

JOB DESCRIPTION FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

COMMISSIONERS

The Commissioners have a particular responsibility to ensure that the general role and specific functions of Overview and Scrutiny which are set out in Articles of the Constitution are discharged effectively.

In order to achieve this, the Commissioners should:-

- a) be responsible for ensuring the effective discharge of the Overview and Scrutiny function by means of promoting and encouraging debate which is both challenging and constructive leading to conclusions which are clear, understandable and supported by well argued reasons;
- b) keep in touch with issues being considered at Cabinet meetings;
- c) be proactive in identifying potential sources of relevant information which may be used in judging the performance of the Council, for example by looking at views expressed by users and the public and information arising from any external examination of the Authority;
- d) promote and encourage the use of the Guidance Notes produced to assist Overview and Scrutiny members;
- e) monitor and review methods of working within Scrutiny and make recommendations on possible changes;
- f) monitor developments and consider lessons learnt from guidance, inspection and research undertaken at a national or local level and report to the Scrutiny Commission on revised working methods;
- g) ensure that Overview and Scrutiny plays a proactive role in performance management and policy development;
- h) ensure that the focus of investigations is on how the Council and partners are performing and delivering services, issues emerging as concerns of local people and best practice elsewhere;
- i) take the lead in identifying issues for detailed consideration, the scope of any investigation or review and determine the method for undertaking such reviews/investigations and share the chairing of any panels established by the Commission;
- j) ensure that recommendations arising from issues considered at Scrutiny are followed up;
- k) to act as Scrutiny Champions within the Council and be responsible for assisting and mentoring members of their Political Group;

- l) ensure that they are aware of significant issues which are debated at Overview and Scrutiny meetings and the outcomes of that process in the light of the need to maintain a critical but constructive relationship with the Executive and external bodies;
- m) advise the Member Learning and Development Working Party on all issues of member training of Scrutiny members and the future development of Scrutiny.
- n) oversee the preparation (on behalf of all Overview and Scrutiny bodies) of an annual report on activities undertaken by those bodies. [Note: The Annual report is to be agreed by the Scrutiny Commission prior to presentation to the Council];
- o) keep in touch with the Forward Plan of Key Decisions;
- p) liaise with the Executive on management of business and in relation to reviews/investigations to ensure that duplication of effort is avoided;
- q) oversee the work programmes for all Overview and Scrutiny bodies, having regard to officer and member capacity and ensure that good project management processes are put in place.

Note: Members are reminded that, in the discharge of their duties as Commissioners, they must follow the various codes of practice and standards of behaviour laid down by the Council, including the Code of Corporate Governance.