

**OFFICER REPORT TO COUNCIL****CHANGES TO SELECT COMMITTEES****KEY ISSUE/DECISION:**

The Council is asked to agree a revised select committee structure for the Council and amendments to Article 7 of the Constitution.

BACKGROUND:

1. Select Committees are an important part of the council's democratic process, discharging the functions of overview and scrutiny, as provided for in the Local Government Act 2000 (sections 21-22 and 32.) The select committees must between them cover all executive functions but the number and remit of each committee may vary from time to time as agreed by the Council.
2. A review of the current select committee structure has been carried out, identifying areas where select committees have been seen to add the most value and how this could be replicated to ensure that all select committees:
 - Provide a constructive challenge to the Cabinet.
 - Are able to review value for money across Council services.
 - Have greater involvement in policy development.
 - Provide proactive scrutiny of issues across the county.
3. Following a Member seminar in January, it was agreed that the select committee process could be strengthened by the introduction of an overarching committee to take a council-wide view and lead on any collaborative scrutiny issues.
4. The Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee would comprise of the chairmen of the select committees with additional members appointed by the Political Groups to ensure political proportionality. The Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee would be selected from among those Members who are not chairmen of a select committee so they do not have an affiliation with a particular committee.

5. In order to be effective, the CIPFA guidance on audit committees states that “the audit committee needs to be independent from executive and scrutiny”. In recognition of this, it is proposed that the Chairman of Audit and Governance is not a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
6. The Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee will take on the following role:
 - Monitoring performance, risk and budget across all services, commissioning select committees to establish task and finish groups to look into issues as appropriate.
 - Considering reports arising from any collaborative scrutiny arrangements with the Boroughs and Districts.
 - Reviewing the overall work programme for the committees, ensuring that work is not duplicated, that reviews are cross-cutting where appropriate and that value for money is addressed by the work programme.
 - Reviewing scoping documents from select committees wishing to carry out detailed reviews, ensuring that, where appropriate, the reviews are cross-cutting, include Members from all relevant committees, are adequately resourced and specify clear expected outcomes.
 - Scrutinising services and contributing to policy development within the Change & Efficiency Directorate and Chief Executive’s Office.
 - Sharing learning and best practice from within the County Council and beyond and identifying training needs as appropriate.
 - Publishing an Annual Report outlining the key achievements of scrutiny over the year.
7. The Select Committee Chairmen currently meet informally but formalising this as described above would provide a more open and transparent process as the committee would meet in public and be politically proportional. It would also then be possible for this committee to exercise greater powers, for example the ability to call-in decisions as well as taking on the role of performance, risk and financial management. Establishing one committee that takes responsibility for budget and performance will allow Members to understand the picture across the Council, so that services are not being considered in isolation. And finally, giving this committee a fuller remit will allow the select committees to concentrate on more in-depth reviews of key areas of concern in line with the Council’s priorities.
8. In addition to the Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee, it is proposed that there are six select committees:
 - Adult Social Care
 - Children & Families
 - Communities
 - Education

- Environment & Transport
- Health

The detailed remit of each committee in terms of the service areas they will cover is included in Appendix 1.

9. The select committees collectively will take on the following role:
 - Contributing to early policy development.
 - Undertaking scrutiny reviews in areas of concern in line with the Council's priorities.
 - Holding Cabinet to account, using call-in powers where it is felt appropriate.
 - Conducting visits within Surrey and beyond to identify, learn and challenge best practice.

10. Whilst the County Overview & Scrutiny Committee will have responsibility for monitoring budget issues across all Select Committees, individual Select Committees will still be involved in the budget planning process for the services within their remit. They should also consider financial implications as part of their discussion of reports and in making recommendations.

11. With the Council Overview and Scrutiny Committee taking responsibility for performance, budget and risk management, the select committees will have more time and capacity to undertake more in-depth reviews of key areas of concern in line with the Council's priorities. This will enable Members to scrutinise more effectively, using their knowledge and experience to challenge current thinking and focusing on comparing Surrey's approaches to best practice elsewhere, leading to more innovative solutions locally. It will also allow greater opportunities for select committees to play a role in policy development.

12. While there are seen to be benefits in implementing the structure as outlined, it is recognised that this on its own will not ensure effective scrutiny and involvement in policy development. Following feedback from Members at the seminar and ongoing discussions with the Select Committee Chairmen's Group, further work is underway to improve our processes. If the revised structure is agreed, this work will be taken forward with the new committees and officers to ensure that Members are well supported in undertaking their overview and scrutiny responsibilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

- (1) the Council approves the select committee remits as outlined in Appendix 1, for inclusion in the Constitution.

- (2) Article 7 of the Constitution be amended accordingly as attached at Appendix 2.
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Sources/background papers:

The Council's Constitution

Appendix 1

Select Committee Areas of Responsibility

Name	Relevant Services	
Council Overview & Scrutiny	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Performance, finance and risk monitoring for all Council services <i>All corporate areas, including:</i> ➤ Budget Strategy/Financial Management ➤ Improvement Programme, Productivity and Efficiency ➤ Equalities and Diversity ➤ Corporate Performance Management ➤ Corporate and Community Planning ➤ Property ➤ Contingency Planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ HR and Organisational Development ➤ IMT ➤ Procurement ➤ Other Support Functions ➤ Risk Management ➤ Europe ➤ Communications ➤ PVR programme and process
Adult Social Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Services for Older People ➤ Services for People with Physical and Sensory Disabilities ➤ Services for People with Learning Disabilities/Mental Health issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Community Care ➤ Supporting People ➤ Health Service relations ➤ Transition
Children and Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Children's Services, including: Looked after children Fostering Adoption Child Protection Children with disabilities Transition 	

Communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Community Safety ➤ Crime and Disorder Reduction ➤ Youth Offending ➤ Fire and Rescue Service ➤ Relations with the Police Authority and Police ➤ Library Services ➤ Localism ➤ 2012 Olympics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Adult and Community Learning ➤ Cultural Services and Sport ➤ Voluntary Sector Relations ➤ Heritage ➤ Citizenship ➤ Customer Services ➤ Trading Standards and Environmental Health
Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Education Services ➤ Services for Young People 	
Environment and Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strategic Planning ➤ Countryside ➤ Waste ➤ Transport Service Infrastructure ➤ Aviation ➤ Highway Maintenance ➤ Community Transport 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Economic Development and the Rural Economy ➤ Housing ➤ Local Transport Plan ➤ Road Safety ➤ Concessionary Travel ➤ Minerals ➤ Flood prevention
Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review and scrutiny of health services commissioned or delivered within Surrey ➤ Public health 	

**Amendment to the Constitution Part 2 – Articles of the Constitution,
Article 7**

Insert following section after paragraph 7.01 and renumber rest of Article 7 as appropriate:

7.02 Council Overview & Scrutiny Committee

The Committee will review performance, finance and risk information for all Council services, referring issues to the appropriate select committee for detailed scrutiny as necessary. The Committee will also perform an advisory role in relation to the select committees' work programmes, ensuring that their scrutiny reviews take account of any impacts on other Council services which are outside their remit and can be properly resourced.