

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 13th January, 2020
6.00 - 8.25 pm

Attendees	
Councillors:	Chris Mason (Chair), Sandra Holliday, Paul Baker, Max Wilkinson, Dilys Barrell, Iain Dobie, Jo Stafford, Dennis Parsons and Paul McCloskey (Reserve)
Also in attendance:	Councillor Matt Babbage (Chair of BSWG), Hilary Gardner (Campbell Tickell), Richard Gibson (Strategy and Engagement Manager), Councillor Rowena Hay (Cabinet Member Finance), Gareth Jones (Senior Environmental Health Officer), Councillor Steve Jordan, Councillor Matt Babbage, Councillor Flo Clucas, Councillor Rowena Hay and Councillor Andrew McKinlay

Minutes

1. APOLOGIES

Councillors Payne and Sudbury had given their apologies. Councillor McCloskey would substitute for Councillor Sudbury.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were declared.

3. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the last meeting had been circulated with the agenda.

Upon a vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on the 18 November 2019 be agreed and signed as an accurate record.

4. PUBLIC AND MEMBER QUESTIONS, CALLS FOR ACTIONS AND PETITIONS

None had been received.

5. MATTERS REFERRED TO COMMITTEE

The Chairman reminded members that having considered the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) in December, some members had raised the issue of payments for members appointed to outside bodies as non-executive directors or trustees. It was decided that this matter should be referred to Overview and Scrutiny and that it was for the committee to decide how it wished to consider the matter.

A member suggested that a key consideration should be whether any other authorities made such payments.

Members acknowledged the complexities of the issue and decided therefore that a task group would be the most appropriate way in which to give consideration to this matter. Draft objectives would be agreed between legal and the Chairman, and these would be tabled at the next meeting for approval.

6. SCRUTINY REVIEW

The Chairman welcomed Hilary Gardner, an Associate with Campbell Tickell (CT). For the benefit of members who had enquired as to why her findings had not been circulated in advance, she explained that CT preferred not to present their findings in advance, as it provided no context and often raised lots of questions amongst those members with whom they had not met (interviewed). She then proceeded to talk through a PowerPoint presentation (attached at Appendix 1) and made the following key points:

- CT, one of the UKs leading consultancies, had worked with more than 800 organisations, and in the last two years this had included CBH and Ubico.
- CT had been tasked with assessing the current arrangements and ways of working in the context of the Statutory Guidance and make recommendations about how the committee could be more effective and how resources could be better focussed or increased.
- There was no single, definitive description of the role and purpose of scrutiny, and information as to the expectations of O&S lack focus, clarity and sometimes consistency.
- A role description for the committee chair should be drafted that outlined key skills and responsibilities.
- Focussed member training sessions should be arranged and this should be held within a meeting, so as to provide real focus.
- Formal feedback from the Leader (Cabinet) to O&S should be introduced.
- With finite resources the committee needed to consider its topics for scrutiny more carefully and focus more on the council's priorities, though this would not preclude them from prioritising other topics.
- Although dedicated resource for the committee had improved since the review was commissioned, officer support more generally, needed to be better focussed.
- Some of the reports she had reviewed were far too long. The committee should consider introducing a maximum page limit for reports.
- She welcomed news that PowerPoint training for officers had been arranged and proposed that presentations at the meeting should be consistently managed by the chair.

- It was suggested that the chair should sense check all reports before publication.
- All members should be encouraged to contribute and feel comfortable to do so, as the meeting that had been observed had been dominated by a small number of members.
- A coversheet would give clarity on the purpose of the report and the action(s) the committee were being asked to take.
- She felt that decisions and actions should be tracked but was aware that was already in hand following the introduction of Clearview.
- To make better use of member energy and time, items for scrutiny should feature higher up the agenda than those that simply provide an overview.
- The duration of meetings should be limited to two hours.
- A wrap-up session at the end of each meeting would give members the opportunity to discuss positives and negatives.

