

DRAFT Scrutiny Vision and Plan

Scrutiny Vision: Long term strategic vision to be achieved by 2028 (by the 3rd Mayoral election) with significant progress by 2025/26 under deeper devolution.

Scrutiny Plan: Short/medium term implementation plans to implement the Vision to be overseen jointly by Scrutiny and the Combined Authority on an annual basis.

Combined Authority DRAFT Scrutiny Vision 2028

Summary – Scrutiny Vision 2028	
Ambition	<p>The Scrutiny Vision aims to position the Combined Authority’s Scrutiny function to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Go above and beyond the Scrutiny Protocol and best practice. • Determine a unique approach suited to the unique needs of regional, strategic scrutiny in West Yorkshire, compared to local authority-level scrutiny or MCA scrutiny elsewhere. • Support the CA’s fundamental strategic purpose, defend the interests of the organisation with regards to its functions and consider the needs of all WY residents it serves. • Foster and sustain an organisational culture where scrutiny and challenge is welcomed, independent, and impactful – not an ‘afterthought’ or ‘box-ticking exercise’. • Be demonstrably outcomes-focused, like any other core corporate service, which can prove the impact it makes on a regular basis – and that it is not a ‘talking shop’.
Role	<p>To directly advise, scrutinise and hold the Mayor and Combined Authority to account in public and private.</p> <p>To have a unique role and purpose, not conducted by other committees, focused on providing serious challenge to identify, monitor and resolve ‘persistent strategic challenges’ by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Enabling</u> – through supporting (but not <i>leading</i>) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ policy development ○ service improvement ○ programme delivery • <u>Protecting</u> – through monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ activity, risks and performance ○ studying data and information ○ maintaining accountability • <u>Investigating</u> persistent issues.

	<p>A wide Terms of Reference which clearly outlines Scrutiny's powers and responsibilities, to provide maximum manoeuvrability and oversight.</p> <p>Strictly non-parochial and non-partisan – having a holistic, strategic focus which considers the Combined Authority's and West Yorkshire's interests.</p> <p>An understanding with local authority scrutiny functions on rules of engagement in scrutinising cross-cutting areas, including formal referral and joint scrutiny arrangements.</p>
<p>Structure</p>	<p>A single overarching, strategic scrutiny committee supported member-led panels / working groups able to operate more flexibly and with greater focus.</p> <p><u>Permanent</u> working groups ('panels') to focus on <i>overview</i> duties monitoring activity and advising the committee on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KPIs and budget • key decisions & project delivery • portfolio, thematic committee and directorate activity • recommendation tracking and work programming • public & democratic (member) engagement <p><u>Temporary</u> working groups ('task and finish') to focus on <i>scrutiny</i> duties and report back to committee by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fact finding and answering questions • reviewing and investigating issues and decisions • making recommendations • reviewing and challenging policy & strategy • managing call-in
<p>Membership</p>	<p>Politically and geographically proportionate membership; calculated across both members and deputies (substitutes) to ensure maximum representation in terms of parties and place.</p> <p>A 'fuller-time' Chair able to dedicate time to maintaining a comprehensive overview of CA activity and maintain a degree of parity in officer interface and profile.</p> <p>Independent Member(s) recruited, as required, for longer terms to maintain continuity over many years and provide particular expertise.</p> <p>Two Vice Chairs, each overseeing a strategic portfolio (i.e. economy or infrastructure), managing a pool of trained, well-supported Members appointed for multi-year terms, who each oversee their own portfolio and working groups as a team.</p>

Duties

Enhanced, detailed role profiles clearly outlining each Member's responsibilities, will be maintained and regularly reviewed.

The roles:

- Chair x 1: Overall Lead
- Vice Chairs x 2: Strategic Leads (*possibly: Infrastructure and Economy*)
- Members: Portfolio / Working Group Leads
- Deputies (formerly substitutes): Assistant Portfolio / Working Group Leads (as appropriate)
- Independent Member(s)

1 x Chair ('Overall Lead') is expected to:

- Manage all committee meetings and agendas
- Oversee overall MCA strategy, WY Plan and activity
- Oversee corporate issues, assets and services
- Manage Vice Chairs and other leads
- Shadow the Mayor
- Interface regularly with officers internally

2 x Vice Chairs ('Strategic Leads') are expected to:

- Support the Chair and deputise as required
- Manage/Chair all relevant meetings within scrutiny of their strategic portfolio area
- Act as a 'strategic portfolio lead' and oversee multiple portfolio areas under strategic categories, e.g. *possibly*
 - *Economy (Business, Skills, Culture portfolios)*
 - *Infrastructure (Transport, Environment, Place portfolios)*
- Manage 'portfolio leads' within their strategic portfolio
- Shadow appropriate strategic chairs *i.e. the Transport Committee and Business Board chairs*

TBC x Members ('Portfolio Leads') are expected to:

- Attend all meetings or send their Deputy
- Brief and keep their Deputy in the loop on their portfolio
- Act as a portfolio lead – maintaining a watching brief over activity in their portfolio area, attend relevant meetings, take relevant briefings, and lead updates and questioning on that area
- Chair working groups and reviews as required

TBC x Deputy Members/Substitutes ('Assistant Portfolio Lead') are expected to:

- Attend all meetings as required with, or on behalf of, their Member
- Keep in the loop on all matters related to their portfolio
- Act as a deputy portfolio lead – maintaining a watching brief over activity in their portfolio area, attend relevant meetings, take relevant briefings, and lead updates and

