

A Guide to the operation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Introduction

This guide sets out information on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and how it operates. We hope it is helpful and informative. However, if you require any further information or assistance please contact Chris Phelan, Scrutiny Support Officer of our Democratic Services Section on 01737-276114 or email chris.phelan@reigate-banstead.gov.uk. Alternatively, why not visit our web site www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk for information on the Council.

What does the Overview and Scrutiny Committee do?

Scrutiny

The Committee reviews and scrutinises decisions and the performance of the Executive and Council Officers for services provided to the community.

The Committee does not make decisions itself but has the power to make recommendations to the Executive or the Council arising from any review it undertakes.

Additionally the Committee can review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies.

Policy Review and Development

The Committee has an important opportunity to assist the Council and the Executive in the development of its budget and policy framework (the Council's plans & strategies).

In fulfilling this role it conducts research and consults the community to identify possible options for the delivery of our services.

Examples of the Committee's work

Monitoring

The Committee continually monitors the implementation of plans and the monitoring of Council services for the community.

Review Panels

The Committee establishes Review Panels to examine service delivery and compares this with alternatives and seeks to establish the best practice for the benefit of the community.

Advice to the Executive/Council

The Committee has a powerful voice in the Council. The Executive and Council must take account of its views before determining policy and taking action.

Focused work programme

The Committee focuses its attention on supporting and developing the Council's key priority areas identified either through comparative performance statistics, resulting from consultation with the community or to meet changing community demands. It is developing a Rolling Programme of service reviews, which will have some flexibility to accommodate changing circumstances.

Overall aim of the Committee

To support the Council in delivering improved services to the community.

How can you get involved?

The Committee wants to hear the views of the community regarding the delivery of the Council's services.

Some of the ways in which you can be involved are set out below and will develop over time:

At meetings of the Committee and Review Panels

Specialist Co-Optees can be appointed to assist the Committee in its work;

Evidence including community views can be received at our meetings.

Feedback

Inform us of services that you feel should be improved. A form is available to help focus your feedback.

Access to Council information

The Committee wish to make it easier for the community to be involved in our work and intend to set up the following arrangements:

- Publish regular progress reports on our web site;
- Advertise reviews & invite contributions;
- Hold its meetings in community venues;
- Develop stronger links with our partners, including the local media to provide more information to the community;
- Publish its work, reports and other consultation opportunities on the web; and
- Be effective listeners to community needs.

When, Where and How Often Does the Committee Meet

The Committee meets every 4/5 weeks. At present these are held at the Town Hall, Reigate and start at 7.30pm. A schedule of meetings for each Municipal Year is agreed in April by the Council and a copy of this is available on request or from our web site.

Membership

Fifteen Councillors serve on the Committee, on a politically balanced basis but not including Executive Members. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of the Councillors on the Committee can be obtained from our Democratic Services Section or the web site.

Who's who at the meeting

The Chairman, Members and Officers supporting the Committee will be seated around a horseshoe table arrangement.

The press, public and community representatives are most welcome at our meetings.

The Agenda

Copies of the Agenda are available in the public gallery at the meeting and can be purchased in advance or viewed at the Town Hall, Help Shops and on the web site.

Conduct of the meeting

The Chairman will conduct the meeting and has the flexibility to adjust the order of business to reflect those present.

Members are required to declare any interests that they may have on items being considered.

Your Local Councillor

Details of your local Councillors can be obtained from Democratic Services, the Council's Help Line and Help Shops. Details are available on the Council's website www.reigate-banstead.gov.uk.

Contact

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