

JOINT EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARD

9 JULY 2020

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SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION

ITEM 5 – EXECUTIVE ADVISORY BOARDS: REVIEW OF STRUCTURE AND REMIT

The response to question 4 of the questionnaire (Interface with Overview and Scrutiny), as set out in section 4(a) of Appendix 3 (see page 37 of the agenda), indicates a desire for a clearer demarcation between the roles of O&S and EABs. In that regard, it is worth pointing out the distinction between O&S as a statutory function, with the wide power to look at ‘matters which affect the authority’s area or the inhabitants of that area’, and require officers and Executive councillors to attend and answer questions and provide information, and the EABs as non-statutory advisory committees to the Executive.

In the response, councillors correctly identified that ‘the main purpose of O&S was to undertake post-decision overview and scrutiny in order to hold the Executive to account’ and inferred that policy review/development is for EABs. However, the statutory role of O&S is wider than holding the Executive to account as its terms of reference in the Constitution (see pages 29-32 of the agenda) and legislation shows. In addition, the work of the in-depth task and finish groups which O&S undertakes are more about policy development than holding the Executive to account (although the two are often interwoven).

It is also worth pointing out that, at the time the current O&S Committee and the EABs were established following the review of governance arrangements in 2015, the Council agreed that O&S should be responsible primarily for post decision review of Executive decisions and wider external scrutiny, including the commissioning of task and finish groups. It was acknowledged that EABs, with their policy development role, would be performing a de facto O&S role even though that role remained statutorily and constitutionally with the O&S Committee.

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