

REQUEST FOR A CO-OPERATIVE REVIEW



What is the name of the review?	Strengthening the Overview and Scrutiny Function
<p>Please provide a brief outline of the subject and scope of the review?</p>	<p>Scrutiny has an important role to play in contributing to developing policy, undertaking specific reviews and in monitoring performance. Following the development of the working arrangement at Plymouth City Council an opportunity has arisen to strengthen the role of the scrutiny function. This review seeks to identify where changes to Plymouth City Council scrutiny function may enhance the process of open, transparent and democratic decision making.</p> <p>The City Council will continue to experience significant sustained change which requires many new and innovative approaches to service delivery. The development of effective scrutiny arrangements for new delivery vehicles which may result will be a key focus in Plymouth over the coming years and the scrutiny function will also need to continue to respond to the changes introduced through legislation.</p> <p>Any changes to the scrutiny function will need to include the requirement to take into account the views of the public, and the ability to form joint overview and scrutiny committees with one or more local authorities.</p> <p>Scope is to include Customers, processes, organisational units, locations, Service Areas, services, products, applications and technology aligned with the scrutiny function and will include –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Processes and Procedures • Members Development and Training • Democratic Support • HR and OD • Scrutiny lead officers • Statutory Lead Officer role • Petition thresholds and related processes for public engagement. <p>Activity that the review will undertake will include but is not</p>

	<p>limited to –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys • Visits to councils which display best practice • Stakeholder focus groups • Rapporteurs • Expert testimony • Written evidence/desktop research • Oral evidence sessions • Report/ recommendations to Council (following consultation with the Constitutional review Group)
<p>Please outline the reasons as to why you believe a review needs to take place?</p>	<p>The importance of effective scrutiny is magnified as public services respond to the challenge of unprecedented financial and demand pressures whilst continuously seeking to improve services.</p> <p>Effective scrutiny can improve the evidence base for decisions on the allocation of resources as well as ensuring that decisions are transparent and in accordance with the needs of the local community.</p> <p>The establishment of this review satisfies an undertaking in the working arrangement agreed by the City’s largest political parties.</p>
<p>What will the review attempt to achieve?</p>	<p>The review will seek to ensure that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview and Scrutiny is seen as paramount in the safeguarding of local democracy; • Opportunities that scrutiny provides for effective engagement with the public and partners and improved public accountability are identified and exploited; • A supportive environment for scrutiny across the Council and City Partnerships will exist; • Overview and scrutiny has a clearly defined and valued role in the council’s improvement and governance arrangements; • Overview and scrutiny is councillor-led, takes into account the views of the public, partners and regulators, and balances the prioritisation of community concerns against issues of strategic risk and importance; • Overview and scrutiny is recognised by the executive and corporate management team as an important council mechanism for community engagement, and facilitates greater citizen involvement in governance;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview and scrutiny has the officer support it needs from officers who are able to undertake independent research effectively, providing councillors with high-quality analysis and advice; • Overview and scrutiny councillors have the training and development opportunities they need to undertake their role effectively.
Who will benefit from the review?	Members of the public will be confident that decision making is open and transparent and provides the best value for the public purse
How long do you think the review might take?	This will be a wide ranging review and will need flexibility in the time and resource applied to it. Resource requirement and timetable will be prepared as part of the project planning process.
When do you think the review should commence and why?	This review should commence immediately to ensure that a comprehensive report is prepared before the end of the calendar year.
When do you think the review should be completed by and why?	As above.
Review requested by?	This review results from an undertaking in the working arrangement.

Received in Democratic Support Section:		Reviewed by the Co-operative Scrutiny Board:	
Date:		Date:	
Scrutiny Review Approved/Rejected			
If approved initial Project Plan meeting date:			