



GUIDE TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY FOR MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Contents	Page/s
Introduction and Background	1
Terms of Reference and areas of responsibility of Overview and Scrutiny Committees	2-4
The role of Chairs, Vice-Chairs and members of Overview and Scrutiny Committees	4-5
Meetings	5
Filming and Audio Recording at meetings	5
Work Programme Setting	5-6
Attendance at meetings	6
Call-In Procedure	6
Task and Finish Groups	6
Annual Reports	6-7
Public Engagement	7
Scrutiny Support Officer Contact Details	8
Appendix A – Call-In Procedure chart	9

Introduction and Background

Overview and Scrutiny Committees were introduced as a result of the Local Government Act 2000, when changes made to political structures within Councils allowed for the establishment of a Leader and Cabinet (or Executive) model, as well as at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Within this structure, the role of Overview and Scrutiny Committees is for non-Executive Members to hold the Executive to account, by reviewing, investigating and challenging decisions, contributing to Policy development and monitoring performance. The aim of scrutiny is to;

- Improve the Council's performance
- Ensure that services delivered by the Council provide value for money
- Ensure that Council services are receptive to local needs
- Engage with the public and communities about decisions which affect them

Overview and Scrutiny Committees cannot make decisions; they can only make recommendations to the Executive or the Council.

Pembrokeshire has five Overview and Scrutiny Committees;

- Corporate
- Services
- Policy and Pre-decision
- Partnerships
- Schools and Learning

Each Committee has 13 members and is politically balanced to reflect the composition of the Council. The Schools and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee, has four additional statutory co-optees as follows;

- One Church of Wales diocese representative;
- One Roman Catholic diocese representative;
- Two Parent Governor representatives

In addition, the Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee has four non-voting co-opted members, whose membership is limited to the exercise of the Committee's powers in relation to Crime and Disorder issues only. These co-opted members are representatives from the following agencies;

- Dyfed Powys Police
- Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service
- Probation Services
- Local Health Board

Further information on political balances can be found in the Council's Constitution

Terms of Reference and areas of responsibility of Overview and Scrutiny Committees

The terms of reference and areas of responsibility of each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees are as follows;

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The role of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to review and scrutinise corporate functions and support services.

The Committee will have oversight of the overall strategic direction, policies, plans and priorities of the Cabinet and Council (post-decision) and monitor their implementation. The Committee will also scrutinise corporate services utilising relevant management information such as Service Improvement Plans and Business Risk Registers. Any areas of specific concern may be referred to the Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.

The remit and scope of the Committee in relation to Corporate functions and services is as follows;

Corporate functions

- Office of the Leader
- Cabinet Member annual reports
- Chief Executive
- Budget Monitoring (annual and quarterly)
- Corporate Performance Monitoring (annual and quarterly)
- Corporate planning
- Wales Audit Office corporate reports
- Service improvement
- Safeguarding

Corporate services

- Financial Services
- Information Technology
- Audit and Risk
- Customer Services
- Human Resources
- Legal and Committee Services
- Procurement
- Marketing and Communications
- Electoral Services

Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The role of the Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to review and scrutinise the services delivered by the Council.

The Committee will scrutinise the quality and performance of services delivered by the Council to the public.

The remit and scope of the Committee in relation to Council services, and divisions within these services, is as follows;

- Highways and Construction
- Environment and Civil Contingencies
- Housing
- Planning
- Property
- Revenue Services
- Public Protection
- Regeneration
- Cultural Services
- Adult Care
- Children's Services
- Leisure Services

Policy and Pre-decision Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The role of the Policy and Pre-decision Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to review and scrutinise policies, plans and strategies prior to decision by Cabinet.

The Committee will undertake pre-decision scrutiny or order to contribute to the quality and robustness of Cabinet decision-making. A further function of the Committee is to ensure that Cabinet decision making is compliant with the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 and takes account of the 'sustainable development' principle and 5 ways of working (long term, preventative, involving, collaborative and integrated) as well as other statutory requirements as appropriate (e.g. Equality Act 2010).

The remit and scope of the Committee is as follows;

- Cabinet forward work programme
- Proposals for service changes, transformation and/or efficiencies
- Integrated Impact Assessments
- Strategies and plans (as appropriate)
- Annual budget proposals

Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The role of the Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to review and scrutinise activity where the Council works in partnership or collaboratively with other agencies.

The Committee will act as the committee designated with responsibility for scrutinising the activity of the Public Services Board (PSB) as required under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Committee will also scrutinise, where appropriate, where the Council works in partnership to deliver or commission services. It will also provide oversight where the Council works collaboratively with partners at a regional or national level. This is also the designated Committee for Crime and Disorder matters in accordance with section 19(1) of the Police and Justice Act 2006.

The remit and scope of the Committee in relation to PSB and other scrutiny is as follows;

PSB

- Development and production of a local Well-being Assessment
- Development and production of a Well-being Plan
- PSB Annual Plan
- PSB activity and progress in delivering priorities
- Requiring any member or invited participant of the PSB to attend and give evidence (but only in relation to the exercise of joint functions undertaken by them as members of the PSB)

Other

- Joint Working Register (strategic partnerships)
- Joint Strategic Commissioning
- Statutory Partnerships (e.g. Community Safety Partnership)

Schools and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The role of the Schools and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to review and scrutinise services delivered to improve outcomes for children and young people, youth support and other community based services, including Adult Learning. It will support the raising of educational standards and outcomes for learners.

