

| Item No. | Ref | Guidance – summary/extract | DCC position | Recommendation |
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| | | Culture | | |
| 1. | Para 11 Page 8 | <p>How to establish a strong organisational culture by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Recognising scrutiny’s legal and democratic legitimacy. - All members and officers should recognise and appreciate the importance and legitimacy the scrutiny function is afforded by the law. | <p>Durham County Council’s overview and scrutiny function embeds the Centre for Public Scrutiny’s established principles of good scrutiny within its constitution (Article 5 and Part 4 – Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules)</p> <p>All scrutiny members at DCC receive training on their role and responsibilities as part of the overview and scrutiny function.</p> <p>Training for officers on the overview and scrutiny function could be offered to new members of staff or those new to their posts who would be providing information to and attending scrutiny meetings.</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes are required although consideration be given to offering training to officers attending and providing information for scrutiny meetings.</p> |
| 2. | Para 11 Page 8 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> b) Identifying a clear role and focus - Authorities should ensure a clear division of responsibilities between the scrutiny function and the audit function. | <p>There is a clear division of responsibilities between the scrutiny function and the audit function at DCC and this is set out in the constitution.</p> <p>The terms of reference for overview and scrutiny are contained within Part 1 Article 5 of the council’s constitution. The terms of reference for the audit committee are in Part 4 Financial Procedure Rules.</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes are required.</p> |

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| 3. | Para 11 Page 9 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The findings of independent whistleblowing investigations might be of interest to scrutiny committees as they consider their wider implications. | <p>DCC has a Confidential Reporting Code (Whistleblowing) in place – the Chief Internal Auditor owns the process on behalf of the Corporate Director of Resources.</p> <p>The Audit Committee has responsibility for the overview of the Council’s Confidential Reporting Code. (Article 4 C (xx))</p> <p>Currently, any wider implications of an investigation under the Confidential Reporting Code would be addressed by the appropriate forum.</p> | It is proposed that no changes are required. |
| 4. | Para 11 Page 9 | <p>c) Ensuring early and regular engagement between the executive and scrutiny</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The executive should not try to exercise control over the work of the scrutiny committee. - The chair of the scrutiny committee should determine the nature and extent of an executive member’s participation in a scrutiny committee meeting. | <p>DCC’s constitution (Article 5) includes requirements for appropriate liaison with COSMB and the executive in the interests of achieving common aims and continuous improvement for the council.</p> <p>Cabinet members and senior officers attend overview and scrutiny committees to provide information as part of policy development and review and also to respond to concerns expressed by scrutiny in respect of service delivery issues.</p> <p>The informal arrangements work well with shared dialogue at regular executive and non-executive meetings.</p> | It is proposed that no changes are required as the guidance is in line with our current approach. |

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| 5. | Para 11 Page 9 | <p>d) Managing disagreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It is the job of both the executive and scrutiny to work together to reduce the risk of (disagreement) and authorities should take steps to predict, identify and act on disagreement. - Scrutiny committees have the power to ‘call in’ decisions should not view as a party-political tool. | <p>Informal arrangements are in place at DCC and work well e.g. executive and non-executive meetings.</p> <p>The Constitution Working Group is a cross party group which meets regularly and provides opportunities for discussion.</p> <p>DCC have utilised the call-in procedure infrequently.</p> <p>Initial work to consider a protocol for working with partners including health is taking place, although to date existing arrangements to work with partners have generally been seen as effective.</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required in terms of an executive and scrutiny protocol however consideration be given to the value of developing a protocol which could be used in a wider context with partners.</p> |
| 6. | Para 11 Page 10 | <p>e) Providing the necessary support</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Level of resource allocated to scrutiny. - Support given by members and senior officers. | <p>The council’s overview and scrutiny function continues to receive acknowledgement as a model of best practice with Durham receiving the Municipal Journal’s Excellence in Governance and Scrutiny award in 2016 for its approach to scrutiny, community engagement and consultation and governance arrangements.</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required.</p> |
| 7. | Para 11 Page 10 | <p>f) Ensuring impartial advice from officers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Roles played by ‘statutory officers’ – the monitoring officer, the section 151 officer and the head of paid | <p>DCC overview and scrutiny function has good working arrangements in place with the relevant statutory officers.</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required.</p> |

