

# Agenda



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Contact: Candida Basilio, Democratic Services Officer

Telephone 07895 213820

Email: [candida.basilio@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:candida.basilio@southandvale.gov.uk)

Date: 6 January 2025

[www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk)

[www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

## A meeting of the **Joint Scrutiny Committee**

will be held on Monday, 13 January 2025 at 6.30 pm  
Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon OX14 3JE

This meeting can be watched live on our YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@SouthandValeCommitteeMeetings/streams>

### **Members of the Committee:**

#### **Councillors**

##### **South**

Stefan Gawrysiak (co chair)

Alexandrine Kantor

Jo Robb

Leigh Rawlins

Ed Sadler

##### **Vale**

Katherine Foxhall (co chair)

Andy Cooke

Ron Batstone

Judy Roberts

Peter Stevens

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Nick Bennett,  
Head of Legal and Democratic

# Agenda

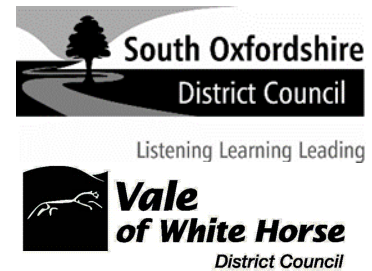
**Open to the Public including the Press**

## **8. Scrutiny Review Actions**

(Pages 3 - 5)

Joint Scrutiny Committee will review a paper on the Scrutiny Review.

# Joint Scrutiny Committee report



Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer)

Author: Nick Bennett

Telephone: 07598 546191

E-mail: Nick.Bennett@southandvale.gov.uk

Cabinet members responsible:

SODC: Councillor David Rouane

E-mail: david.rouane@southoxon.gov.uk

VOWHDC: Councillor Lucy Edwards

E-mail: lucy.edwards@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

To: Joint Scrutiny Committee

DATE: 13 January 2025

## Scrutiny Task and Finish Group

### Recommendation(s)

- (a) That the Joint Scrutiny Committee establishes a task and finish group and nominates two members of the committee to take part.
- (b) That the Joint Scrutiny Committee establishes a task and finish group to consider and make recommendations to both authorities based upon the previous work and report from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny in 2024.
- (c) That the terms of reference for the task and finish shall be -
  - Purpose – to make recommendations in respect of scrutiny based upon the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny report.
  - Chair and membership shall be as agreed by the Joint Scrutiny Committee but shall include two members nominated from each individual scrutiny committee for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.
  - Meeting schedule shall be as agreed by the Chair of the task and finish group.

Implications (further detail within the report)	Financial	Legal	Climate and Ecological	Equality and diversity
	No	No	No	No
Signing off officer				

## Purpose of Report

1. The Joint Scrutiny Committee (JSC) and separate individual council Scrutiny Committees for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils (OSC's) aim to play a vital role in the Councils' decision-making and policy development processes. The committees strive to ensure that public accountability is exercised at every level and that key decisions relating to place, communities, resources and finance are thoroughly reviewed.
2. In April 2024 a piece of work was completed by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) which provided a detailed analysis of the scrutiny function for both councils, with the intention of offering suggestions to members on how to develop scrutiny processes.
3. The CfGS report set out many factors which its authors advised should be reviewed by members. To ensure broad consideration of those issues, members from each of the OSC's and the JSC would form part of that Task and Finish Group.

## Strategic Objectives

4. The aim of the scrutiny committees is to secure continuous positive improvement in the way the Councils' functions are exercised, taking economy, efficiency and effectiveness all into account. However, it has been recognised by the councils that overview and scrutiny at both councils needs to be more efficient and effective to reflect the important role that it can and should play in the democratic system. The potential for the devolution bill may impact the scope of the review and members of the task and finish group will be asked to consider which that wider context in making their recommendations.

## Background

5. The CfGS report sets out some key recommendations and conclusions which it considers can improve how the JSC and OSC's can be more effective. These can be seen in detail through the recommendations listed in the CfGS report and the key features identified during the review and report at section 5.26 of the CfGS report. A JSC task and finish group will take those recommendations forward to generate the continuous positive improvement sought by the three scrutiny committees.
6. To ensure the task and finish group considers matters from the perspective of this authority as well as a joint perspective, the Monitoring Officer recommends that this committee nominates two members to the Joint Scrutiny Committee task and finish group.

## Financial Implications

7. No immediate financial implications from this nomination.

## Legal Implications

8. This report and its recommendation is intended to support the duties of proper governance imposed upon the Council by statute but also through the Council's own constitution.

## Climate and ecological impact implications

9. None

## Equalities implications

10. This report is for information only and therefore there are no equalities implications.

## Risks

11. None.

## Other Implications

12. The impact and timing of the Devolution bill may impact the task and finish group and its recommendations.

## Conclusion

13. None.

## Background Papers

CfGS report: Appendix 1



South and Vale  
Report Letter 1.0.pdf