

## **Suggested wording for Section 3.8 ("Scrutiny") of the draft Assurance Framework 2019**

To secure independent and external scrutiny of decisions, the Combined Authority's statutory Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviews and scrutinises decision-making by the LEP and by the Combined Authority.

No member of the Combined Authority or the LEP may be appointed to the Committee. The terms of reference, membership, meeting dates, agenda items and minutes of the Committee can be found [here](#).

The Committee may produce independent reports and make recommendations on any matter considered by the LEP or relating to LEP governance. It may also review or scrutinise any Combined Authority decision in its role as accountable body for the LEP.

The LEP may also seek input from the Committee on any issue relating to policy and strategy development, or otherwise.

The Committee operates in accordance with Scrutiny Standing Orders, which can be found [here](#). These provide for the committee to require any member of the Combined Authority (including the LEP Member or a Chair of any committee or Panel) to attend to answer questions or provide information.

Further details on the LEP's agreement with the Combined Authority (in its role as Accountable Body) in respect of scrutiny arrangements are set out in **Appendix 1**.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a specific power, in accordance with its Scrutiny Standing Orders, to "call in" decisions<sup>1</sup> for further scrutiny after they are made. If the threshold of five scrutiny members, with at least two from different local authority areas, is met the Committee may instruct that the implementation of a decision be deferred while post-decision scrutiny takes place and make recommendations to the decision maker.

In anticipation of new statutory scrutiny guidance due to be published by the Government early this year, the Committee is also seeking to review the effectiveness of current scrutiny arrangements with a view to strengthening its role in terms of undertaking pre-decision scrutiny in relation to impending project approvals.

To support pre-decision scrutiny, officers will maintain a forward plan of projects in development and anticipate timescales and decision-point milestones and make this forward plan available to scrutiny members to review periodically on request.

Following the technical appraisal of business cases by case officers and subsequent consideration by the Programme Appraisal Team (PAT), officers will ensure that the relevant documents, information and analysis relating to each project can be made available to scrutiny members on request.

Schemes might be selected for further scrutiny based on a sectoral mix around cost, risk, complexity, aimed benefits or strategic value – as determined by the Committee's priorities and work programme. Scrutiny members could then look closer at a particular project or selection of projects.

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<sup>1</sup> Key decisions include investment decisions at decision point 2 of the Assurance Process.

Officers will support scrutiny members to have the opportunity to review projects, raise any concerns and ensure comments are reported and brought to the attention of decision making committees and officers prior to the approval and progression of projects through decision points.

The pre-decision scrutiny review process serves as an important function in parallel to the Assurance Process, not as an additional step to delay the progress of projects in development as a matter of course.