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| | | <p>service, and the statutory scrutiny officer have a particular role in ensuring that timely, relevant and high-quality advice is provided to scrutiny.</p> | | |
| 8. | Para 11 Page 10 | <p>g) Communicating scrutiny's role and purpose to the wider authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authorities should take steps to ensure all members and officers are made aware of the role the scrutiny committee plays in the organisation, its value and the outcomes it can deliver, the powers it has, its membership and, if appropriate, the identity of those providing officer support. | <p>An overview and scrutiny annual report is submitted to council each year setting out the work undertaken in the past year and giving detail of work to be carried out in the coming year. The report contains information of the impact of scrutiny reviews and recommendations made. (Article 5 5.03 (d))</p> <p>The annual report is circulated widely and contains details of the officers providing support to the function.</p> <p>Overview and scrutiny is featured on DCC's website with links to individual committees, membership and latest reviews. (www.durham.gov.uk/scrutiny)</p> <p>A scrutiny handbook is also produced and is widely available.</p> | <p>The Statutory Scrutiny Officer to review the scrutiny reporting procedures in consultation with the Monitoring Officer to determine whether any further changes to arrangements should be considered.</p> |
| 9. | Para 11 Page 10/11 | <p>h) Maintaining the interest of full Council in the work of the scrutiny committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authorities should take steps to ensure full council is informed of the work the scrutiny committee is doing. | <p>Durham County Council's overview and scrutiny review reports are currently reported via the council's Cabinet. Responses to review recommendations and six-monthly updates to review recommendations are considered by overview and scrutiny committees. The overview</p> | <p>The Statutory Scrutiny Officer to review the scrutiny reporting procedures to council in</p> |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This can be done by reports and recommendations being submitted to full council rather than just Cabinet - The business of scrutiny should be reported to the Combined Authority board or to the chairs of the relevant scrutiny committees of constituent and non-constituent authorities, or both. | <p>and scrutiny function reports annually to full council on its work during the year and on proposals for work programme development.</p> <p>A more regular report could be submitted to council setting out the breadth of work that is undertaken by overview and scrutiny members. It is suggested this could be done on a quarterly basis.</p> <p>DCC have representatives on both the NECA Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the NECA and North of Tyne CA Joint Transport Committee Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Reference is made to the agendas of both these regional committees on the Chairs Update submitted to meetings of COSMB.</p> <p>Any changes in reporting processes to council will be subject to the council's procedures as set out in the constitution. (Article 5 5.03 (d))</p> | <p>consultation with the Monitoring Officer. The review to consider the inclusion of a quarterly update from overview and scrutiny to council in addition to the current annual report.</p> <p>Consideration be given to including either the minutes of NECA scrutiny meetings on the COSMB agendas or expanding the content of the Chairs Update to COSMB.</p> |
| 10. | Para 11 Page 11 | <p>i) Communicating scrutiny's role to the public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Consideration should be given to how and when to engage the authority's communications officers, | <p>The scrutiny team works with colleagues in Communications to identify any matters within the work programme which may be of particular interest such as reports to Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee on potential changes to hospital services etc. These arrangements are working well.</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required.</p> |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - This will require engagement early on in the work programming process. | <p>Twitter is the main focus for publicising meetings of scrutiny committees. Data shows that in the past year tweets relating to scrutiny have received 87,764 views. (@DurhamCouncil)</p> <p>Scrutiny has welcomed the introduction of Local Democracy reporters who are in attendance at most scrutiny meetings. The coverage of scrutiny meetings has increased which has raised the public profile of scrutiny and for specific issues increased public participation in the scrutiny process.</p> | |
| 11. | Para 11 Page 11 | <p>j) Ensuring scrutiny members are supported in having an independent mindset</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An independent mindset is fundamental to carrying out work effectively. - Requires scrutiny chairs working proactively to identify any potentially contentious issues and plan how to manage them. | <p>All scrutiny members at DCC receive training on their role and responsibilities as part of the overview and scrutiny function.</p> <p>The member development programme is currently being updated and training specific to the role of chairs and deputy chairs is included.</p> <p>The chair and vice chairs work with officers to review the work programme each year.</p> | It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required. |
| | | Resourcing | | |
| 12. | Pages 13/14 | Resources allocated to the scrutiny function play a pivotal role in | During unprecedented levels of austerity, the level of investment by the council in its overview | It is proposed that no changes to the |

