

Principles of Scrutiny between WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Local Authority Scrutiny

Overview and Scrutiny has a key role in ensuring that the Combined Authority operates in a way which is open and transparent, both from the public's perspective and from the perspective of local authorities and other key stakeholders. To be effective in its operation Combined Authority Scrutiny must work collaboratively with local authority scrutiny arrangements to ensure that the best possible outcomes are achieved for every resident in the area.

1. The basis of scrutiny will be co-operation and partnership with a mutual understanding of the following aims:
 - To improve the visibility of overview and scrutiny regionally;
 - To work together on shared interests and to share intellectual and practical resources and experiences where appropriate.
2. The WMCA and constituent and non-constituent councils will work together to maximise the exchange of information and views, to minimise bureaucracy and make best use of the time of members and officers of other bodies or agencies and will lead by example.
3. The WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee will focus on issues with a regional reach, and will have regard to any reviews or work being undertaken at a more local level.
4. The scrutiny process will be open and transparent.
5. Different approaches to scrutiny reviews and investigations may be taken. When undertaking scrutiny reviews and investigations WMCA Scrutiny will seek to act as inclusively as possible and will take evidence from a wide range of opinions.

Ways of Working

1. Each Local Authority will nominate a lead member and lead officer the WMCA can contact in relation to calls for evidence, this information will be updated following annual council each Municipal Year. In addition, contact will be maintained with the West Midlands Regional Scrutiny Network to ensure a co-ordinated approach to activity.
2. Each Local Authority's representative on the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee will act as that Council's Scrutiny Link. The Authority Scrutiny Link will be responsible for reporting back to their own Council on the scrutiny work carried out by the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee and will also be responsible for reporting back to the WMCA any issues identified locally by their own Council which may warrant scrutiny at a sub-regional level.
3. Nominations to the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the way in which this role will be performed, will be determined by each Council. Local Authorities will hold their representatives on the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee to account to ensure that they are acting in the best interests of the local authority area they represent.

4. Members of the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee will, when considering reviews, determine whether the issue is more appropriately dealt with by one of the Local Authorities, or elsewhere, and will not duplicate the work of existing bodies or agencies.
5. Subject to prior notice being given to them, the Constituent and Non-Constituent Councils will respond positively to requests for information, or for the attendance of a member or officer at any meetings set up under these arrangements.