concern at Committee meetings.</li> <li>• Balance between officers / Members</li> </ul>				

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		given sufficient time to present on massive issues.				
	Improve focus of pre-meets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To have a pre-agenda template for discussion at pre-meets to help focus and perform better at meetings.</li> </ul>				
	Improve scope to include case studies, external organisations, hearing from residents and or local groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Apply a stakeholder mapping within scope of the agenda items to ensure that the relevant people are attending the meeting.</li> </ul>				

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<b>C. Work Programme:</b> Develop and deliver a coordinated work programme across all scrutiny committees which supports the council to achieve its strategic objectives and reflects the concerns of residents						
Objectives	Priority	Action	Owner(s)	Delivery	RAG	Comments
<p>4. O&amp;S Committee develops a work programme, focusing on priority areas including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improvement agenda</li> <li>• Delivering the strategic plan</li> <li>• Linking performance and budget scrutiny</li> </ul>	Scrutiny Officer support to assist scrutiny members with research and analysis on progress made over the last year including timetabling in service action plans to come back to scrutiny as part of the work programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Each committee meeting to have one area of spotlight or challenge.</li> <li>• Challenge sessions are diarised at beginning of municipal year at various intervals (rather than just the end)</li> </ul>				
	Reduce volume of agenda items at committee meetings and help address limited committee meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase number of one-off challenge session to provide coverage on issues that warrant more detailed examination.</li> </ul>				
	O&S Work Plan (post committee sign off) to be circulated out to directorates as part of supporting directorate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include likely Challenge Sessions as they are confirmed</li> </ul>				



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	forward planning.					
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To programme into O&amp;S work plan – review of service action plans based on challenge session records.</li> </ul>				
	Improving Committees focus on issues – better forward planning (looking at topics earlier)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To programme in O&amp;S work plan less agenda items to facilitate in-depth focus on issues which are more thematic in nature.</li> <li>Engage SMT in work plan setting now before new Committees comes in so we have items.</li> </ul>				
	Combination of Spotlight and Challenge Session to facilitate in-depth focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Application of a light touch spotlight session on issue and follow up a more in-depth</li> </ul>				

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		focus using scrutiny review/ challenge session.				
	Raising residents' awareness on facility to ask questions on topics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase level of comms to residents making them aware opportunity to ask questions on specific topics.</li> </ul>				

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<b>D. Represent residents and enable their concerns to inform Council decision making and policy development</b>						
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner(s)</b>	<b>Delivery</b>	<b>RAG</b>	<b>Comments</b>
5. Promote opportunities for resident to engage with scrutiny meetings	Develop a comms plan that publicises the OSC and meetings offering residents participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build comms actions into work plan and Action Log e.g. committee member to request info before Challenge Session.</li> <li>Programme meetings in the community if possible and dependent on work plan.</li> </ul>				
	Promote council's online scrutiny suggestion of topics page annually along with the Governance mailbox as part of the wider scrutiny comms plan					
	One-off resident led scrutiny topic (based on resident poll as key issue) within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutiny chair to consider where this could have best impact within their work plan and how residents can be</li> </ul>				

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		engaged with the session (possibly challenge session).				
	Incorporate resident questions section within the committee meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutiny Officer to ensure that the questions are received by a set time and programmed into the session at beginning or the end.</li> </ul>				

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<b>E. Evidence gathering:</b> Ensure a wide range of witnesses are engaged, and evidence researched, to allow Scrutiny to make informed and effective recommendations						
Objectives	Priority	Action	Owner(s)	Delivery	RAG	Comments
6. Council explores where 'independent expertise' exists in the county, taking account of existing networks and contacts, and how this could be used to assist independent scrutiny of services.	Build opportunities for community members and stakeholders to give evidence at meetings and assist with evidence gathering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Request relevant community and stakeholder contacts from Directorates.</li> <li>Promote online Scrutiny engagement portals.</li> </ul>	Policy officers			
	<p>Consider benchmarking with neighbouring or similar sized authorities to understand their approach including inviting scrutiny chairs from different authorities.</p> <p>Scrutiny Chair and/or representative to be integrated into council's partnership working (thematic boards)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Brief exercise comparing to other authorities.</li> <li>Relevant partnership boards and opportunities identified.</li> <li>Scrutiny Chair and/or representative invited to attend as appropriate.</li> <li>Scrutiny Members undertake site visit (where feasible</li> </ul>				