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| | | <p>determining how successful that function is and the value it can add to the work of the authority.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective support is also about the ways in which the wider authority engages with those who carry out the scrutiny function. - Effectively-resourced scrutiny <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o adds value to the work of authorities, improving their ability to meet the needs of local people. o helps policy formulation and so minimises the need for call-in of executive decisions. - Authorities should ensure that, officers providing scrutiny support are able to provide impartial advice. This might require consideration of the need to build safeguards into the way that support is provided. | <p>and scrutiny function, as detailed within the latest CIPFA benchmarking information shows that DCC continues to spend at the higher end of local authorities on its scrutiny function.</p> <p>DCC has a dedicated overview and scrutiny team within the Transformation and Partnerships directorate which sits under the leadership of the Head of Strategy. The officer resources model uses a mix of specialist officers dedicated to scrutiny, integrated officers drawn from the corporate centre, committee officers and specialist officers who also support the executive drawn from specific policy or service areas.</p> <p>Members have access to reports from a wide range of officers both within the council and external partners at Chief Executive, Director, Head of Service and manager level.</p> <p>The council’s Statutory Scrutiny Officer is the Head of Strategy, Transformation and Partnerships, Jenny Haworth. (Article 9 9.04 (a)-(d))</p> <p>Regular reviews of overview and scrutiny are undertaken and reports submitted as part of the council’s existing governance arrangements where improvements to overview and scrutiny are identified.</p> | <p>current arrangements are required.</p> |

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| | | | <p>Following the 2017 local government elections an induction programme for councillors was delivered which included bespoke training for members in respect of overview and scrutiny. Changes to arrangements for the appointment of both statutory voting and non-voting co-optees have been developed to ensure that public involvement in scrutiny is robust.</p> | |
| | | Selecting Committee Members | | |
| 13. | <p>Paras 27/28/29 Pages 15/16</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What an authority must consider when forming a committee is that, as a group, it possesses the requisite expertise, commitment and ability to act impartially to fulfil its functions. - Authorities should articulate in their constitutions how conflicts of interest, including familial links (see also paragraph 31), between executive and scrutiny responsibilities should be managed, including where members stand down from the executive and move to a scrutiny role, and vice-versa. - When selecting individual members to serve on scrutiny committees, an authority should consider a member's experience, expertise, | <p>It is a function of full council to decide at the annual meeting which committees to establish, their size, terms of reference and allocation of seats in accordance with the political balance rules. (Article 4 4.02 (e) and Council Procedure Rules 1.2 (a) – (c).The overview and scrutiny committees at DCC have cross party membership</p> <p>DCC does not allow members of the executive or executive support members to participate in scrutiny other than as witnesses. (Article 5, 5.01)</p> <p>The political groups pay due regard to the requirements for selecting committee members in the informal processes they currently utilise. Role descriptors are available to assist in selecting members.</p> | <p>It is proposed the role descriptors for members be reviewed to reflect the requirements of the new guidance.</p> <p>It is proposed that, subject to the above, no changes to the current arrangements to the selection of committee members are required.</p> |

