

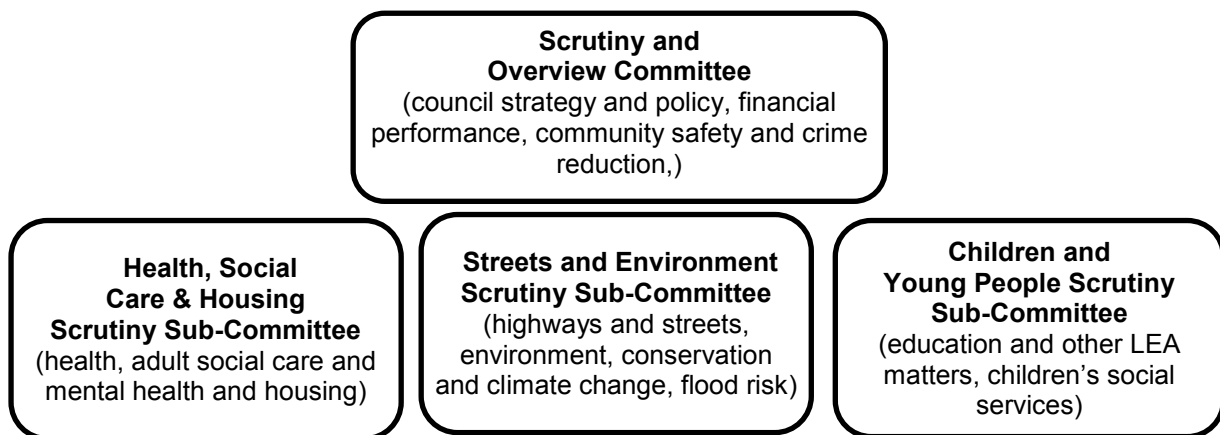
GUIDANCE FOR SCRUTINY CONTRIBUTORS

What is scrutiny?

Scrutiny is about increasing accountability, improving performance and engaging local people in the organisations whose decisions and actions shape their communities.

How does scrutiny work in Croydon work?

Croydon has a strategic overview committee and three sub-committees that carry out scrutiny work:



These committees have regular meetings and sometimes also work in more informal ways - such as through workshops, site visits, evidence sessions, literature reviews, surveys and Local Action Mini Reviews. They may use this evidence to make recommendations to the Council's Cabinet or other external bodies about how services could be improved or developed.

What is my role as a contributor?

You will have been asked to be a contributor to the scrutiny process because the committee feels that you have valuable opinions and/ or expertise that will help them gain a better understanding of an issue they are looking at. Councillors are members of the community and need to hear contributions from a wide range of people with a connection to the topic being scrutinised if they are to come to a well-considered conclusion.

How should I prepare for the meeting?

To help you prepare, we will confirm the date, time and location of the meeting and will send you a link to the website where you can find a copy of the agenda and any relevant papers. If you don't have access to the website, please let us know and we will send these to you prior to the meeting.

We will provide guidance on the topics that will be covered in the meeting. You may also be requested to provide specific written information (for example statistics or financial information) in advance of the meeting.

Remember that the councillors may not be experts in your area and you should try to avoid jargon. Attending a scrutiny meeting offers a good opportunity to provide councillors with information about your particular topic face-to-face.

Where are the meetings held?

Most of the Council's scrutiny meetings are held in the Council Chamber in the Town Hall (see map attached). You should check in at the main reception area on your arrival and you will then be guided to the meeting room.

Please let us know if you have any particular requirements or access need. If you would like to bring another person with you to the meeting it is helpful if you notify us beforehand.

What happens when I arrive to attend the meeting?

When you arrive at the meeting room you will normally be met by one of the scrutiny team members. He or she will explain what happens at the meeting and check any final arrangements with you.

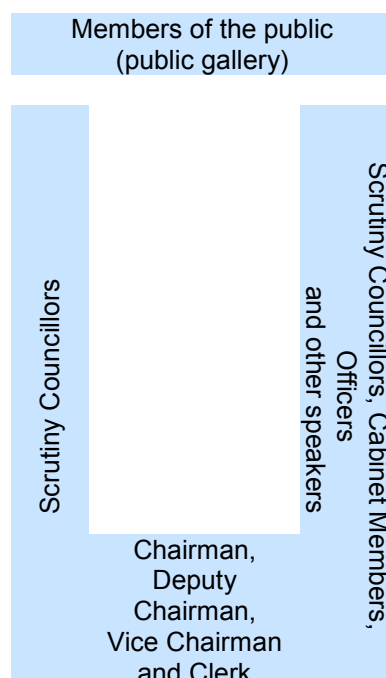
Who will be at the meeting?

In addition to the Committee members, you can expect some other people to be present, including:

- Officers from the Council or local partner agencies who have been asked to provide a report and answer questions
- The Cabinet Member(s) with oversight of relevant service(s)
- Other contributors who have a specialist knowledge and who usually come from local organisations
- Members of the public, who have an interest in the topics being discussed
- The local press
- Officers from the Scrutiny Team who support Scrutiny Members and clerk the meeting

Where does everyone sit?

A typical room layout for a scrutiny committee meeting is:



We will provide nameplates for all members of the committee, officers of the council and anyone else we have invited to provide information to the committee.

How should I address people at the meeting?

Although the Chairman will try to make everyone feel comfortable, it is a formal meeting of the Council and even if you know other people there, you should use a formal form of address. Members of the committee should be addressed as “Councillor (*surname*)”.

What happens when I present my information?

You will normally be asked to make your presentation or, if you have provided information in a written form to the Committee, to introduce and expand on that report. We will let you know in advance how long your presentation or introduction should last.

Members of the Committee may ask you questions. These will be orderly and respectful. If you are unable to provide the answers to some of these questions, members may ask you to send in further information after the meeting. You are welcome to attend for the entire meeting or you can leave as soon as you have given your presentation and answered any questions.

If you plan to refer to a specific page in a report or appendix contained in the Agenda Pack, please use the PACK page number on the bottom right hand of the page, rather than the report page number as this helps ensure that everyone can find the correct page quickly.

Can I provide my information in private?

Scrutiny Committee meetings are normally held in public. However, the Committee may agree to question you in private if you specifically request to do so because, for example, you may reveal exempt, confidential or commercially sensitive information during the discussion. If this is the case, the minutes from that part of the meeting will also be kept confidential.

What happens after the meeting?

The minutes of the meeting will include a summary of the main points raised and provide details of any resolutions the committee makes. They will be published on the council website a week before the following meeting.

Contacts and further information

For further information please visit our website www.croydon.gov.uk or you can contact the scrutiny team at:

E-mail: scrutiny@croydon.gov.uk

Telephone: 020 8726 6000 x 62226/ 62317/ 62683

Post: Democratic & Legal Services, London Borough of Croydon, Floor 4 Zone G
The Annex, Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk Croydon CR0 1EA

How to get to Croydon Town Hall

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Katherine Street
Croydon
Surrey
CR0 1NX