Hilary gave the following responses to member questions:

- There was no suggestion of political bias within the committee, however some members had commented that call-in was infrequently used as it was considered that given the political make-up of the council and the large majority, there was little point in challenging some decisions.
- It was important that the committee focussed on prioritising its time and focus on council objectives, though this was not to say that it shouldn't prioritise other topics as appropriate.

In summing up, Hilary summarised what she considered to be the key recommendations:

- The need for a single clear description of the role of the committee.
- The need for additional training and support for members and for any sessions to be held within a meeting.
- A formal process for getting feedback from the Leader.
- Shorter reports.
- An agenda front sheet which sets out why an item has come to committee and what the committee are being asked to do.
- Splitting the agenda into scrutiny items at the start and overview items at the end.
- A wrap up session at the end of each meeting.

A member expressed their support for more focus on council priorities and less on members' personal interests. However, another member felt that the committee should be cautious when dismissing any such topics as these things often came to light in one ward before it quickly transpired, as a result of having considered the issue, that it was an issue facing residents in other wards.

She commended the committee for how openly they had approached the review and for their obvious commitment to improve.

The Chairman thanked Hilary and Campbell Tickell for their work on the review and accepted that the committee had to work smarter. He looked forward to seeing her final report and recommendations.

The Executive Director of People & Change felt reviews were valuable, refinements important and having shone a spotlight on the scrutiny function, he too looked forward to taking forward any recommendations.

7. URBAN GULLS

Mark Nelson, Enforcement Manager reminded members that he had last reported on progress in August 2019 and the paper that had been circulated with the agenda aimed to provide a further update in respect of the recommendations of the Urban Gull Task Group. He assured the committee that egg-oiling was an extremely effective method of preventing eggs hatching, as well as breaking the two year cycle of chicks returning to lay their own eggs and felt that the introduction of surveys to identify nest locations had been invaluable. It was therefore proposed that income above the pest control income target, up to a maximum of £10k, combined with the base budget of £9.4k would fund an expanded egg oiling programme in 2020/21. The success of the gull control programme would determine the emerging strategy, though priority actions would ultimately be determined by the budget available.

The Enforcement Manager and Pest Control Manager gave the following responses to member questions:

- Egg oiling had proved effective in Cheltenham. On a survey of four commercial premises, in the year that egg oiling took place only two eggs hatched, the year that those properties did not form part of the programme, 35 had hatched, and given the two year cycle, any surviving chicks would return to Cheltenham to lay their own eggs. The Enforcement Manager had no doubt that egg oiling was the most effective means of managing the urban gull population in Cheltenham.
- Leaflets had been produced and officers were planning a media campaign. These officers were also in discussion with the Comms Team regarding the most effective way of using the council's media platform to raise awareness of the issues around gulls and provide residents with advice.
- The gull nesting season would start between the 12 and 21 May.

- There were some practical issues to be worked through, in terms of how waste would be collected, before the re-usable hessian sacks could be trialled.

The Chairman invited the Cabinet Member Development and Safety to address the committee. He had commended the work of the STG and their recommendations at the time that it was presented to Cabinet. Using Tivoli as an example, nesting birds were not an issue but rather those travelling to and from Wingmoor Farm for food; he stressed that there was no exact science to gull control. He expressed his disappointment that it had not been possible to use drones to identify nests, as this would have been quicker and less expensive than having to use cherry pickers.

The Chairman thanked the Officers and Cabinet Member for their attendance and suggested that the draft strategy should be considered by the committee at the appropriate time.

8. SOCIAL VALUE POLICY

The Strategy and Engagement Manager introduced initial thoughts on the draft social value policy, further to it having been raised at the October meeting of the committee. The council sought to use legislation, which came into force in 2013, to secure wider social, economic and environmental benefits when commissioning or procuring services. This was particularly important given the substantial procurement activities that would be undertaken as part of the cyber central project and the housing investment plan and would also allow for additional resources towards helping us deliver a carbon neutral Cheltenham and tackling child poverty. As an organisation CBC were also more aware of the importance of the 'Cheltenham pound' in recognition that the more that was spent locally, the more this would benefit the town. He talked through the proposed definition of social value and priorities, as well as the practical support and outcomes that may be sought, in addition to how it could be delivered. He proposed that this committee would have a role to play in ensuring that the policy was working.