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| | | <p>interests, ability to act impartially, ability to work as part of a group, and capacity to serve.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authorities should not take into account a member’s perceived level of support for or opposition to a particular political party. | <p>The council agreed the role descriptors for members serving in a variety of capacities on council committees including Cabinet members, non-executive/scrutiny committee members, Regulatory Committee (Planning and Licensing) members and Audit Committee members. These are linked to the key qualities required for each unique role. It would be appropriate to review these descriptors in view of the new guidance.</p> <p>The code of conduct for members forms part of the constitution which sets out the conduct all members are expected to follow. This includes the registration of interests, the disclosure of pecuniary interests, sensitive interests and other relevant interests. (Part 5 Member Code of Conduct Part 2)</p> <p>The Member Code of Conduct reflects the standards in public life and the expectations on members in relation to integrity, objectivity, openness and honesty. (Part 5 Member Code of Conduct Part 1)</p> | |
| 14. | <p>Paras 30/31/32 Page 16</p> | <p>Selecting a Chair</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The chair plays a leadership role on a scrutiny committee as they are largely responsible for establishing its profile and ways of working. | <p>Chairs of committee receive training relating to their roles and meet with the other overview and scrutiny chairs and vice chairs to share good practice.</p> <p>All DCC overview and scrutiny chair and vice chair positions are appointed at the annual</p> | <p>It is proposed the role descriptors for committee chairs be reviewed to reflect the requirements of the new guidance.</p> |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Chair should possess the ability to lead and build a sense of teamwork and consensus among committee members. - It is strongly recommended that the Chair does not preside over scrutiny of their relatives. - The method for selecting a Chair is for each authority to decide for itself, however every authority should consider taking a vote by secret ballot. | <p>meeting of the council in accordance with the requirements of the council’s constitution. (Council Procedure Rules 2 - 1.1(g)). This has been a longstanding arrangement of the authority and constituent authorities.</p> <p>The election of chairs in a meeting open to the press and public ensures that decision making in DCC is open, transparent and accountable to the public. The adoption of a secret ballot for the selection of committee chairs may be interpreted as a mechanism to avoid public scrutiny of the process and appears at odds with the principles which all council members follow and are enshrined in the member’s Code of Conduct. (Code of Conduct Part 1 para 4.2)</p> <p>The political groups pay due regard to the requirements for selecting committee members in the informal processes they currently utilise. Role descriptors are available to assist in selecting members. It would be appropriate to review these descriptors in view of the new guidance.</p> <p>The code of conduct for members forms part of the constitution which sets out the conduct all members are expected to follow. This includes the registration of interests, the disclosure of pecuniary interests, sensitive interests and other relevant interests. (Code of Conduct Part 2)</p> | <p>It is proposed that, subject to the above, no changes to the current arrangements to the selection of committee chairs are required.</p> |