The remit and scope of the Committee is as follows;

- Educational outcomes, particularly at Key Stage 4
- School categorisation
- Education through Regional Working (ERW)
- Individual schools (via a School Scrutiny Panel)
- Inclusion services
- Youth Support and other community based services
- Post-16 learning, skills and training
- Financial information relating to schools and learning

The Role of Chairs, Vice-Chairs and members of Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Chairs and Vice-Chairs

Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Committees should work together to support the work of their Committee, through;

- prioritising the work of the Committee
- ensuring Committee members are engaged and have the opportunity to contribute and have their views heard
- working closely with officers to agree the business for each meeting and set the agendas

Committee Members

The following list outlines what a Scrutiny Member should and should not do to ensure that the scrutiny function is discharged successfully and to ensure the aims of scrutiny are met;

- ensure that they understand their role fully, so that they are able to contribute at meetings and be part of the 'critical friend' process
- not use meetings to air personal agendas
- prepare for meetings by reading papers, making notes and formulating challenging questions
- not raise subjects that are not on the agenda
- ask positive and challenging questions
- not make statements rather than ask questions, or try to score political points
- contribute to setting forward work programmes and be prepared to assist in any Task and Finish groups
- try to ensure that they attend every meeting.

Meetings

Each Committee holds at least five ordinary meetings per year, which are usually held in Committee Room 1 in County Hall. Meetings may be held outside County Hall when combined with a Members site visit for example, or to encourage public engagement on a particular topic. The quorum for an Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall be half of its voting members. Joint meetings of two or more Committees are held when appropriate. Meetings are open to the public, apart from when information of a confidential or exempt nature forms part of an agenda, when the public will be excluded from the meeting whilst the item concerned is being discussed.

Minutes of meetings will be placed on the Council's website within 15 working days following the date of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting.

Filming and Audio Recording at Meetings

The Council permits filming and audio recording at meetings which are held in public. The Chair shall, at the commencement of the meeting, confirm to those present that the meeting, or parts of the meeting, may be filmed or audio recorded. Notices to this effect will also be placed inside and outside the meeting room.

Rights to film or audio record meetings will be removed and the press and public will be excluded when information of a confidential or exempt nature is due to be discussed. Where a member of the public or representative of an external body is due to speak at a meeting, the Chair must ask each individual to provide their express permission to be filmed and/or recorded speaking. Filming or audio recording will not take place if the individual concerned objects.

Work Programme setting

Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a forward work programme which provides details of what the Committee will scrutinise over a 12 month period. Work programmes consist of, for example;

- items that will be, or have been, considered by Cabinet (pre and post decision scrutiny)
- departmental performance monitoring

- financial information/budget proposals
- items of interest or concern to Committee members

Members of the public and other interested stakeholders may also put forward suggestions for items to be discussed by Overview and Scrutiny Committees. For these reasons, forward work programmes are designed to be flexible and are considered at each meeting and updated when necessary. They may also change to accommodate issues that may arise within the year and which are within the remit of Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Attendance at meetings

Officers regularly attend Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings to present information or provide verbal updates on items within the Committee's work programme. Officers and Members may also be requested to attend meetings to give account on any item under discussion within a Committee's remit.

Non-Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members may, with the prior consent of the Committee Chairman, be allowed to present evidence at Committee meetings where this is relevant to his/her Electoral Division as Local Member and also relevant to the presented agenda. Non-Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members may also, again with the prior consent of the Committee Chairman, ask questions when presentations are made to Committees.

Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee has support from a Scrutiny Support Co-ordinator who attends each meeting to give advice and provide guidance to the Chair, Vice-Chair and Committee members, and to any working groups established to undertake detailed investigations into particular areas of the work programme. Details of the Support Officers can be found at the end of this document.

Members of the public are able to attend all meetings unless confidential or exempt information is being discussed.

Call-in Procedure

Members have the power to challenge decisions made by Cabinet, a Cabinet Member or a Cabinet Committee. Such a decision can be called-in by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman, by at least four members of the same Overview and Scrutiny Committee or by any six elected Members of Council. A chart showing the Call-In procedure process can be found in Appendix A.

Task and Finish Groups

Overview and Scrutiny Committees may establish Task and Finish Groups if they consider that a review of a particular issue or subject is required. Task and Finish Group members will be identified by the Committee (or Committees if the issue/subject is considered to be within the remit of more than one Committee). The number of times a Task and Finish Group will meet will depend upon the nature of the issue/subject to be reviewed. Support will be provided at Task and Finish Group meetings by the Scrutiny Support Officer.

Annual Reports

Overview and Scrutiny Committees produce annual reports which review the work of the Committees over the previous year. The reports focus on the work the Committee has carried out, the difference the work of the Committee has made, key outcomes, training and

development undertaken by Committee members and challenges for the Committee in the year ahead. Copies of the annual reports for each committee and a combined Chairs annual report can be found on the Council's Overview and Scrutiny web pages.