The Strategy and Engagement Manager and the Director of People & Change gave the following responses to member questions:

- The current Procurement Policy was adopted in 2015 and did include reference to social value but this had never been actively promoted. Given the level of investment that was planned as a consequence of the cyber park and housing, there were some major gains to be made, though obviously all subject to VfM.
- In the past tenders had been evaluated using a percentage split between cost vs quality, but with the adoption of a social value policy it could be that 10% of the weighting could be applied to social value outcomes
- By increasing the threshold for informal procurement from £10k to £25k, the council had made it easier for small local businesses to bid for contracts.

- The social value element could take the form of simple yet creative practical solutions to help our priority communities.
- Any bids would be judged against the core priorities, of which carbon emissions is one and therefore the distance and means by which a contractor would have to travel to do the job, would be a consideration.
- In acknowledgement that some children and families have had adverse experiences in the past, 'trauma informed' described the more rounded approach to working with such families CBC will adopt.
- A member mentioned that we had to be careful that suppliers did not see social value as a levy and just put up their prices.
- Larger contractors expected to be challenged on social value, but the council spent £23m a year and CBH spent £4m and this in itself provided scope to deliver additional value.

A member commented that the tender process would still be a competitive one and that contractors would simply get more points for having a social value mind-set.

The chairman thanked the Strategy and Engagement Manager for his attendance.

9. REVIEW OF AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA

This item was taken after agenda items 10, 11 and 12.

Gareth Jones, Senior Environmental Health Officer referred members to the PowerPoint presentation that had been circulated in advance of the meeting and proceeded to talk through key points of that presentation.

He started by explaining the difference between local air quality and climate change: climate change was a global issue, the effects of which would not necessarily be visible locally and air quality effected areas of up to 20 to 30 meters from a road. The solutions however, were very similar: fewer private cars, particularly diesels and increased cycling, walking and public transport, as well as cleaner energy production and reduced consumption.

The council's responsibilities were set out in law, specifically the Environment Act 1995, which also included the relevant limits, though he noted that these would likely change in the near future. The main concern in Cheltenham was NO₂ which derived entirely from traffic and levels were measured using NO_x tubes at 29 locations around the town and AQ station at St. George's Street. Particulates came from a wider range of sources, including tyres and brakes, even those of electric vehicles and were of increasing note. Measured by mesh pods at 9 locations across Cheltenham, levels were not close to (current) limits.

In 2011 the borough-wide AQMA was adopted, because there were 5 failure areas and it was felt that it would be counter-productive to write 5 separate plans and risk displacing the problem from one area to another. Results showed that whilst the annual average of NO₂ had breached the limit, the short-

term limit had not and PM10 levels were nowhere near breaching, however, the limits were likely to be reduced. It was noted that these results were all available on the website.

The outline was approved by DEFRA in 2018/19 and the detailed assessment confirmed the need to re-define the AQMA. By law the council had to revoke the existing borough-wide AQMA and simultaneously declare a new, smaller one. The map showed the sausage shaped area that the new AQMA would cover and this would include all properties with a façade onto the roads (29 commercial and 79 residential properties) and approximately 120 residents. It would take another 12 months to develop a new action plan and outline ideas included working with Stagecoach, though their fleet was comparatively cleaner than others, Royal Mail and works to the traffic lights. He stressed that this would require input from GCC, who coincidentally had a large Climate Change fund and any action in terms of climate change would positively impact the air quality in Cheltenham.

