

Performance and Finance Select Committee

22 May 2019

Annual Scrutiny Performance 2018-19

Report by Director of Law and Assurance and Head of Democratic Services

Executive Summary

The latest Scrutiny Newsletter is attached as Appendix A. This summarises the work of the select committees in 2018-19 and reports the performance data for the end of year.

Focus for Scrutiny

The Committee should review scrutiny performance and make any recommendations for improvements. It should also consider its role in improving scrutiny practice and if appropriate identify any training or development needs for scrutiny members.

1. Background

1.1 The Performance and Finance Select Committee has overall responsibility for monitoring the performance of the scrutiny function. It carries this out through the publication and review of the scrutiny newsletter, which is intended to provide members with information to fulfil this monitoring role. The newsletter provides an annual overview of the work of select committees, reports overall performance of the scrutiny function, shares best practice and highlights any future development or training required by select committee members.

2. Scrutiny End of Year Newsletter for 2018-19

2.1 The end of year Scrutiny Newsletter is attached as Appendix A for members' consideration. The newsletter covers:

- Select Committee Annual Survey Results
- Performance monitoring data for 2018-19
- What has worked well and areas for future development
- Overview of the key issues covered in the period
- Joint scrutiny arrangements
- Task and Finish Groups
- Future meeting dates 2019-20

2.2 The newsletter provides a summary of information collated from the Select Committee Annual Survey and any informal sessions held after select committee in March. The survey was distributed to all select committee members to give their views of the scrutiny function. The data in the

Newsletter shows a comparison with previous year's figures to highlight where changes have occurred. The response rate of return of the survey was 60%, the same as last year. The analysis shows that there are some decreases in the member statement scores from last year, seven measures have decreased whilst six improved or stayed the same. The most notable decreases in statement scores relate to:-

- Select committees are able to influence decisions appropriately,
- There are clear, measurable outcomes from the scrutiny process,
- Select committees have had opportunity to input into policy development, and
- Timing of committee involvement in issues is appropriate.

2.3 Statement scores that have improved include;

- Good support from Democratic Services support staff,
- Able to commit the necessary time to undertake the role, and
- The select committee work programme reflects the issues of greatest public concern/importance.

2.4 The newsletter also contains performance monitoring data for the year 2018-19. The aim of the newsletter is to provide PFSC members with information to assist them in their overarching scrutiny monitoring role. The performance data included in the newsletter is based on the key issues to be monitored and achieved following the Scrutiny Review carried out in 2011. As can be seen from the data a large number of recommendations have been made and accepted by Cabinet Members to assist them in their decision-making role. The newsletter also briefly highlights the key issues scrutinised over the year to ensure the strategic issues are being addressed and that the approved work programme is on track.

2.5 The newsletter is also available online so that all members, the public, other local authority officers and any other interested parties, e.g. district and borough councils, can access it to find out more about scrutiny at West Sussex County Council.

2.6 The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has very recently (May 2019) published 'Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities'. The guidance will be reviewed in order to ensure scrutiny at the County Council follows national guidance and that any improvements and developments are reviewed and taken forwards during 2019/20.

3 **Implications**

3.1 There are no resource, risk management, Crime and Disorder Act or Human Rights Act implications arising directly from this report. However, many of the substantive reports presented to Committees will have some implications and an Equality Impact Report would have been included as necessary.

Tony Kershaw
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Appendix

A End of Year 2018-19 Scrutiny Newsletter

Background Papers

None