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| | | | <p>The new Code of Conduct requires members to declare private interests and to take steps to resolve conflicts of interests to protect public interest.</p> | |
| 15. | <p>Paras 33 – 36 Page 16/17</p> | <p>Training for committee members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authorities should ensure committee members are offered induction when they take up their role and ongoing training so they can carry out their responsibilities effectively. - Authorities should pay attention to the need to ensure committee members are aware of their legal powers, and how to prepare for and ask relevant questions at scrutiny sessions. <p>Co-option and technical advice The provision of outside expertise can be invaluable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authorities must establish a co-option scheme to determine how individuals will be co-opted onto committees. | <p>Training and development for overview and scrutiny has been identified as an essential element of the council’s Member Development programme.</p> <p>Training for overview and scrutiny members planned for 2019/20:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media and social media training (July 2019) – delivered by the Comms team • Questioning skills (Autumn 2019) – delivered by the LGA • Finance Training (Autumn 2019) – delivered by Paul Darby <p>Following a successful recruitment process for new co-optees in early 2018, DCC has continued to bring external voices into scrutiny to enhance our work and offer different perspectives and challenge. The co- opted members ensure a strong external representation, bring their own expertise and help scrutiny to engage with the public.</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required in view of the training opportunities for members that are in place.</p> <p>It is proposed no changes are made to the current established arrangements for co-option and technical advice.</p> |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Technical advisers – depending on the subject matter, independent local experts might exist who can provide advice and assistance in evaluating evidence. | <p>The council's overview and scrutiny committees have engaged local academics and expertise as part of their review activity e.g. the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has worked with Professor Jon Gluyas, Dean of Knowledge Exchange, and Dong/Ikon Chair of Geoenergy Carbon Capture and Storage, Department of Earth Sciences, Durham University.</p> | |
| | | Power to Access Information | | |
| 16. | Paras 37 – 44 Pages 18/19 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A scrutiny committee needs access to relevant information the authority holds, and to receive it in good time, if it is to do its job effectively. - Members of scrutiny committees enjoying powers to access information - regulations give enhanced powers to a scrutiny member to access exempt or confidential information - Scrutiny members should have access to a regularly available source of key information about the management of the authority – particularly on performance, management and risk. | <p>Members have access to enhanced access to information if it relates to an individual scrutiny review the member is involved in.</p> <p>Members have access to reports from a wide range of officers both within the council and external partners at Chief Executive, Director, Head of Service and manager level.</p> <p>Scrutiny sessions have been held to consider confidential/exempt information e.g. the procurement implications of the renegotiation of the Durham Park and Ride Service and the procurement of the new Drug and Alcohol service.</p> <p>Each scrutiny committee receives quarterly reports on performance management. The Audit Committee receives reports on risk.</p> | <p>It is proposed, as effective arrangements are in place and the relevant regulations are applied, that no further action is required on access to information.</p> |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - While each request for information should be judged on its individual merits, authorities should adopt a default position of sharing the information they hold, on request, with scrutiny committee members. - Before an authority takes a decision not to share information it holds, it should give serious consideration to whether that information could be shared in closed session. | <p>Members have previously expressed some concerns at the timeliness of information and reports being brought to scrutiny in respect of the scrutiny of the MTFP. This has been addressed by the earlier provision of details of savings made to scrutiny for the past two years.</p> | |
| 17. | <p>Paras 45 and 46 Pages 19/20</p> | <p>Seeking information from external organisations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scrutiny members should also consider the need to supplement any authority-held information they receive with information and intelligence that might be available from other sources, and should note in particular their statutory powers to access information from certain external organisations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The need to explain the purpose of scrutiny ○ The benefits of an informal approach | <p>The overview and scrutiny team are experienced in successfully engaging with many external partners and organisations.</p> <p>Scrutiny committees have engaged with several providers of commissioned services e.g. commissioned services such as drug and alcohol treatment services, health visitors and school nursing services.</p> <p>The scrutiny committees have engaged local academics and expertise as part of their review activity.</p> <p>Three overview and scrutiny committees have statutory responsibilities for scrutinising matters which fall within their remit and have a good track</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes take place to seeking information from external organisations as current arrangements are working well.</p> |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ How to encourage compliance with an approach ○ Who to approach | <p>record of exercising these responsibilities effectively.</p> <p>The Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a statutory role under the Health and Social Care Act 2001 as amended, to scrutinise local health services. For example, following scrutiny of planned changes to Ward 6 at Bishop Auckland Hospital the Adults, Wellbeing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee requesting that proposed consultation and engagement on the changes be paused. The Foundation Trust and CCGs agreed to undertake further staff and patient stakeholder engagement activity which would shape future models of care for the ward. The key impact was that Ward 6 remained open, continued to accept patients and be well utilised. It continues to do so until options for future services are developed and subject to formal consultation.</p> <p>The Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has statutory responsibility under the Localism Act 2011 as amended, to scrutinise flooding and coastal risk management functions of the council and external bodies. It meets annually with the Flood Risk Management Authorities for County Durham to determine that they are working in partnership and receive detail of current and future investments.</p> | |

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| | | | <p>The Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has powers under the Police and Justice Act 2006 as amended to scrutinise work being undertaken by the statutory crime and disorder reduction partnership; the Safe Durham Partnership.</p> <p>The Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has worked with Professor Alistair Irons, Academic Dean for Faculty of Computer Science, Sunderland University.</p> <p>Following Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee review activity, specific evaluations have been undertaken on 20mph limits by Durham University and Safe and Wellbeing visits by Teesside University.</p> | |
| 18. | Para 46d Page 20 | <p>Following ‘the Council Pound’</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scrutiny committees will often have a keen interest in ‘following the council pound’, i.e. scrutinising organisations that receive public funding to deliver goods and services. - Authorities should recognise the legitimacy of this and consider the need to provide assistance to | <p>Existing service contracts already provide information for contract monitoring and it is considered that this is adequate to service the purposes of scrutiny oversight.</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required.</p> |