The Senior Environmental Health Officer gave the following responses to member questions:

- Results in January, February and March were worse because more people drove in colder weather and the cold weather meant pollutants would take longer to dissipate.
- Longer-term results showed a small decline, which was consistent with the rest of the country.
- Whilst the AQMA would be smaller, no existing monitoring points would be removed, except the 6 that were strategically located to monitor the diversions that were in place for Phase 4 of the Cheltenham Plan. In fact, monitoring would increase to 38 locations, from 29 at present.
- The mesh pods were able to measure PM down to 2.5 and these were easily recalibrated.
- The action plan was out of date and required significant revision to reflect areas suffering the worst problems. Efforts needed to be focussed on areas where levels were in breach or marginal.
- The AQMA reflected the areas where legal limits were being breached and other locations reflected areas where limits were marginal or changing areas where a level of verification was needed. It was possible to monitor any area but this would prove very expensive. Members were welcome to contact him directly with questions about particular areas.
- Colleagues at Stroud District Council were monitoring the area around the new incinerator very closely and would flag any concerns with CBC if further investigation was required.
- There were baseline figures for the AQMA and the areas around it.

- Pollutant levels by vehicle were available online, but members were warned to take account of who had commissioned a particular study.
- The traffic lights would go towards addressing the number of vehicles but there was also a question about how to address the different types of vehicle using these roads.
- A mesh pod would be located outside of a school on a busy road in Cheltenham and it was possible to increase the frequency at which it sent data, from the standard 15 minutes down to every minute, but there would create a resource issue in terms of the data handling required. It was always possible to redeploy pods to other schools if required. It was noted that GCC, who were ultimately responsible for Schools, had done a project with schools in the town, whereby they had taken measurements during term-time and again at half term, but he personally, didn't feel this had been the most scientific of projects.
- He agreed with various members that dealing with the school run would be key in dealing with climate change and air quality and whilst it was not possible to force people not to drive their children to school, he felt that the data would help persuade people to make different choices.

The committee agreed that they would make a formal request that Cabinet consider funding short-term monitoring outside of schools across the town.

The Chairman thanked the Senior Environmental Health Officer and asked that he, and colleagues from GCC be invited to come back in 6 months to talk about schools specifically.

10. BUDGET PROPOSALS (FOR COMING YEAR)

Councillor Babbage, the Chair of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group (BSWG), referred members to the briefing that had been circulated as a supplement. He explained that the BSWG had met on the 7 January to discuss the Cabinet's interim budget proposals for the coming year and had a range of questions. He noted that ordinarily the HRA was less contentious, as it was much 'business as usual' but that given the potential for a vast increase in housing, there had been many more questions this year.

There was specific request that, despite budget having been allocated, the business case for in-cab technology for the Ubico fleet, should be considered fully.

Councillor Babbage gave the following responses to member questions:

- The BSWG scrutinised the process, as much as the detail, but it was not their budget.
- In their absence from the meeting, CBH had been asked to provide a written response to the question about the expected increase in the number of Universal Credit claimants as per the HRA budget papers and the possible 'bad debt' implications this could have, as CBC officers were not able to provide an answer.

The Cabinet Member Finance gave the following answers to member questions:

- CBH were undertaking a piece of work which looked at the impact that building carbon neutral houses would have on their budget. Cabinet Members would likely be presented with a range of options by March. However, CBH were also looking at existing programmes of work, in terms of boiler replacements and door and window replacements. Considerations were largely around expenditure, rather than necessarily doing less (carbon neutral work), for more money.
- Norwich was an interesting example, as whilst the commitment to build eco-friendly estates was to be commended, it was proving to be less sustainable in the longer-term.

Councillor Babbage took the opportunity to thank the Cabinet Member Finance, Executive Director of Finance & Assets and the Chief Accountant for their ongoing advice and support for the BSWG.

11. FEEDBACK FROM OTHER SCRUTINY MEETINGS ATTENDED

The Chairman advised that Councillor Horwood had not attended the HOSC meeting on the 19 November and therefore there was no update, neither had there been any meetings of the Police and Crime Panel since the last meeting of this committee.

Councillor McCloskey had produced a written update on the 20 November meeting of the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee and this was taken as read. There were no questions from members.

In view of the feedback from Campbell Tickell, the Chairman questioned the value in these updates forming part of the agendas for this committee, given that there were rarely any questions and though some members agreed, some felt that they provided members with an opportunity to pose further questions on matters of interest.

