

CAMPBELL TICKELL RECOMMENDATION:	TASK GROUP AGREED ACTION:	TARGET FOR COMPLETION:
<p>Recommendation 1: Develop and agree a single, clear and measureable definition of the role and purpose of the committee, used consistently in all documentation</p>	<p><i>The Overview and Scrutiny have statutory powers to scrutinise decisions the executive is planning to take, those it plans to implement, and those that have already been taken or implemented. The Overview and Scrutiny committee can enable improvements to be made to policies or the implementation of those policies and also have an important role to play in developing policy and improving performance.</i></p> <p><i>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Provide constructive ‘critical friend’ challenge to the executive;</i></li> <li>• <i>Amplify the voices and concerns of the public;</i></li> <li>• <i>Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role; and</i></li> <li>• <i>Drive improvement in public services in Cheltenham.</i></li> </ul>	<p>JUNE 2021</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: Develop a specific role description for the committee chair to include skills, attributes and key responsibilities</p>	<p><i>The Chair plays a leadership role on a scrutiny committee as they are largely responsible for establishing its profile, influence and ways of working. The Chair should possess the same attributes as those outlined for the wider membership of the committee (paragraph x), as well as having the ability to lead and build a sense of teamwork and consensus among committee members.</i></p> <p><i>Specific skills include:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>A good understanding of the strategic importance of the scrutiny function within the council</i></li> <li>• <i>A clear understanding of the terms of reference for the committee</i></li> <li>• <i>Advanced chairing skills</i></li> <li>• <i>Advanced communication skills (public speaking, listening and questioning)</i></li> <li>• <i>The ability to weigh-up evidence and make recommendations based upon that evidence</i></li> <li>• <i>Be fair and balanced, ensuring the objectivity of the committee</i></li> <li>• <i>Having an understanding of the challenges facing the overview and scrutiny function</i></li> </ul>	<p>JUNE 2021</p>



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- *Being able to cultivate constructive relationships with the executive, senior officers and partners*
  - *Being a champion of the scrutiny function*

*Their key responsibilities will include:*

- *Ensure the committee focusses on matters of strategic importance or concerns of the public, where a trend exists*
- *Develop a clear understanding of the terms of reference for the committee*
- *Preside over the agenda and work plan setting process*
- *Encourage effective contributions from all members of the committee and constructive challenge of decisions makers*
- *Ensure the committee fulfils its responsibilities effectively by working with officers to identify training needs as required*
- *Report to Council at least once a year, or as required*
- *Exercise their right as Chair of overview and scrutiny to call-in decisions, waive the right to call-in and agree special urgency requests, where necessary*

*It is noted that the chair would be offered support and appropriate training, as necessary.*

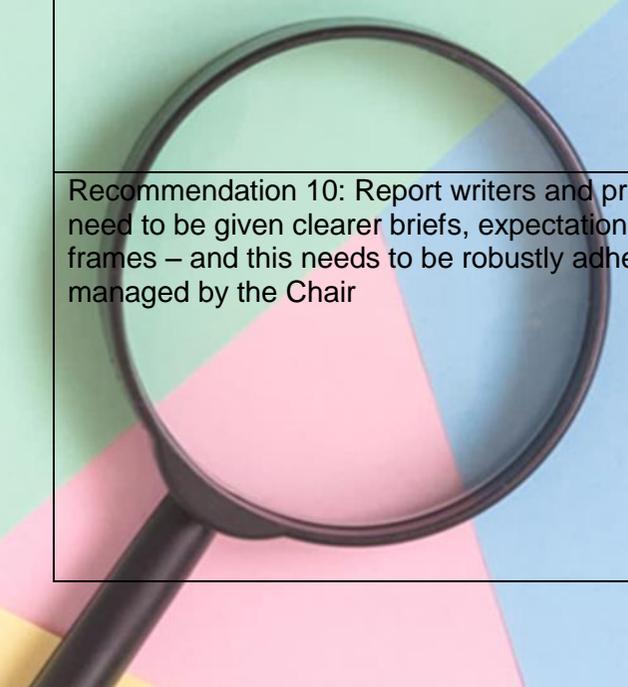
**The task group also agreed that it would be helpful to have a general role description for committee members:**

