

# ENVIRONMENT AND PLACE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



Report subject	<b>Recommendations from Portfolio Holders, Cabinet or Council</b>
Meeting date	2 April 2025
Status	Public Report
Executive summary	<p>The Council's constitution provides that Overview and Scrutiny (O&amp;S) Committees may consider requests for work from a range of sources, including requests from Portfolio Holders, Cabinet and Council.</p> <p>The O&amp;S Committee is asked to consider two requests for scrutiny recently made by Council and one request for scrutiny from a Portfolio Holder, and to determine these requests in line with the associated constitution procedure rules.</p>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>It is RECOMMENDED that the O&amp;S committee considers and approves or rejects the two requests for scrutiny as set out in this report.</b>
Reason for recommendations	To comply with the decision of Council and the requirements of the council's constitution.
Portfolio Holder(s):	Not applicable for this decision
Corporate Director	Graham Farrant
Report Authors	Lindsay Marshall, Overview and Scrutiny Specialist
Wards	Council-wide
Classification	For Decision

## Process for consideration of scrutiny requests

1. This report relates to requests for scrutiny made to the O&S committee by a Portfolio Holder, Cabinet or Council. The process for determining requests to O&S Committees from these bodies is set out by the council's constitution procedure rules as follows:

- *Where Portfolio Holders, the Cabinet or Council request that O&S Committees undertake a specified piece of work, the relevant O&S Committee shall respond to the request as soon as it is possible to do so.*
  - *The Committee will assess the value to be added by the work suggested when determining whether to exercise its powers in this respect. Where it chooses to exercise its powers in relation to the request, it will report back its findings and any recommendations to Cabinet and/or Full Council.*
  - *Where the Committee chooses not to exercise its powers in relation to the request, it will provide reasons for this to the body that made the original request.*
2. In addition, the constitution requires that *no item of work shall join the work plan of any O&S Committee without an assessment of:*
    - *detail outlining the background to the issue suggested;*
    - *the proposed method of undertaking the work;*
    - *likely timescale associated with undertaking the work; and*
    - *the anticipated outcome and value to be added by the work proposed.'*
  3. The O&S Committee should follow these processes when determining requests for scrutiny.

## **Requests for consideration**

### Redhill Paddling Pool

4. **Background** - At its 25 February 2025 meeting, Council received and debated a petition entitled 'Stop the closure of Redhill paddling pool'. Council resolved to '**ask Overview and Scrutiny to investigate how we arrived at this situation and investigate ways to keep the paddling pool open and report back to full Council.**' The referral has been directed to the Environment & Place O&S Committee because this area of council services falls within the remit of this committee.
5. **Scrutiny process and timescale** - this was not set out by Council and requires further consideration by the committee, although the proposer of the motion originally requested that O&S establish a task and finish group on the matter. This was later withdrawn during Council debate in recognition that O&S was best placed to establish the most appropriate working method. A timescale for the work was not proposed.
6. **Anticipated outcome and value to be added by the work proposed** – this was not clearly set out by Council in its referral to O&S. However, Council noted that funding had been secured for the 25/26 year and the debate centred around a commonly held view that the paddling pool was a valued community asset and as such a long-term plan for securing the future operation of the paddling pool was the outcome sought through scrutiny.

In relation to the first part of the referral 'investigate how we arrived at this situation' - an investigation into decisions, budgeting and maintenance planning were cited as possible lines of enquiry by the proposer of the motion but not formalised into a recommendation to scrutiny by Council. The value to be brought by this enquiry was not outlined by Council in relation to this part of its referral.

7. The full decision of Council is set out at Appendix 1.

#### Building Control

8. **Background** - At its 25 February 2025 meeting, Council considered a motion 'to strengthen building standards through Local Authority control'. The proposer of the motion was seeking Council support to lobby government on this matter. Among other resolutions on this motion Council agreed to '**refer the motion to the Environment and Place O&S Committee for recommendation of the Council's policy position on this matter.**'
9. **Scrutiny process and timescale** – this was not set out by Council and requires further consideration by this Committee.
10. **Anticipated outcome and value to be added by the work proposed** – this was not clearly stated by Council and requires further consideration by the committee.
11. The full decision of Council is set out at Appendix 1.

#### **Options Appraisal**

12. The O&S committee may choose to agree or reject the requests made. This decision should be made in line with the requirements of the constitution as set out above, particularly in relation to the anticipated value and outcome of proposed work and the resources available to undertake work.
13. If requests are agreed, the committee should determine methods and timescales for scrutiny, taking account of other priorities already established within the committee work programme. This may be delegated to the Chair of the committee to consider with officers and report back.
14. If requests are rejected, the committee should provide reasons for this to the body making the request.

#### **Summary of financial implications**

15. There are no financial implications associated with this decision to determine scrutiny requests.

#### **Summary of legal implications**

16. There are no legal implications associated with this decision to determine scrutiny requests.

#### **Summary of human resources implications**

17. There are no human resources implications associated with this decision to determine scrutiny requests

**Summary of sustainability impact**

18. There are no sustainability impacts associated with this decision to determine scrutiny requests.

**Summary of public health implications**

19. There are no public health implications associated with this decision to determine scrutiny requests.

**Summary of equality implications**

20. There are no equality implications associated with this decision to determine scrutiny requests.

**Summary of risk assessment**

21. There are no risks associated with this decision to determine scrutiny requests.

**Background papers**

Current Environment & Place O&S Committee work programme

**Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Extract Minute, Council 25 February 2025.