

Dealing with Members' requests for review and PICK Priority Setting

Setting Up Task Groups

As a guideline and subject to resource constraints, the Overview and Scrutiny Board will establish time limited scrutiny Task Groups. These Task Groups will be charged with carrying out an in-depth investigation into a specific service area or policy. Each Task Group will work to the scope agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Membership of the Task Groups may be drawn from the Board itself and/or a pool of non-executive Members. Membership will depend on the knowledge and expertise required to deal with the matter in hand, as long as the principle of independence is not compromised.

Choosing the topics for the scrutiny Task Groups to work on is a key task for the Overview and Scrutiny Board. It will be impossible for the Task Groups to cover all the Council's activities and there is therefore a need to prioritise particular issues. The Overview and Scrutiny Board has adopted criteria to assist it with the task of selecting and prioritising topics for scrutiny review.

This system is called PICK. This acronym stands for:

PICK System

P for Public Interest

Members' representative roles are an essential feature of scrutiny. They are the eyes and ears of the public, ensuring that the policies, practice and services delivered to the people of the Borough, by both the Council and external organisations, are meeting local needs and to an acceptable standard. The concerns of local people should therefore influence the issues chosen for scrutiny. Members themselves will have a good knowledge of local issues and concerns. Surgeries, Parish Councils, Residents Associations and Community Groups are all sources of residents' views. Consultation and surveys undertaken by the Council and others can also provide a wealth of information.

I for Impact

Scrutiny is about making a difference to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area. Not all issues of concern will have equal impact on the well-being of the community. This should be considered when deciding the programme of work, giving priority to the big issues that have most impact. To maximise impact, particularly when scrutinising external activity, attention should also be given to how the committee could influence policy and practice.

C for Council Performance

Scrutiny is about improving performance and ensuring the Council's customers are served well. Members will need good quality information to identify areas where the Council, and other external organisations, are performing poorly. According to the Council's Performance Management Framework, the Cabinet may also refer matters of concern to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

K for Keep in Context.

To avoid duplication or wasted effort priorities should take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered. Is there an internal audit review happening or planned? Is the service about to be inspected by an external body? Are there major legislative or policy initiatives already resulting in change? If these circumstances exist Members may decide to link up with other processes or defer a decision until the outcomes are known or conclude that the other processes will address the issues. Reference should also be made to proposed programmes of work in the Council's plans and strategies

Members' Requests

Members should complete the Scrutiny Review Topic submission form which covers these key criteria. Requests will be considered by officers and the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board and assessed using the following scoring system.

- **P**ublic Interest: the concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen

| Score | Measure |
|-------|------------------------|
| 0 | no public interest |
| 1 | low public interest |
| 2 | medium public interest |
| 3 | high public interest |

- **I**mpact: priority should be given to the issues which make the biggest difference to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area

| Score | Measure |
|-------|---------------|
| 0 | no impact |
| 1 | low impact |
| 2 | medium impact |
| 3 | high impact |

- **C**ouncil Performance: priority should be given to the areas in which the Council, and other agencies, are not performing well.

| Score | Measure |
|-------|--|
| 0 | 'Green' on or above target performance |
| 2 | 'Amber', |
| 3 | low performance 'Red' |

- **K**eeP in Context: work programmes must take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort.

| Score | Measure |
|-------|---|
| 0 | Already dealt with/ no priority |
| 1 | Longer term aspiration or plan |
| 2 | Need for review raised but not adopted policy |
| 3 | Need for review acknowledged and already incorporated into programme or contained in a strategy |

Each topic will be scored under each category as indicated above. Where a category is not applicable, no score will be given.