

A guide to scrutiny task groups

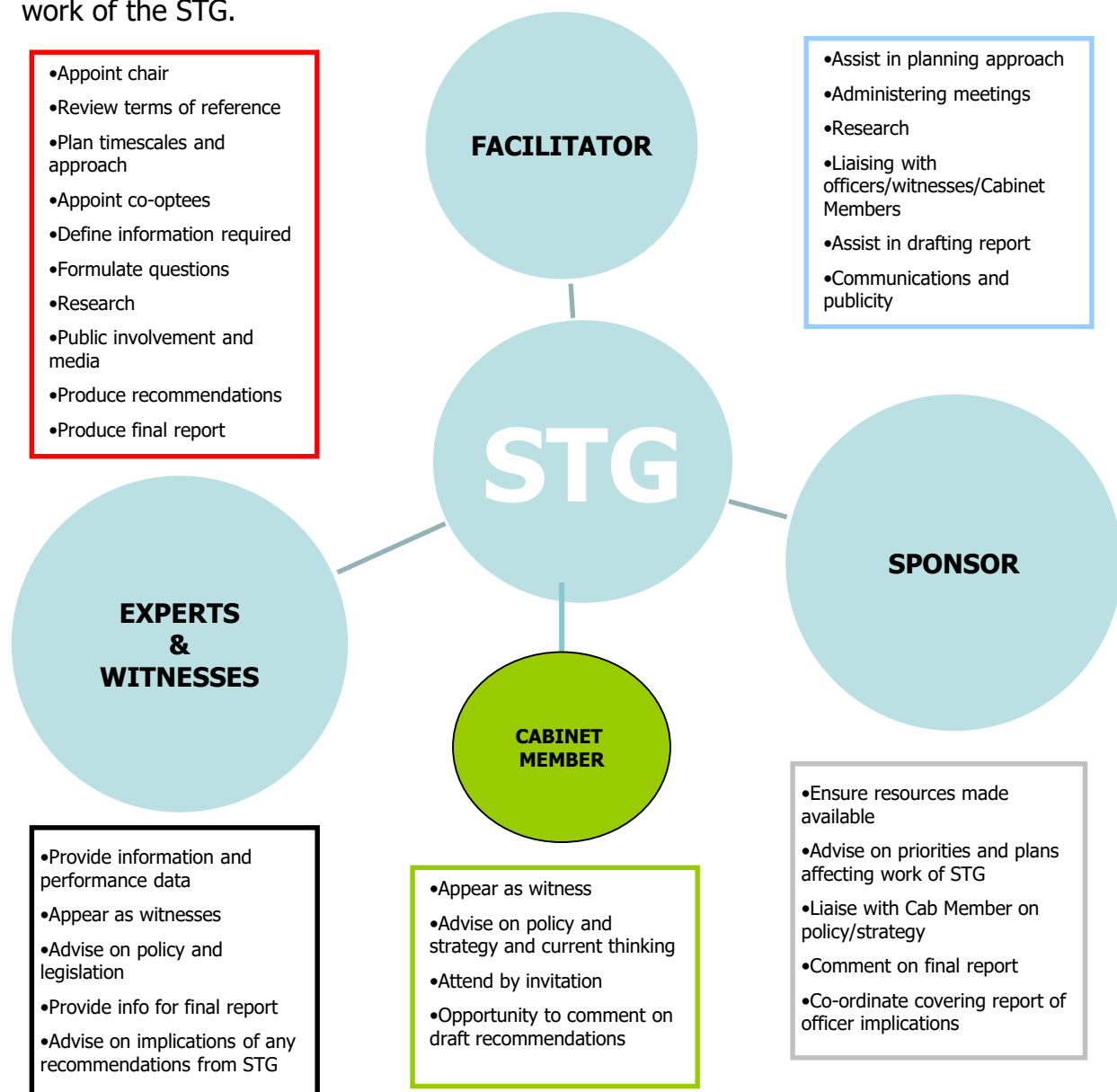
What is a scrutiny task group?

Scrutiny task groups (STGs) are smaller than committees and are set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&S) to examine specific issues in detail and they tend to work more flexibly and informally. The review could be of an existing policy or service but scrutiny task-groups can also look to develop new policies. Generally they have a fixed time frame and are dissolved once they have completed their work.

How does it work in Cheltenham?

Who is involved?

Scrutiny task-groups are made up of non-executive members (non-Cabinet Members) and this is not restricted to members of O&S. Officers will support the work of the STG.



How do they gather information?

When establishing a STG, O&S will set its clear terms of reference. The STG will then develop their **One Page Strategy** which sets out how they plan to approach the review. The STG can obtain information through many different media, including face-to-face interviews; questionnaires; focus groups; site visits; reports; and written submissions. The most common witnesses are council officers, representatives from partner agencies and service users.

How do they report their findings?

When the STG has finished gathering information, it will draft a report and agree its recommendations. Officers will support the STG and at the same time draft a covering report which includes HR, Legal and Financial implications associated with the recommendations being made by the STG. The STG will also consult on their report and give others such as the Cabinet Member, the opportunity to comment and suggest any corrections. The report will be considered by O&S who will be asked to endorse the recommendations of the STG before the report is considered by Cabinet or other body.

What happens next?

The STG recommendations will be considered by Cabinet or other body and will either be agreed or rejected.

If the recommendations are agreed, then O&S will monitor the implementation and outcome of the recommendations and review them, typically in 6 months time.

If the recommendations are rejected, then the reasons will be reported back to the STG and O&S.