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| | | <p>scrutiny members and support staff to obtain information from organisations the council has contracted to deliver services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - When agreeing contracts with these bodies, authorities should consider whether it would be appropriate to include a <i>requirement</i> for them to supply information to or appear before scrutiny committees. | | |
| | | Planning Work | | |
| 19. | <p>Paras 48 and 52</p> <p>Page 21</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Authorities with multiple scrutiny committees with a separate work programme for each committee - consideration should be given to how to co-ordinate the various committees' work to make best use of the total scrutiny resources available - When thinking about scrutiny's focus, members should be supported by key senior officers. The statutory scrutiny officer will need to take a leading role in supporting members to clarify the role and function of scrutiny, and championing that role | <p>Overview and scrutiny committee work programmes are determined by overview and scrutiny members annually based upon a variety of factors including the Cabinet's Forward Plan of Key Decisions, the Sustainable Community Strategy and associated actions, government legislation, outcomes from quarterly performance reports and other plans and strategies including those of key partners.</p> <p>The current annual process of developing work programmes works well. Draft programmes are taken to each thematic overview and scrutiny committee during March. The work programmes are shared with chairs, vice chairs, executive members, senior officers and key stakeholders</p> | <p>Consideration could be given to reporting all the thematic overview and scrutiny work programmes to COSMB to provide oversight and co-ordination of scrutiny work.</p> |

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| | | | <p>prior to being submitted to the first meeting of the municipal year for agreement.</p> <p>The work programme process recognises capacity of officers and members whilst maintaining flexibility to accommodate matters which may arise in year.</p> <p>Overview and scrutiny committees plan joint meetings on occasions to enable joint working across subject areas and avoid duplication of effort by individual committees.</p> | |
| 20. | Para 53 Page 21 | <p>Who to speak to - the public</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asking individual scrutiny members to have conversations with individuals and groups in their own local areas. | <p>Amplifying the voice of the public is one of the four principles of good scrutiny practice and it is championed by the Chair of COSMB.</p> <p>Current arrangements to ensure all scrutiny work is evidence-based work well in DCC.</p> <p>Many topics considered by scrutiny have generated a good deal of public interest and engagement e.g. the position of Ward 6 Bishop Auckland Hospital, Climate Change and the Durham Light Infantry Museum.</p> <p>There are statutory processes in place for members of the public who may wish to seek redress e.g. for health issues there are NHS complaints procedures, Healthwatch etc</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required.</p> |

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| | | | <p>The thematic overview and scrutiny agendas include a standing item of ‘any items from co-opted members or interested parties’ to enable matters to be discussed.</p> | |
| 21. | <p>Para 53 Page 22</p> | <p>Who to speak to - the authority’s partners</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - relationships with other partners should not be limited to evidence-gathering to support individual reviews or agenda items | <p>DCC maintains comprehensive links with a wide range of partners e.g. police, fire and rescue service, local health service providers, clinical commissioning groups, registered social landlords, probation services, Northumbrian Water Ltd., Environment Agency, schools.</p> <p>The work programme is informed by plans and strategies of our key partners in addition to the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Council Plan and other relevant documents.</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required.</p> |
| 22. | <p>Para 53 Page 22</p> | <p>Who to speak to - the executive</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a principal partner in discussions on the work programme. | <p>As part of the work programme development process the relevant Cabinet portfolio member is consulted. The councils Notice of Key decisions also informs the process.</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required.</p> |
| 23. | <p>Para 54/55 Page 22</p> | <p>Information sources</p> <p>Scrutiny will need access to relevant information to inform its work programme. The type of information will depend on the specific role and function</p> | <p>The councils’ performance management information is reported regularly to the relevant scrutiny committee whilst COSMB receives the complete performance report to enable it to take an overview of the council’s performance.</p> | <p>It is proposed that the information highlighted in para 54 of the guidance regarding information sources routinely provided</p> |

