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|  COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL | COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL |
| Name and date of Committee | OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 25 MAY 2021 |
| Report Number | AGENDA ITEM 10 |
| Subject | FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE |
| Wards affected | ALL |
| Accountable member | Councillor Stephen Andrews, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee |
| Accountable officer | Claire Hughes, Business Manager for Corporate Responsibility Tel: 01594 812515 Email: claire.hugehes@publicagroup.uk |
| Summary/Purpose | A report setting out changes to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings which will take effect from the 2021/22 civic year |
| Annexes | None |
| Recommendation/s | That the Committee notes the report. |
| Corporate priorities | All |
| Key Decision | No |
| Exempt | No |
| Consultees/ Consultation | N/A |

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The Local Government Act 2000 introduced a new political management system for local Councils in England and Wales, requiring them to have a separate 'executive' in the form of a leader, or elected mayor, and cabinet.
- 1.2. To provide a counterweight for this, the Act also introduced the concept of 'Overview and Scrutiny', whereby every Council with an executive management structure is required to have an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This enables the rest of the Council to scrutinise the executive by investigating their decisions and policies, and issuing reports and recommendations where any shortcomings are identified.
- 1.3. The principal power of a scrutiny committee is to influence the policies and decisions made by the Council and other organisations involved in delivering public services. The scrutiny committee gathers evidence on issues affecting local people and makes recommendations based on its findings.

2. CHANGES TO OPERATION OF COMMITTEE

- 2.1. The Council currently has an Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Its role is to scrutinise the decisions of the Cabinet and to influence policy development. The Committee should be seen as a 'critical friend' and its operation should always add value.
- 2.2. In order to ensure the Committee operates effectively the following changes to its overall operation will take effect from the 2021/22 civic year:
 - a) The existing recurring item of the quarterly digest will be replaced with a focused summary document. The summary document will be prepared by democratic services following a review of relevant County Council minutes. It will then be shared to the Council's respective representatives who will be able to add comments or content if required. The summary document will then be included in the agenda pack together with links to the relevant GCC minutes should members wish to access them.
 - b) A new recurring agenda item will be added in relation to the Cabinet Forward Plan. This item will enable members to review the forward plan and identify items for scrutiny, facilitating the ability for scrutiny to make recommendations to cabinet where appropriate.
 - c) The Committee will make more use of task and finish groups where there is a focused piece of work to be completed. Task and finish groups will be properly scoped and relevant resources identified to ensure that they are adding value and have clear objectives.
 - d) Where appropriate the Committee will receive presentations from officers and/or external bodies so Committee can determine whether something should be looked at and if so how that may be taken forward and scoped.
 - e) A more focused work plan will be developed which will be more explicit in terms of scope and value added.

3. TRAINING

- 3.1. To ensure that scrutiny is effective two training sessions are being arranged (dates to be confirmed shortly). The first of these sessions will be open to all members.
- 3.2. Session 1 will be an overview training session, presented by the Local Government Association and a member peer. The session will cover:
- Introduction – to include what is scrutiny, powers and roles, what makes effective scrutiny
 - Work Programming
 - Scrutiny topic selection process
 - Adding value
 - Call In
- 3.3. The second session will be an interactive work planning session for members of the Committee, focusing on selecting topics, scoping work and prioritisation. This session will be facilitated by the Business Manager for Corporate Responsibility, the Monitoring Officer and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1. The costs of the training will be met from the Councillor training budget.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1. None

6. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1. Not required

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT

- 7.1. Not required

8. ECOLOGICAL AND CLIMATE EMERGENCY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. Not required

9. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 9.1. None

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no relevant background papers