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## **Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee: Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23**

### **Background**

- 1** The Annual Scrutiny Report on activity during the previous year aims to promote effective scrutiny and identify areas of best practice or for development.
- 2** All scrutiny members had the opportunity to contribute to the report through an informal end of year review sessions held by each scrutiny committee. The Scrutiny Annual Report, **attached at Appendix 1**, was endorsed by the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee (PFSC) at its meeting on 16 June 2023.
- 3** Reporting scrutiny performance through County Council helps to raise the profile and benefits of strong scrutiny in line with statutory guidance which encourages all members to be aware of and engaged in scrutiny processes.

### **Discussion**

- 4** PFSC assessed scrutiny activity during 2022/23 using the following indicators (agreed by the Governance Committee and the County Council in 2019):
  - Influence policy ideas or proposals before they are developed
  - Spend time on matters critical to service outcomes for residents
  - Provide meaningful challenge to the performance of services
  - Show the difference scrutiny makes to service outcomes for residents
- 5** The Report identifies areas that members felt had worked well and those needing improvement, as summarised below.

#### **Worked well:**

- The flexibility of hybrid technology, enabling witnesses to attend meetings
- Using different ways of working to make better use of time and resources
- The provision of thorough reports and timely information by Council services
- The use of a range of witnesses to triangulate evidence
- Early influence on policy development
- Cabinet member engagement in work programme planning
- All committee members updated on work programme planning
- More robust performance, budget and risk monitoring
- A new recommendations tracker helping to monitor scrutiny input and influence
- Liaising and sharing learning with Surrey County Council's scrutiny committees

#### **Areas for improvement:**

- More use of external witnesses/external subject matter experts
- Using different ways of working (visits, briefings, task and finish groups, evidence gathering)
- More involvement by all committee members in work programme planning
- Members to be well prepared for meetings and confident in their questioning
- Ensuring members have the time and skills to carry out effective performance monitoring

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- 6** The Scrutiny Annual Report will be published on the Council’s website and shared with all scrutiny committee members, included co-opted members.

**Recommended**

That members consider the effectiveness of the Council’s scrutiny function and note the Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23, as attached at Appendix 1.

**Pieter Montyn**

Chairman of the Performance and Finance Scrutiny Committee

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**Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23

**Background papers**

None