12. CABINET BRIEFING

The Leader acknowledged the complexities surrounding the question of SRAs for non-executive directors and trustees of outside bodies, pointing out that it was in-fact illegal for the company to make payments to councillors as it does with all other GAL directors, and therefore if Council decided that these payments should be made, it would be the Council that would have to make them.

He highlighted a slight amendment to the constitution. Given the number of planning issues relating to the cyber-park, the decision had been taken to, for the foreseeable future, move responsibility for the local plan and development control, away from the Cabinet Member Development & Safety, to the Leader, so as to avoid any confusion.

13. UPDATES FROM SCRUTINY TASK GROUPS

Councillor Parsons, as Chair of the Events STG, advised the committee that the group had met for the fourth time earlier today for a meeting which focussed on enforcement. Prior to this, the group had met with stakeholders and he felt that this had been a productive meeting which identified the need for the council to

engage with residents groups more effectively. The last meeting of the group was scheduled for the 30 January and it was hoped that the group would be in a position to agree their conclusions and any recommendations at this meeting, with a view to being able to table their final report with the committee at the February meeting.

Due to the lack of any volunteers for the Third Sector Policy Review STG, the Chair proposed that he and the other lead members for O&S (Councillors Payne and Sudbury) undertake a desktop review and report back with their findings. The committee agreed that this was a sensible proposal.

14. REVIEW OF SCRUTINY WORKPLAN

A copy of the work plan had been circulated with the agenda.

The Chairman confirmed that there had been some changes to the work plan since its publication. The demonstration of Clearview had been pulled from the February meeting and moved to the March, to accommodate the final report and recommendations of the Events STG. He also noted that the LGA Peer Review progress report would be in the form of a briefing note, which would not be discussed.

The committee were also advised that the Residents Satisfaction Survey would not be taken to the March meeting and instead members were asked to contact the Director of People & Change with any specific questions or concerns about any of the feedback and the committee would then take a view on whether any of those issues needed to be considered further. The Director of People & Change would email all members inviting feedback.

A member queried what was being done with regards to the Climate Change Emergency. The Director of People & Change confirmed that funding would be in place from April 2020 and specific initiatives would commence from that point. The suggestion from the Chairman was that this be added to the work plan as an annual item.

15. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXEMPT INFORMATION

Upon a vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED that in accordance with Section 100A(4) Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the remaining agenda items as it is likely that, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, if members of the public are present there will be disclosed to them exempt information as defined in paragraph 3, Part (1) Schedule (12A) Local Government Act 1972, namely:

Paragraph 3; Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

16. EXEMPT MINUTES

Ten exempt minutes of the last meeting had been circulated with the agenda.

Upon a vote it was unanimously

RESOLVED that the exempt minutes of the meeting held on the 18 November 2019 be agreed and signed as an accurate record.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting was scheduled for 24 February 2020.

Chris Mason
Chairman

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Review of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Hilary Gardner and Ceri Victory-Rowe
13th January 2020

Outline

- Purpose & process
- Our overall findings
- Conclusions and recommendations
- What next?

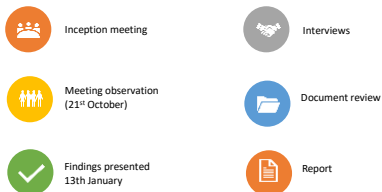
Campbell Tickell: Our experience

- One of the UK's leading consultancies focusing primarily on the statutory and non-profit sectors
- Operated for 20 years
- Recognised expertise in governance, regulation, business transformation and improvement, financial and risk analysis, human resource and recruitment.
- Worked for more than 800 organisations including many local authorities.
- Over the last 2 years have worked with the Boards of CBH and Ubico. Recently recruited new independent chair and 2 independent board members for Ubico

Brief

- Assess current arrangements and ways of working...
- ...in the context of the Statutory Guidance published by MHCLG in May 2019
- Make recommendations about how Overview and Scrutiny can become more effective
- Consider how resources to support Overview and Scrutiny could be better utilised or increased

