

## **Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference**

**Members: 7**

**Quorum: 3**

In line with expectations set out in the Fire and Rescue National Framework 2018, Sections 3.12 and 3.13, the Fire Authority has established a Scrutiny Committee to support in achieving its strategic objectives and ensuring that its policy and budgetary framework is followed and developed to reflect the changing needs and demands in meeting its statutory obligations.

**Purpose:**

The overall purpose of the Committee will be to provide oversight and assurance that Chief Fire Officer and Senior Management Team are making appropriate and effective decisions that are aligned with the Fire Authority's Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP), Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and any other areas of Fire Authority Strategy.

The main purpose of the Scrutiny Committee is to:

- Inform Policy Development – provide, where appropriate, a political steer before a decision is taken/implanted.
- Hold Officer and the Service to Account – the Committee may call in decisions for scrutiny before they are implemented and may call upon officers to respond to enquiries.
- Hold the Authority to account – the Committee may call-in decisions for scrutiny before they are implemented, may examine decisions that have already been implemented and may call upon relevant members to respond to enquires.
- Conduct reviews into specific issues – the Committee may identify matters that it wishes to conduct reviews into and call the relevant officers and members to assist it in carrying out those reviews.

In carrying out its role the Scrutiny Committee may look at operational and strategic issues.

**Roles and Functions**

**Membership:**

The Panel will include the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority, Chairs of each Committee and the leaders of each Political Group. The Panel serves in an advisory

capacity without decision making powers, thus rendering the requirement for political balance not applicable.

**Chair:**

The meeting shall be-chaired by the Vice-Chair of the Fire Authority. The ACFO Service Delivery will provide technical assistance to the Chair.

**Meetings:**

The scheduling of Committee meetings shall be contingent on the Fire Authority's published meeting schedule. Scrutiny Committee meetings will be held at least one calendar month in advance of scheduled Fire Authority.

The Committee sessions will be public, unless the topic being discussed is considered exempt.

**Terms of Reference:**

Fire Authority members will be required to submit topic requests for consideration at least 14 days before the scheduled Fire Authority meeting date via their Group Leaders.

These include:

- Service Delivery
- Corporate Services
- Service Communications
- Fire and Rescue Authority/Service Risk

Areas for Scrutiny will identify;

- Accountable person
- Rationale of Scrutiny
- Aim and objectives
- Terms of reference
- Timeline outlining milestones
- Regular updates

A Scrutiny review will not exceed a 12-month period.

**Powers:**

The Panel will have no decision-making powers.

The Fire Authority's committees will retain the decision-making powers to shape and/or to direct the strategy of the organisation.

**Accountability/ Reporting:**

A summary from the Scrutiny Committee will be provided to the Fire Authority at each scheduled meeting for awareness and progress.