	<p>questioning on that area, and advice their Member on anything of note</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chair working groups and reviews as required
<p>Support</p>	<p>To perform enhanced duties, Members will be provided with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Onboarding and induction at the beginning of the year, with frequent in-year follow up. • Training, development and ‘360 performance review’ throughout the year, as required. • Engagement through regular 1-1s and catch ups. • Summaries, analysis and advice on lines of questioning in advance of meetings to ensure productive, strategic scrutiny. • Direct access to relevant information, members, officers and meetings, as required (i.e. Key Decisions, agenda forward plans, reports/committee papers, media scanning, briefing notes) at an equal level to ‘Executive’ members. • Appropriate allowance level and travel expenses commensurate with new enhanced duties, which allow members to take enough time of work and council duties to fulfil. <p>Scrutiny will be well resourced and supported by a dedicated professional service of scrutiny support officers able to provide independent overview, scrutiny, research, review, analysis, and advice duties, overseen by the statutory scrutiny officer.</p>
<p>Meetings</p>	<p>An appropriate number of full committee meetings per year supplemented with regular meetings of panels, working groups, workshops, briefings and director / portfolio holder catch ups – as required.</p> <p>Public committee meetings have two purposes/outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Document accountability – challenge and ‘shine a light’ • Manage recommendations – drive and monitor improvement <p>These outcomes will be primarily pursued in two formats:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Inward (member-member interface): members reporting on their inter-meeting overview and scrutiny duties and agreeing formal recommendations and actions with each other 2. Outward (member-witness interface): members questioning relevant witnesses (politicians, experts, public, officers) on overarching strategic themes and challenges to build evidence in order to agree evidence-led recommendations and actions <p>Business-focused sessions (‘Inward’):</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early “AGM-style” agenda to formally confirm governance and work programme (i.e. member roles and working groups) and consider previous year’s annual report. • Mid-year “state of the union” meeting to consider the overall performance situation and the previous, current and next year’s budget and business planning. • Late year “final chance” meeting in before the pre-election period to wrap up the municipal year’s business and decide how to monitor issues during the election/nomination season. • Pre-meeting for Members to ask clarifying questions on reports and receive briefings on live issues. • Standing items: minutes/notes of relevant meetings, work programme, member reports, working group reports, review reports and recommendation tracking. <p>Evidence-focused sessions (‘Outward’):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members, officers, experts, guests, other members invited to be questioned and give evidence. • Focusing on answering themed, strategic, cross-cutting questions e.g. <i>“Is CA activity Leeds-centric?”</i> or <i>“Are residents and members views being taken into account in decision-making?”</i> • Pre-meeting for Members to ask clarifying questions, discuss lines of questioning and establish outcomes. • “Wrap up” to establish conclusions, next steps and emerging recommendations. • Reports include cross cutting background information, data and analysis and aim to support Members’ in-session questions.
<p>Profile</p>	<p>Parity of profile with executive members, in terms of access to organisational resources and impartial advice by officers.</p> <p>Reporting scrutiny activity to other committees, including through attendance by appropriate Scrutiny Members at appropriate meetings (i.e. Scrutiny Chair / Vice Chairs at the main Combined Authority meetings).</p> <p>Consideration of Scrutiny’s work programme and recommendations in the MCA’s planning, decision-making and activity to ensure Scrutiny participates and contributes to key areas of work.</p> <p>Dedicated communications plan to support and promote Scrutiny activity, including consultation, press releases and social media management.</p>

	Maintain its own network of stakeholders including members, the public, experts, and scrutiny partners to support the scrutiny process.
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Combined Authority DRAFT Scrutiny Plan 2024-2028

Summary – Scrutiny Plan 2024-2028			
Phase	Focus	Years	Objectives
1	Agreement (Vision)	2023-24	<p>Review and approve improved scrutiny arrangements.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Scrutiny Protocol, make recommendations and propose a Vision. Convene an IRP to assess allowances according to enhanced duties in new role profiles.
2	Development (Resources)	2024-25	<p>Build new structures, processes, systems, resources, and member roles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement new committee and working group structure. Recruit, induct and train members – and assign and trial new ‘member lead’ roles. Identify big / persistent strategic challenges and establish long-term work programme goals. Conduct reviews through working groups. Determine officer support structure (i.e. recruit officers, include scrutiny work in business planning, regular briefing arrangements). Design and test new systems and processes (i.e. key decisions, report templates, etc). <i>[Report to government on progress in implementing scrutiny protocol, in the event of any L4 deeper devolution deal.]</i>
3	Application (Activity)	2025-26	<p>Build on structures, processes, systems, additional resources, and member training and experience established in Phase 2 to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deepen level of outcomes-based scrutiny activity. Begin higher-profile evidence sessions and reviews. Expand working group and member activity, according to added resource.
4	Evaluation (Impact)	2026-27	<p>Independent/external review and evaluation to determine if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Vision is still sound and fit for purpose. the goals of Phases 1-3 have been achieved. there is a demonstrable impact and outcomes in from Scrutiny work. how the CA has benefited from scrutiny as an organisation.
5	Consolidation (Results)	2027-28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make improvements and adjustments required by the Evaluation. Confirm the Vision has been implemented in full. Outline real impact of Scrutiny since 2024.