Process



Context of review

- 2011 number of scrutiny committees reduced from three to one
- Current committee last reviewed in 2013
- May 2019: Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities published by MHCLG:
 - "Effective overview and scrutiny should:
 - Provide constructive 'critical friend' challenge;
 - Amplify the voices and concerns of the public;
 - Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role; and
 - Drive improvement in public services

The status of the statutory guidance

"This is statutory guidance from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Local authorities... must have regard to it when exercising their functions. [This]... does not mean that the sections of statutory guidance have to be followed in every detail, but that they should be followed unless there is a good reason not to in a particular case"

CAMPBELL
TICKELL |

Overall findings

"Scrutiny works best when it has a clear role and function. This provides focus and direction".

- Consistent view of key purpose of committee
- **But** no single, definitive description of its role on paper...
- ...nor expectations set about the benefits scrutiny should deliver
- So difficult to know what effective looks like?
- Potential value of committee not being fully realised
- Ultimately, it is difficult to demonstrate tangible outcomes: 'a lot of effort for what?'

CAMPBELL
TICKELL |

Detailed findings

Culture and ways of working

"The prevailing organisational culture, behaviours and attitudes of an authority will largely determine whether its scrutiny function succeeds or fails".

- Political make up of council perceived as potential barrier to effective scrutiny and discharge of ToR
- Overall low level of understanding and support for scrutiny

CAMPBELL
TICKELL |

Detailed findings

Culture and ways of working (continued)

- Lines of sight and communication between committee and executive not clearly articulated
 - Few working group reports to Cabinet with too many recommendations? How do scrutiny monitor delivery of accepted recommendations. Is this regularly reported
 - Scrutiny of Cabinet reports: how are members comments taken on board and how is feedback received and monitored
 - Council leader regularly attends scrutiny meetings but contribution not clear or maximised
- Scrutiny not really visible to full council, rarely referred to in council meetings, not valued
- Call-in rarely used

CAMPBELL
TICKELL |

Detailed findings

Resources

"The resource an authority allocates to the scrutiny function plays a pivotal role in determining how successful that function is and therefore the value it can add to the work of the authority".

- Resources improved - but could be better focussed/organised and prioritised . Over reliance on one person?
- Work of committee not valued sufficiently to merit priority for resources
- Additional resource may be required to support development/training

CAMPBELL
TICKELL |

Detailed findings

Committee membership

"Selecting the right members to serve on scrutiny committees is essential if those committees are to function effectively. Where a committee is made up of members who have the necessary skills and commitment, it is far more likely to be taken seriously by the wider authority".

"When selecting individual members to serve on scrutiny committees, an authority should consider a member's experience, expertise, interests, ability to act impartially, ability to work as part of a group, and capacity to serve".

- Appointment to committee is political or self-selected
- Limited role description for committee chair, with no reference to skills and attributes required
- Little support or training offered/provided to members

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TICKELL |

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Detailed findings

Access to information

"Scrutiny members should have access to a regularly available source of key information about the management of the authority – particularly on performance, management and risk".

- No evidence of resistance to members having information they need;
- **But**
- Information request often not clearly understood or presented well
- Inconsistent evidence of members understanding how to use that information in the best way in carrying out their role

CAMPBELL
TICKELL

Detailed findings

Planning work

To "make a tangible difference to the work of the authority...scrutiny committees need to plan their work programme, i.e. draw up a long-term agenda and consider making it flexible enough to accommodate any urgent, short-term issues that might arise during the year".

"While scrutiny has the power to look at anything which affects 'the area, or the area's inhabitants', authorities will often find it difficult to support a scrutiny function that carries out generalised oversight across the wide range of issues experienced by local people, particularly in the context of partnership working. Prioritisation is necessary".

