



Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Agenda Item
18 March 2024	5

Title:	Appointment of Skills Rapporteur
Report of:	Anne Gardiner, Governance Manager & Statutory Scrutiny Officer
Lead Member:	Edna Murphy – Lead Member for Governance
Public Report:	Yes
Key Decision:	N/A
Voting Arrangements:	A simple majority of all Members

Recommendations:

A	Nominate and appoint a member to the Rapporteur role for the Skills and Employment Committee
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Strategic Objective(s):

The proposals within this report fit under the following strategic objective(s):

Achieving ambitious skills and employment opportunities
Achieving good growth
Increased connectivity
Enabling resilient communities
Achieving Best Value and High Performance

Appointing rapporteurs to shadow the work of the thematic committees plays a key role in driving the new ways of working and enhancing the Overview & Scrutiny function which is a key ambition from the ongoing improvement framework of the Combined Authority. A healthy, capable and supported Overview & Scrutiny functionality will drive accountability and improve the effectiveness of decision-making within the Combined Authority, which in turn will contribute to driving enhanced delivery and performance.

The Combined Authority is committed to implementing a positive governance culture in all that it does, building upon significant improvements already delivered in response to previously identified governance shortcomings as it seeks to build the foundations for a healthy regional democracy. This involves improving awareness, opportunity and accountability to the public through the Overview & Scrutiny function.

1. Purpose

1.1	The report provides the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with details regarding the Rapporteur Lead Roles and requests that the committee consider nominating another member to cover the Skills and Employment Committee following Cllr Rippeth standing down from the Committee.
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2. Proposal

2.1	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to adopt new ways of working and a new approach to implementing the Overview & Scrutiny function at the Combined Authority at its meeting on 19 June 2023: this followed consideration of a number of options over the course of several meetings and supported through Member workshops.
2.2	The committee selected Option A which included the development of the existing Rapporteur roles to shadow the Combined Authority Thematic Committees to help enhance the ways of working between Board and Thematic Committees and the Scrutiny function and help to develop opportunities for early scrutiny involvement in key decision making and strategy development.
2.3	The appointment to Rapporteur roles for each of the Combined Authority Thematic Committees will play a key role in driving these new ways of working: once appointments have been made it is suggested that Rapporteurs meet with the Chairs of the Thematic Committees to discuss how they can best support each other.
2.4	Both members and substitute members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are invited to put themselves forward for a Rapporteur role. This acknowledges the additional call on members' time in taking on additional work for the Committee and recognises that substitutes may have greater capacity than a main member. Detail on time commitments is included within the job role description at Appendix 1. If a substitute member is appointed as Rapporteur, they would be able to attend meetings to provide feedback on items they have reviewed. They would only have full voting rights if they were at the committee meeting as a substitute in the absence of the main member.

3. Background

3.1	At the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny on 19 June 2023, the members agreed to support the implementation of Option A which would create a new strategic focus for the Committee supported by informal planning meetings and the commissioning of deep dive reviews.
3.2	<p>At the Informal Session on August 31st Cllr Rippeth was appointed as one of the rapporteurs for the Skills and Employment Committee; this appointment was ratified at the September O&S Committee meeting.</p> <p>Following the stepping down of Cllr Rippeth from the O&S Committee; members are asked to consider appointing another member to be a rapporteur for Skills and Employment Committee. Cllr Tim Griffin is currently the standing rapporteur for this Committee; members felt that having two rapporteurs for each committee was prudent in recognising members availability and capacity to attend additional meetings.</p>

4. Appendices

4.1	Appendix A - Rapporteur Job Description
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5. Implications

Financial Implications

5.1	Appointment of rapporteurs as part of the delivery of the scrutiny function is unlikely to impact significantly on the Combined Authority's finances.
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Legal Implications

6.1	The importance and legitimacy that scrutiny is afforded by the law should be recognised. Overview and Scrutiny was created to act as a check and balance on the executive and is a statutory requirement for all combined authorities.
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6.2	Although the existence of the function is set out in legislation, how it operates and how it is structured is left to individual Local Authorities. This provides for a high degree of flexibility and the ability to consider different topics and issues in the most appropriate way.
Public Health Implications	
7.1	There are no public health implications set out within the content of this report, although it should be noted that the new approach to delivering the scrutiny function is intended to contribute to effective decision-making and drive accountability, performance and delivery across all of the Combined Authority remit.
Environmental & Climate Change Implications	
8.1	There are no environmental and climate change implications set out within the content of this report, although it should be noted that the new approach to delivering the scrutiny function is intended to contribute to effective decision-making and drive accountability, performance and delivery across all of the Combined Authority remit.
Other Significant Implications	
9.1	There are no other significant implications set out in the content of this report.
Background Papers	
10.1	March 2023 Overview & Scrutiny Committee: O&S Meeting – March 2023
10.2	June 2023 Overview & Scrutiny Committee: O&S Meeting – June 2023
10.3	July 2023 Overview & Scrutiny Committee: O&S Meeting – July 2023
10.4	September 2023 Overview & Scrutiny Committee: O&S Meeting – Sept 2023
10.5	November 2023 Overview & Scrutiny Committee: O&S Meeting – Nove 2023