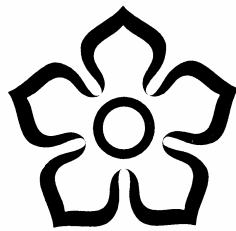

Leicester City Council Scrutiny Review

Scoping Document for completion by Members

Draft for consideration by Overview Select Committee



Leicester
City Council

Background to scrutiny reviews

Getting the right topics for scrutiny reviews is the first step in making sure scrutiny provides benefits to the Council and the community.

The scoping template has been designed to assist in thinking through the purpose of a review. This scoping document needs to be completed by the member proposing the review.

In order to be effective, every scrutiny review must be properly project managed. This is to make sure that the review achieves its aims and has measurable outcomes. One of the most important ways to make sure that a review goes well is to ensure that it is well defined at the outset. This way the review is less likely to get sidetracked or be overambitious in what it hopes to tackle. The task group's objectives should, therefore, be as SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic & Time-bound) as possible.

This template includes a section for the Department to complete to allow OSC to consider any additional factors that may influence the proposed review.

Scrutiny reviews will be facilitated by a Members Support Officer.

Evaluation

Reviewing changes that have been made as a result of a scrutiny review is the most common way of assessing effectiveness. This will, in part, be done through the Scrutiny Annual Report which is produced yearly and which will include departmental feedback on which, if any, recommendations from task group reports have been taken forward as well as providing an explanation where they have not been implemented. However, any scrutiny review should consider whether an on-going monitoring role for the task group is appropriate to the topic under review.

For further information please contact the Members Support Team on (0116) 229 8824

1. Title of Proposed Scrutiny Review

English for speakers of foreign languages (ESOL) funding within Leicester

Proposed by - Councillor Ross Willmott: Chair of Overview Select Committee

2. Rationale

Changes to the funding of ESOL programmes – at City Council, Government and European level – have been introduced in the last two years.

Changes have also taken place to the way in which funding can be accessed.

The service has an important profile in a city where there are many incoming and existing communities where language can be a social barrier and an economic barrier to education and employment.

Currently the City Council is not reducing its ESOL offer despite national changes to fee remission eligibility planned for September. The issue is whether 3,000 current ESOL learners (with us or Leicester College) who will no longer be eligible for national fee remission will be able to afford to pay the fees of approx £450 per year.

Clarify existing programmes
Access to ESOL programme
Make recommendations based on current programmes and policies
Comment on programme funding

4. Outcome

The relevant Overview Scrutiny Commission shall:

Gain a clear understanding of the current position on ESOL

Shall propose options for continued future ESOL provision within the city.

Produce a short report

5. Methodology/Approach

Review of current legislation

Discussions with relevant Assistant Mayor and Officers and with other providers of ESOL programmes

How the issue is being handled in other parts of the country - and what might learnt from this.

6. Time Management

This should be considered by a Scrutiny Commission during August because of the September start date for the next year's ESOL course programme.

7. Resource Requirements

Member Support Officers will provide necessary support within existing resources

8. Risks

Limited time available to make impact on the provision for September course programmes.

9. Publicity

Publicity will be through media release email and direct contact with interested groups and individuals

10. Further Supporting Evidence

You may feel you would like to add further information to support your case for an inquiry. Please feel free to do so in the space below.

Support documentation includes a review of the legislation in the form of an attached Parliamentary briefing setting out some of the national framework.

11. Departmental Comments

Scrutiny's role is to influence others to take action. It is, therefore, important for OSC to understand the department's view of the proposed review. Please ensure that the following box is filled in by a relevant officer in the department.

we need to recognise that this is a crisis arising from a national change that our local MPs have contested and lobbied against. Since this will impact on services and budgets in September we need to find solutions at city level to minimise the risks of loss of service to potentially 3,000 people in Leicester and not create other budget pressures within the City Council.

Therefore during July, through the leadership of the Assistant Mayor, we have been exploring potential solutions with members and with Leicester College, who are the other main ESOL provider in the city. I welcome the chance to further this debate at the Overview Select Committee.

Departmental Comments Completed by ___ Chris Minter ___

Job Title ___ Head of Adult Skills and Learning ___

DRAFT