

Pre-Decision Scrutiny Protocol

2nd December 2025

Report of Overview and Scrutiny Committee

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To request Cabinet to consider the recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to adopt a Pre-Decision Scrutiny Protocol.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

- (1) That Cabinet adopt a Pre-Decision Scrutiny Protocol.

1.0 Introduction

At its meeting on 22nd October 2025, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered a draft Pre-Decision Scrutiny Protocol which was presented by the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Corporate Services. Further details can be found in the report of the Senior Manager Democratic Support and Elections, attached at Appendix A.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 The Committee has been considering a Pre-Decision Scrutiny Protocol for quite some time. At its meeting, held on 6 September 2023, the Committee was provided with a report and a copy of the Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities, previously reported to the Committee on 14 June 2023. The outcome of discussions with the relevant Cabinet Member has resulted in the draft Protocol attached at Appendix B.

- 2.2 Unfortunately due to ill health there has been a delay in progressing this matter

Options and Options Analysis (including risk assessment)

	Option 1: To adopt the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Protocol	Option 2: Not to adopt the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Protocol
Advantages	To enable effective scrutiny to be undertaken to improve the Scrutiny function as highlighted in the Peer Review and the Statutory Guidance for Overview and Scrutiny.	No benefits. This would not follow the Statutory Guidance on Scrutiny.
Disadvantages		

	There are no disadvantages.	To hamper effective scrutiny with no definitive framework for scrutiny to work within.
Risks	None	None

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee's preferred option is Option 1 – to adopt the Pre-decision Scrutiny Protocol.

3.0 Conclusion

Cabinet is requested to adopt the Pre-Decision Scrutiny Protocol at Appendix B

RELATIONSHIP TO POLICY FRAMEWORK As shown on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee report attached.	
CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability etc) As shown on the Overview and Scrutiny report attached.	
FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS As shown on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee report attached.	
SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS As shown on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee report attached.	
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS As shown on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee report attached.	
MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS As shown on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee report attached.	
BACKGROUND PAPERS DLUHC Overview and Scrutiny: statutory guidance for councils, combined authorities and combined county authorities – 22.04.24. To view please click here	Contact Officer: Jenny Kay – Civic and Ceremonial Democratic Support Officer. Telephone: 01524 582065 E-mail: jkay@lancaster.gov.uk