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| | | <p>scrutiny plays within the authority, but might include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Performance information from across the authority and its partners. - Finance and risk information from across the authority and its partners. - Corporate complaints information, and aggregated information from political groups about the subject matter of members' surgeries. - Business cases and options appraisals (and other planning information) for forthcoming major decisions. This information will be of particular use for pre-decision scrutiny - Reports and recommendations issued by relevant ombudsmen, especially the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman <p>Scrutiny members should consider keeping this information under regular review.</p> | <p>Finance reports are reported regularly to the relevant scrutiny committees. This complements the finance reporting mechanism to Cabinet and the Audit Committee. Detailed risk reporting is to Cabinet and the Audit Committee. High-level risks under each of the council's strategic aims are reported quarterly to scrutiny as part of the performance management reporting process.</p> <p>Corporate complaints information is reported to COSMB.</p> <p>There are no formal arrangements for reporting information from member surgeries.</p> <p>The reporting of business cases/options appraisals is considered on a case by case basis.</p> <p>Arrangements are in place for the reporting of Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman reports to COSMB.</p> | <p>to scrutiny committees be reviewed periodically.</p> |

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| 24. | Para 55 Page 23 | <p>Shortlisting Topics</p> <p>Approaches to shortlisting topics should reflect scrutiny's overall role in the authority. and require the development of bespoke, local solutions. The kind of questions a scrutiny committee should consider might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do we understand the benefits scrutiny would bring to this issue? - How could we best carry out work on this subject? - What would be the best outcome of this work? - How would this work engage with the activity of the executive and other decision-makers, including partners? <p>Some authorities use scoring systems to evaluate and rank work programme proposals. Others take a looser approach.</p> <p>A committee should be able to justify how and why a decision has been taken to include certain issues and not others.</p> | <p>DCC overview and scrutiny committees shortlist topics for inclusion on the work programme on an informed basis as outlined above.</p> <p>As the processes are working well there is no need to change. In addition, conversations take place at executive and non-executive meetings around the work programme which help inform decisions.</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required.</p> |

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| 25. | Para 58 Page 23/24 | <p>Carrying out work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - As a single item on a committee agenda - At a single meeting - At a task and finish review of two or three meetings - Via a longer-term task and finish review - By establishing a ‘standing panel’ | <p>DCC currently use all of these methods for carrying out scrutiny work apart from the use of a standing panel. There are no proposals to change as these methods work well for DCC.</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required.</p> |
| | | Evidence sessions | | |
| 26. | Para 59 /60 Page 25 | <p>Evidence sessions are a key way in which scrutiny committees inform their work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good preparation is a vital part of conducting effective evidence sessions. Members should have a clear idea of what the committee hopes to get out of each session and appreciate that success will depend on their ability to work together on the day. | <p>The council's overview and scrutiny function continues to receive acknowledgement as a model of best practice with Durham receiving the Municipal Journal's Excellence in Governance and Scrutiny award in 2016 for its approach to scrutiny, community engagement and consultation and governance arrangements.</p> <p>Pre-meetings and development of questioning plans may be necessary if meetings are held in public and the topic is one which may provoke complex or sensitive questioning.</p> | <p>It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required.</p> |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective planning does not necessarily involve a large number of pre-meetings, the development of complex scopes or the drafting of questioning plans - Chairs play a vital role in leading discussions on objective-setting and ensuring all members are aware of the specific role each will play during the evidence session | | |
| 27. | Para 66 Page 26 | Developing recommendations Are normally three stages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the development of a ‘heads of report’ – setting out general findings - the development of those findings, which will set out some areas on which recommendations might be made - the drafting of the full report. Recommendations should be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - evidence-based and SMART - consider sharing them in draft. | Processes and procedures in place at DCC generally reflect the guidance. DCC received an Excellence in Governance and Scrutiny award in 2016 which acknowledged our overview and scrutiny function as a model of best practice. We continue to ensure that our community engagement, consultation and governance arrangements are strong and thorough. | It is proposed that no changes to the current arrangements are required. |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - six to eight recommendations are sufficient to enable the authority to focus its response. - Sharing draft recommendations with executive members should not provide an opportunity for them to revise or block recommendations before they are made. | | |