Public Engagement

Public engagement in the Scrutiny process is important to ensure that local services are citizen-focused.

Section 62 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 places a requirement on local authorities to make arrangements that enable all persons who live or work in the area to bring to the attention of the relevant overview and scrutiny committees their views on any matter under consideration by the committee. Overview and Scrutiny Committees are required to consider any relevant views submitted. A form is available on the Council's Overview and Scrutiny web pages to enable people to submit their views.

Members of the public who live or work in the area may also suggest topics for consideration by Overview and Scrutiny and provide either oral or written evidence if the suggested topic is accepted for consideration and if required by the Committee.

Scrutiny Support Officer Contact Details

Contact details for the team are as follows;

Nick Evans
Partnership and Scrutiny Support Manager
nicholas.evans@pembrokeshire.gov.uk
01437 775858

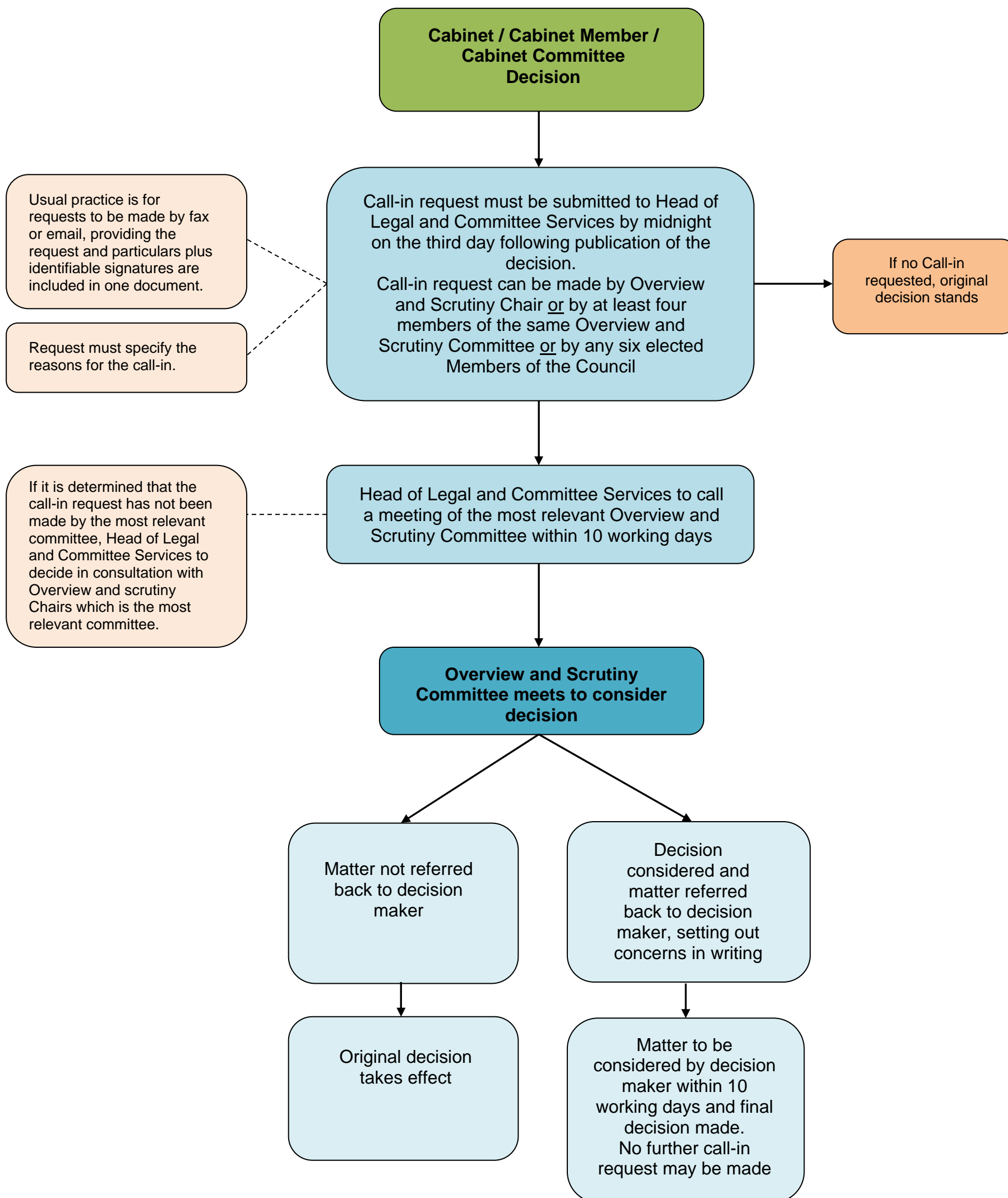
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CALL-IN PROCEDURE

The call-in procedure set out below shall not apply where the decision made has been recorded as urgent



(See Section 7, pt.18 of Pembrokeshire County Council Constitution, agreed July 2016.)