- No evidence of a strategic approach to work planning, nor of systematic prioritisation, responds to cabinet work plan
- Work plan is relatively short-term
- Scrutiny workgroups focus on individual members (or their constituents) interest or concerns rather than agreed priorities of council
- Agenda planning involves Chair, vice chair and independent member supported by Democracy Officer
- Agenda items often not clearly articulated or thought through, no clear focus or recommendation

CAMPBELL
TICKELL

Detailed findings

Meetings and evidence sessions

- The majority of agenda items/papers lack focus
- Large volume for information only
- Often little clarity as to why items are presented and what the committee is being asked to do
- Chair should provide stronger and consistent leadership in managing specific agenda items, look to provide a clear introduction and summary of each item

"Good preparation is a vital part of conducting effective evidence sessions. Members should have a clear idea of what the committee hopes to get out of each session and appreciate that success will depend on their ability to work together on the day".

- evidence sessions not observed but feedback to committee could be improved

CAMPBELL
TICKELL

Conclusions

- Current ways of working need to be improved to evidence good regard/ following the new Statutory Guidance
- But in reality the guidance is just re-enforcing good practise. You should be looking to achieve this as a minimum if you (and the wider council) want to be good at Scrutiny!
- Overall need a re-focussing of purpose and the resourcing and delivery of a number of practical actions

CAMPBELL
TICKELL

Questions

CAMPBELL
TICKELL

But...

...our field work and in particular our interviews showed a desire to improve.



CAMPBELL
TICKELL

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Culture and ways of working

- Develop and agree a **single, clear and measurable** definition of the role and purpose of the committee
- Develop a specific role description for the committee chair to include skills, attributes and key responsibilities
- Consider how the members of the committee can be suitably supported and trained to be skilled and effective members who clearly understand the purpose of the committee and their contribution to it
- Arrange focussed training session(s) for **all** members (within a meeting) specifically on how to be an effective O and S member. Possible areas of training : how to promote and build visibility of scrutiny; how to effectively challenge and scrutinise information and decisions

CAMPBELL
TICKELL |

Culture and Ways of working (2)

- Introduce a formal feedback/link from Cabinet to O and S. (The Leader attends O and S, and nobody asked him anything!)
- Consider how you select your enquiry topics should they be focussed more on delivery of the Council's corporate plan. Better use of finite resources and could help to evidence added value to the wider council
- Consider how the Chair and committee can widen it's visibility in the council? political makeup should not be a barrier to effective scrutiny, its about using information and looking at decision making in a smarter way

CAMPBELL
TICKELL |

Resources

- Although dedicated resource to O and S has improved, general officer support needs to be better focussed and respected
- Report writers need to be given clearer brief and expectation and time frame and this needs to be robustly adhered to and managed by the Chair
- Consider introducing a maximum page limit for reports with use of appendices by exception
- Consider training for officers on pp presentation
- Chair to sense check all papers before dispatch
- Chair to consistently manage presentations at meeting

CAMPBELL
TICKELL |

Effective Meetings

- Ensure that all members are encouraged to contribute and feel comfortable doing so
- Introduce a front cover sheet for each report/agenda item to provide clarity on the purpose of the report, why it is coming to O and S and what recommendations/action the committee are being asked to make. This should be made available to report authors after agenda planning meeting. Chair to use this to 'top and tail' each agenda item at meeting and can also be useful for minutes
- Introduce an action tracker so that all decisions/actions made by the committee can be tracked at each meeting. This should also include tracking of recommendations to Cabinet or other committees/groups

CAMPBELL
TICKELL |

Effective meetings (2)

- Re-order agenda (recognising issues with public attendance) between items for Scrutiny and items for overview in order to make better uses of meeting time and member energy
- Re-introduce maximum meeting time of 2 hours , linked back to agenda planning, quality of reports, length of presentations, management of external speakers
- Introduce a wrap up session at the end of each meeting to consider 'positives and negatives' from meeting

CAMPBELL
TICKELL |

Questions?

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Recommendations: Summary and next steps

- *Our recommendations are not just about showing adherence to the Statutory Guidance*
- *They are more than that, if accepted and delivered they will help make the committee more effective, members feel valued and improve the standing of the committee within the wider council*
- **Next steps:** Written report to be finalised including feedback from this presentation
- Action plan to be developed and agreed by committee
- Committee to track progress on implementation of recommendations

Thank You

Hilary Gardner and Ceri Victory-Rowe
020 8830 6777

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