



PROTOCOL FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENT

PURPOSE OF PROTOCOL

1.1 This protocol has been established to provide a clear understanding and provide guidance on the procedure by which members of the public can suggest topics for inclusion in the overview and scrutiny work programme.

APPLICATION OF PROTOCOLS

1.2 This protocol applies to the work programmes of the Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) Committee and the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee. Please note that it does not apply to the work programmes of any Sub-Committees or Working Groups formed by either overview and scrutiny committee.

1.3 This protocol applies to members of the public who live and work of the Dover District, and local businesses, schools, colleges, and voluntary or community groups.

1.4 This protocol does not apply to members of the public who, in accordance with the respective provisions of the Constitution of the Council, are submitting a petition for consideration by the Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) Committee.

1.5 This protocol does not apply to Dover District Councillors who should contact Democratic Support for further information as to the process by which they can submit items for consideration by an overview and scrutiny committee.

WHAT IS THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME?

1.6 The overview and scrutiny work programme is the list of the work that the committees intend to undertake during the course of the municipal year.

1.7 The programme is set at the start of each municipal year by the respective scrutiny committees and can apply to anything that affects the people who live and work in the Dover District. It acts to focus the priorities of the overview and scrutiny committees in accordance with the principles set out in the assessment criteria.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR SUGGESTED REVIEW TOPICS

1.8 Any topics proposed for inclusion in the work programmes as a review topic **MUST** meet the following criteria:

- It must directly affect a group of people living or working within the Dover District.
- It must relate to a service, event or issue in which the Council has a significant stake or over which the Council has an influence.
- It must have a clearly defined outcome.

1.9 It **MUST NOT** fulfil any of the following criteria:

- It must not be an issue that one of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Sub-Committees or Working Groups has considered during the last twelve months.
- It must not relate to an individual service complaint.
- It must not be incompatible with the principles of the Council's Equality Policy.
- It must not relate to a petition.
- It must not relate to a specific individual.
- It must not relate to matters dealt with by another committee of the Council, unless the issue deals with policy or procedure.

1.10 In assessing any suggested topic, the overview and scrutiny committees will be looking for evidence of at least one of the following:

- A topic that is an area of significant public concern, as evidenced through local media, Councillor's surgeries, public consultation or direct correspondence with the Council.
- It is one of the Council's key corporate priorities.
- It is an area of significant budgetary commitment by the Council.
- It is a service that is an external priority in an area the Council supports or it is a shared priority with a partner organisation.
- It refers to new guidance or legislation that is likely to impact on the way the Council delivers its services.
- It relates to an area of poor or declining performance in service.

1.11 The topic will then be prioritised on the basis of importance and impact using the scoring guide set out below:

Score	Importance Indicator	Impact Indicator
0 pts	No evidence of links to the Council's corporate aims and priorities.	No identified benefits in undertaking scrutiny of this topic.
1 pt	No evidence of links to the Council's corporate aims and priorities, but an ongoing area of public concern.	Minor potential benefits affecting a single ward or group.
2 pts	Some evidence of links to the Council's corporate aims and priorities but it may be indirect and the topic is not a current corporate priority.	① Minor potential benefit affecting two or more wards or groups. ② Moderate potential benefit affecting a single ward or group. ③ Potential benefit to an individual service area within the Council.
3 pts	① Good evidence of links to the Council's corporate aims and priorities; and/or	① Moderate potential benefit affecting two or more wards or groups.

Score	Importance Indicator	Impact Indicator
	② Good evidence of public concern.	② Significant potential benefit affecting a single ward or group. ③ Potential benefit to a division within the Council.
4 pts	① Strong evidence of links to the Council's corporate aims and priorities; and/or ② High level of public concern.	① Significant potential benefits for a substantial proportion of the community. ② Significant potential benefit to the Council as a whole.

1.12 The scores for the topic are then applied to the priority grid set out below to determine its priority for inclusion in the overview and scrutiny work programme.

IMPORTANCE	HIGH	4	Possible topic for inclusion in the work programme but not a priority.	Priority topic for scrutiny.	
	3				
	2		Reject topic for scrutiny.	Possible topic for inclusion in the work programme but not a priority.	
	1				
LOW	0	1	2	3	4
		LOW	IMPACT	HIGH	

1.13 The selection of a topic suggested by a member of the public who lives or works in the Dover District, local businesses, voluntary or community group for inclusion in the work programme does not guarantee that it will be scrutinised, although every effort will be taken to do so. Each of the Council's overview and scrutiny committees reserves the right to vary its work programme to address changing priorities and to react to changing circumstances.

TIMETABLE FOR TOPIC SUBMISSIONS TO INITIAL WORK PROGRAMME

1.14 From 01 January until 31 March each year, suggestions will be invited for inclusion in the overview and scrutiny work programme from members of the public, local businesses, voluntary and community groups. If you would like to suggest a topic for inclusion in the overview and scrutiny work programme outside of this period, please contact your local District Councillor to ask them to raise the matter on your behalf.

1.15 The topic submissions will be collated, researched and scored by the Democratic Support Officer in conjunction with the Chairman and Controlling Group Spokesperson of the relevant overview and scrutiny committee. A full list of topic submissions will be reported to the April meetings of the Scrutiny (Community and Regeneration) Committee and the Scrutiny (Policy and Performance) Committee. At the April meeting, each overview and scrutiny committee will identify the topics it would wish to scrutinise throughout the year based on its priorities.

1.16 Each committee at its May meeting sets its final overview and scrutiny work programme. In the event that a submission from a member of the public who lives or works in the district, a local business, voluntary or community group is adopted as part of the work programme, they will be advised by the Democratic Support Officer as to the progress of the item during the course of the municipal year.

HOW TO SUBMIT A TOPIC FOR INCLUSION IN THE WORK PROGRAMMES

1.17 All suggestions must be submitted on the suggestion form available from the Dover District Council website or from the Democratic Support team at the Council Offices, Whitfield.

1.18 The purpose of the standardized suggestion form is to ensure that the Council's overview and scrutiny committees are sufficiently well informed to allow for the effective assessment of submissions and select topics for inclusion in the work programme that will have a measurable impact and add real value.

1.19 All forms must be submitted to: Overview and Scrutiny, Democratic Support, Dover District Council, White Cliffs Business Park, Dover, Kent CT16 3PJ or send by facsimile on 01304 872452 or by e-mail to scrutiny@dover.gov.uk. If you have any questions about a topic submission you can also contact the Democratic Support Officer on 01304 872304.