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		and relevant) as part of developing intelligence for Committee meeting agenda.				
	Distribution of scrutiny agenda items amongst scrutiny member to help more in-depth focus of meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutiny Chair to spread agenda topics amongst Members to help sharpen the focus/ examination of the topic.</li> </ul>				
	Reviewing the Cabinet Forward Plan to identify any controversial issues which need scrutiny's attention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scrutiny members need a more investigative approach with Cabinet members and officers on these topics via 1-2-1</li> </ul>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Committee to review the experience of the County from a Place wide</li> </ul>				

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		perspective – branch out beyond the Council.				

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<b>F. Scrutiny improves outcomes and drives improvement in public services</b>						
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7. Scrutiny Self Reflection on its work for 2022/23	To continue review using feedback surveys and capture the views of Members, Co-optees, partners and officer feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvement Plan published.</li> <li>Reviewed informally throughout the year.</li> </ul>				

<b>G. Accountability &amp; Culture:</b> Nurture a culture of scrutiny and work closely with the Council's Cabinet and Corporate Directors to encourage their buy-in and have open and honest conversations about performance, key issues and identify where scrutiny can add value						
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner(s)</b>	<b>Delivery</b>	<b>RAG</b>	<b>Comments</b>
8. Managing disagreement – cultivating the relationship between Scrutiny Members and Executive.	Develop an executive and scrutiny protocol which creates an expectations framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capture expectations of information when requested by committee i.e. timely, topical etc.</li> <li>Capture expectation of members' focus at meetings</li> </ul>				
9. Improving relations	Scrutiny's relationship with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Respect on all side</li> </ul>				



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	Cabinet and officers	<p>whilst maintaining critical friend approach and taking a collaborative approach ensuring scrutiny adds value, has systematic focus upon what residents and service users are saying.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny to establish approach to controversial issues and establishing rapport for a more open and honest dialogue.</li> <li>• Developing a parity of esteem so that O&amp;S function has equal weighting to that of Executive.</li> </ul>					
	Scrutiny's relationship with external partner organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be honest and upfront with partner organisations.</li> </ul>					

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		<p>invited to scrutiny meetings - let them know that scrutiny will challenge on what they bring to the meetings and what they say at the meetings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Buy-in from every level of the Council is needed for Overview and Scrutiny to function fully. The culture of O&amp;S is key here, and a substantial shift needs to take place at an organisational level.</li> </ul>		10.Improving scrutiny's representation			
	Facilitation better transparency on agenda issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>OSCs to encourage council services to bring areas of concern to the committee so that work can be undertaken to</li> </ul>					

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		<p>review and add value to workstreams.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensuring that the right officer is in place to provide response on cross cutting topics such as the budget – to provide better accountability.</li> </ul>				
	<p>Create scope for Scrutiny Members to participate at boards and panel groups</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Map our relevant partnership boards</li> </ul>				
	<p>Clarity on decision making process and openness from departments to share in a timely and regular manner</p>	<p>Scrutiny to request documents such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Situation reports – prepared by the council departments and by partners.</li> <li>Public health updates - specific reports on the spread of the disease and mitigation and suppression measures.</li> </ul>				

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Action trackers – service by service and corporately.</li> </ul>				
	Escalation mechanism for risk issues to council statutory officers, Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer, S151 Officer.	Scrutiny to red flag where it identifies clear risk to the Council on issues identified within the committee meetings as a support mechanism for governance.	Scrutiny Officer in liaison with O&S Committee Chair			