

Overview and Scrutiny

How Scrutiny Works – Suggesting Topics

Suggesting Topics for Scrutiny Reviews including councillor calls for action (CCfA)

1. Topics for Scrutiny

Any Member of the County Council can propose a topic for a scrutiny review. The matter does not have to be one that relates to County Council services and could include other public service providers in Nottinghamshire.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) is responsible for managing the programme of work for scrutiny and all topic suggestions will be received by the OSC.

Suggesting Items for Scrutiny	
Local Issues (calls for action)	Strategic Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If received from the public, the Member should acknowledge the request and inform the constituent of the action intended • Members should attempt to resolve local issues through the appropriate officers, officials or executive Members before referring it for scrutiny • Members should discuss any issue with a scrutiny officer who will provide advice and assist the Member to write an introduction to the matter for the OSC • The OSC will receive an overview of the issue and the actions taken by the Member and decide a course of action which could include further consideration by the OSC or a Select Committee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members may wish to conduct some research into the issues through the appropriate officers, officials or executive Members before raising it for scrutiny • Members should discuss any issue with a scrutiny officer who will provide advice on raising it with the OSC • The issue will be included in a report to the OSC when considering the programme of work. The OSC will decide a course of action which could include further consideration by the OSC or a Select Committee <p>(suggestions received from the public will be considered in a similar way and should also involve the local Member)</p>

2. Action required by the Member

Members are encouraged to investigate a matter before referring it to scrutiny. Support is available to Members to do this and includes the local government library, political researchers, departments and the scrutiny team. Where the issue is specific to a Member's electoral division, the Member should also attempt to resolve the issue before putting it forward as a topic. Public service providers will be encouraged to provide Members with relevant information and to co-operate with a Member's attempts to resolve the matter.

Suggestions for reviews will need to be presented to the OSC for consideration at the next appropriate meeting. Support will be available to Members from scrutiny officers to ensure that the OSC receives the necessary information. Members may wish to attend the meeting of the OSC to discuss the matter.

3. Progressing a concern

The OSC will consider all requests for scrutiny reviews and decide what further action is required. The OSC does not have to decide to take up a review, but should provide reasons if it does not. The OSC may also have to prioritise reviews based upon the number of issues put forward and the available resources.

In a number of very limited circumstances the OSC should reject a CCfA for a scrutiny review immediately. These are set by law and include issues where the matter relates to an individual and an alternative resolution is available eg a complaint or appeal. The OSC should also not consider a CCfA for a matter relating to a planning or licensing process.

The OSC may decide that the matter is something that should be considered by the OSC itself. Alternatively the OSC may decide to commission a select committee to carry out a scrutiny review and make recommendations for improvement. Reviews may vary in length dependent upon the issue and the select committee will be encouraged to involve the communities affected by the issue, for example holding meetings in the locality. There is an expectation that a Member championing a local issue will sit on any select committee reviewing the matter.

4. Other sources of reviews

The OSC may also receive proposals for scrutiny reviews from other bodies. Each request should be considered on its merits but also considering the current programme of work and available resource. Possible sources could include; the public (covered by a separate protocol), the Cabinet, Partners, Member Forums and LINKs. The OSC must consider referrals from meetings of the full Council and LINKs (covered by a separate protocol).