*The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will, unless agreed by Council, reflect the political proportionality (make-up) of the council.*

*Members of the executive cannot be members of scrutiny.*

*Members should be able to act impartially, to work as part of a group and be committed to improving public services in Cheltenham. They will require listening and questioning skills and some experience of risk and project management would be beneficial.*

	<p><i>Members will be offered induction training when they take up their role, so that they have clarity as to the purpose of their role and the remit of Overview and Scrutiny and ongoing training, so that they can carry out their responsibilities effectively.</i></p>	
<p>Recommendation 3: Consider how members of the committee can be suitably supported and trained to be skilled and effective in their role and clearly understand the purpose of the committee and their contribution to it</p>	<p><i>Once agreed, the committee definition will provide a clear understanding to the purpose of the committee and how members should contribute to it.</i></p> <p><i>The brief outline of committee membership will make clear the necessary attributes that are required of members that sit on the committee.</i></p> <p><i>Induction training will be offered to all new members, as well as existing members that feel that they would benefit from a refresher.</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing training has always been offered, but there will be a regular discussion about training needs as part of the informal de-brief at the end of each meeting.</i></p>	<p>JUNE 2021</p>
<p>Recommendation 4: Arrange focused training for all members, perhaps within a scheduled meeting, specifically on how to be an effective Overview and Scrutiny Committee member. Possible areas for training include how to promote and build visibility of scrutiny, and how to effectively challenge and scrutinise information and decisions</p>	<p><i>The committee will decide if and what training members would benefit from based on any gaps in knowledge or skills, as part of the informal de-brief that will be scheduled at the end of each meeting.</i></p> <p><i>Any training could then be held within a scheduled meeting, though this would have to be decided upon prior to agenda items being scheduled as there have been previous complaints about adding these sessions on to a meeting with an already full agenda.</i></p>	<p>COMPLETE</p>
<p>Recommendation 5: Introduce a formal feedback loop/link from Cabinet to Overview and Scrutiny Committee to make best use of the council leader's attendance at committee</p>	<p><i>The Leader is advised that written updates, even a few bullet points, are now mandatory in advance of the meeting and members will be invited to ask for information on specific topics in upcoming briefings.</i></p>	<p>COMPLETE</p>
<p>Recommendation 6: Review and determine how enquiry topics are to be identified; should they be focused on the delivery of the council's corporate plan? This would make better use of finite resources and help negate possible tension between Cabinet and the committee</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Is it a corporate priority?</i></li> <li>• <i>Is it an issue that whilst not a corporate priority, is of concern to a number of residents; is there a sufficient degree of representation?</i></li> <li>• <i>Does the committee have any influence, or is another committee/body better placed to scrutinise the issue?</i></li> <li>• <i>Would the topic be better served as a seminar, task group, briefing, etc.?</i></li> </ul>	<p>JUNE 2021</p>



