



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Agenda Item No: 7

Report title: Review of Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements Update

To: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Date: 25th October 2021

Public report: Yes

From: Anne Gardiner
Governance Manager

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

Recommendations: a) Note and comment on the Action Log from officers. (Appendix 1)
b) Approve the Information Sharing Protocol (Appendix 2)
c) Note the feedback from the Combined Authority Board meeting.

Voting arrangements: Simple majority of all members

1. Purpose

1.1 To provide the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the work being carried out by officers in relation to the actions recommended by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.

2. Background

2.1 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny published their second edition on guidance to overview and scrutiny in Combined Authorities. This second edition reflects upon the past three years of practice since the introduction of CA's. It provides guidance around how scrutiny can best operate in practice.

The guidance may be found here: [Revised guidance: Overview and Scrutiny in Combined Authorities - Centre For Governance and Scrutiny \(cfgs.org.uk\)](https://www.cfgs.org.uk/revised-guidance-overview-and-scrutiny-in-combined-authorities)

- 2.2 Following this guidance being published the CPCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee held an informal workshop with CfGS to discuss some of the points raised within the guidance and requested that a proposal be brought forward from CfGS to carry out a review of the current scrutiny arrangements at the CPCA.
- 2.3 The Committee received the recommendations at their meeting on the 28th June 2021 and a further report detailing the timetable for the actions at their meeting on the 26th July 2021.
- 2.4 The attached Action Log (Appendix 1) details what progress has been made and planned actions over the coming months.

Information Sharing Protocol

- 2.5 One of the actions from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny report was that an Information Sharing Protocol be produced which would provide a useful part of an induction process for new members and would also form part of a wider guide to scrutiny at the CA which would be of use to members more generally. The findings suggested that a new approach to the sharing of information with scrutiny members which involved an end to the regular sharing, and scrutiny of, Mayoral decisions at committee, with information being shared on an ongoing basis outside of committee to inform the appropriate escalation of issues to committee based on need. The proposed Information Sharing Protocol is attached at Appendix 2.

Combined Authority Board

- 2.6 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny report and recommendations were taken to the CA Board on 29th September 2021. Report can be found [here](#).

The CA Board approved an amendment to the report which stated:

‘The CA Board note the importance of Overview and Scrutiny Committee scrutinising Mayoral Decision Notices, as those Notices bypass the normal checks and balances of the Combined Authority.’

- 2.7 The CA Board also provided the following feedback:
- Some members of the CA Board questioned whether the practice of O&S submitting questions in advance of Board meetings and receiving pre-prepared answers at those meetings was the best use of its time.
 - That O&S review the fundamental commitments on which the Combined Authority was founded including doubling GVA and delivering affordable housing and jobs.
 - Mayor’s Question Time to be held more frequently in order to hold the Mayor to account
 - A strong role for O&S would support good governance within the organisation.
 - The Mayor stated that he had made clear that he was happy to appear at O&S both in his capacity as mayor and as the chair of the Transport and Infrastructure Committee and to have discussions with the chair and vice chair of O&S around how that was achieved.
 - O&S should be supported to examine key policy issues.

- The Committee should provide their views of the recommendations from Centre for Governance and Scrutiny to the CA Board.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 None

4. Legal Implications

4.1 None.

5. Appendices

5.1 Appendix 1 – O&S Review Action Log

5.2 Appendix 2 – Information Sharing Protocol

6. Background Papers

6.1 [O&S March Report](#)

6.2 [O&S March Appendix](#)

6.3 [CA Board Report - March](#)

6.4 [O&S Report – 28th June 2021](#)

6.5 [O&S Report – 26th July 2021](#)

6.6 [O&S Report – 23rd August 2021](#)

6.7 [O&S Report – 27th September 2021](#)