

HIGH PEAK BOROUGH COUNCIL

Council

15 October 2019

TITLE:	Review of Overview and Scrutiny Governance Arrangements
EXECUTIVE COUNCILLOR:	Councillor Anthony McKeown- Council Leader
CONTACT OFFICER:	Linden Vernon – Senior Officer (Governance and Member Support)
WARDS INVOLVED:	Non-Specific

Appendix A – Current Select Committee Structure

1. Reason for the Report

- 1.1 This report proposes that the Council reviews its select committee structure following revised guidance issued by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Council:
- Appoints a politically balanced sub-committee (comprising 6 councillors for which substitutes will be permitted), chaired by the Leader of the Council, to conduct a review of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function performed by its select committees.
 - That any revised arrangements be proposed to Council and implemented following Annual Council on 14 May 2020.

3. Executive Summary

- 3.1 The overview and scrutiny function was introduced by the Local Government Act 2000 to act as a counterweight to new executive arrangements. In May 2019 the MHCLG issued revised statutory guidance for overview and scrutiny which authorities should have regard to when exercising their functions.

3.2 The Council's present governance structure for the overview and scrutiny function was last considered by Council on 11 May 2017. It is therefore considered appropriate to conduct a review of the Council's current arrangements.

4. **How this report links to Corporate Priorities**

4.1 The successful delivery of all corporate priorities is dependent upon the effective scrutiny and development of Council policies and services.

5. **Alternative Options**

5.1 That Council undertakes a review of its select committee structure following the publication of the MHCLG Statutory Guidance (recommended).

5.2 That Council does not undertake a review of its select committee structure following the publication of the MHCLG Statutory Guidance (not recommended).

Mark Trillo

Executive Director (People) and Monitoring Officer

Web Links and Background Papers

- [MHCLG Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities](#)
- [CfPS – The Good Scrutiny Guide](#)

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6. **Detail**

6.1 The overview and scrutiny function was introduced by the Local Government Act 2000 as part of new governance arrangements to act as a counterweight to new executive arrangements. Following the 2017 inquiry "Effectiveness of local authority overview and scrutiny committees", conducted by the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Committee, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) issued in May 2019 revised statutory guidance for overview and scrutiny which authorities should have regard to when exercising their functions. This recognises that the way in which local government services are delivered has changed considerably since the function was first established. This guidance was also complimented in June 2019 by 'The Good Scrutiny Guide' published by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS).

6.2 The Guidance states that current legislation recognises that authorities are best placed to determine which arrangements best suit their own individual needs and provides for a great degree of flexibility to decide which

arrangements to adopt. The Council's present governance structure for the overview and scrutiny function was last considered by Council on 11 May 2017. It is therefore considered appropriate to conduct a review to ensure that the Council continues to make the best use of its resources, taking into account the revised MHCLG guidance and the changing environment in which the Council operates. The present terms of reference for each of the Council's three select committees are provided in Appendix A of this report.

- 6.3 It is therefore recommended that the Council appoints a politically balanced sub-committee (comprising 6 councillors for which substitutes will be permitted) to conduct the review with view to any revised arrangements being proposed to Council and implemented following Annual Council on 14 May 2020.
- 6.4 The sub-committee will be chaired by the Leader of the Council and will also seek to investigate ways that the scrutiny process can better involve and engage local residents as part of the policy development and decision-making process.
- 6.5 The review should also consider options around how scrutiny considers ward issues, and how members on outside bodies can better feed-in information from those bodies, enabling the Council to better support the role of ward members and our representatives on outside bodies.