<p>Recommendation 7: Consider how the Chair and committee members can extend the committee's visibility within the council</p>	<p><i>The committee produce an annual report which summarises the accomplishments of the O&amp;S Committee from the previous year and this is presented at Council.</i></p> <p><i>Invitations to attend and participate, are routinely extended to the wider membership of the council, where topics are of borough-wide interest.</i></p> <p><i>Meetings and specific agenda items where applicable, are promoted on social media by the Comms Team.</i></p>	<p>COMPLETE</p>
<p>Recommendation 8: Although dedicated resource to the committee has improved and is valued, general officer support needs to be better focused and respect demonstrated for the role and value of the committee</p>	<p><i>The dedicated resource to the committee by the Democracy Officer continues, and this is welcomed by members.</i></p> <p><i>The involvement of the Executive Director People &amp; Change has resulted in positive change in terms of the commitment of officers more generally, to the scrutiny process.</i></p>	<p>COMPLETE</p>
<p>Recommendation 9: All members should take ownership of their contribution at meetings, including reading briefing notes in full</p>	<p><i>Late reports are by exception only and with officers advised that reports should be no more than 4 sides, meaning timely publication of good quality reports.</i></p> <p><i>Reports are also being taken as read, with the Chairman reminding members about the objective for each item and an introduction from officers with a focus on key points only, or specifically what they want from the committee. This means that members need to have read the papers beforehand.</i></p> <p><i>The Chair will invite all members to contribute and members are expected to respect the questions and opinions of others.</i></p>	<p>COMPLETE</p>
<p>Recommendation 10: Report writers and presenters need to be given clearer briefs, expectations and time frames – and this needs to be robustly adhered to and managed by the Chair</p>	<p><i>Report writers and presenters are given guidance on the objective for each item and any specifics they need to cover in their paper, as well as being asked to provide as much information as is needed, without exceeding 4 sides.</i></p> <p><i>They are also given an estimated start time, definitive time limit and reminded that any introduction should be limited to 5 minutes, with the remaining time being dedicated to question and comments from members.</i></p> <p><i>With assistance from the Democracy Officer, the Chair will monitor timings and where necessary, remind members to refrain from repeating one another, keep to topic and be succinct.</i></p>	<p>COMPLETE</p>

Recommendation 11: Consider introducing a maximum page limit for reports with use of appendices by exception	<i>Report authors are given guidance on the objective for each item and any specifics they need to cover in their paper, as well as being asked to provide as much information as is needed, without exceeding 4 sides. This would be amended to include advice on the inclusion of appendices, only where necessary.</i>	COMPLETE
Recommendation 12: Consider training for officers on PowerPoint presentation in order to maximise the benefit obtained by the committee	<i>PowerPoint training for officers will be arranged by the end of June.</i>	JUNE 2021
Recommendation 13: The Chair should sense-check all papers before dispatch	<i>This was unworkable and considered somewhat unnecessary given the improvements of the last year and the positive feedback on the quality of recent reports.</i>  <i>The committee will continue to give feedback, including constructive criticism and the Democracy Officer will provide support where necessary, referring officers to good examples of reports.</i>	N/A
Recommendation 14: Ensure that all committee members are encouraged to contribute and feel comfortable doing so	<i>A clear and concise definition for the committee, along with updated guidance and member training, will provide clarity to members as to the remit of the committee and their role, resulting in members who have the confidence to make comments or ask questions.</i>	COMPLETE
Recommendation 15: Introduce a front cover sheet for each committee report/agenda item to provide clarity on the purpose of the report, why it is coming to committee and what action the committee is being asked to take. This should be made available to report authors after agenda planning meeting. The Chair should use this to 'top and tail' each agenda item at meeting and can also be useful for minutes.	<i>The objective for each item will continue to be included on the agenda and the Chair will continue to remind the committee of this objective, as part of his introduction to each item.</i>	COMPELTE
Recommendation 16: 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	<i>The Clearview system would be used to monitor and track any recommendations.</i>	POST JUNE MEETING
Recommendation 17: Re-order agenda (recognising issues with public attendance) between items for	<i>External guests or topics of public interest will continue to be scheduled at the start of the agenda and because the public are excluded for exempt business, these items will continue to be scheduled at the end of the agenda.</i>	COMPLETE

scrutiny and items for overview in order to make better use of meeting time and member energy		
Recommendation 18: Re-introduce maximum meeting time of two hours, attending carefully to agenda planning, quality of reports, length of presentations, management of external speakers, etc	<i>The two hour limit has been re-introduced. The agenda setting meeting gives focus to the length of the agenda, Officers are given clear advise as to timings and the Chair takes a far more proactive role in managing these within the meeting.</i>	COMPLETE
Recommendation 19: Introduce a wrap up session at the end of each meeting to consider 'positives and negatives' from meeting	<i>An informal de-brief (for members only) will be scheduled at the end of each meeting. This will be an opportunity for the committee to reflect on what has gone well and identify any opportunities for improvement or possible training needs. The de-brief itself will be a short discussion only and the chairs group will consider any issues in more detail.</i>	COMPLETE

