

Rules of Procedure

1. Meetings

The Transforming Suffolk Joint Scrutiny Panel (referred to as the Panel in this document) shall meet at least six times a year and on such other occasions as shall be agreed by the Panel. For these purposes 'a year' commences on 1 May and expires on 31 April.

2. Agenda

2.1 The order of the agenda will be agreed by the Chairman.

2.2 Each agenda should be structured to make sure sufficient time is available to give detailed consideration to each item.

2.3 Any member of the Panel can notify Suffolk County Council's Monitoring Officer of a relevant item that he wishes to be included on the agenda. At its next meeting the Panel will consider whether or not to include the item in its forward work plan.

3. Quorum

3.1 The quorum of a meeting of the Panel will be four and must include two representatives from local authorities and two Independent Community Members.

3.2 If during a meeting of the Panel the Chairman counts the numbers of members present and declares that there is not a quorum present, then the meeting will adjourn.

4. Signing the minutes

4.1 The Chairman will sign the minutes of the proceedings of a meeting at the next suitable meeting.

4.2 The Chairman will move that the minutes of the meeting be signed as a correct record.

4.3 The only part of the minutes that can be discussed is their accuracy.

5. Motions and Amendments

- 5.1 Any two or more members of the Panel may, by notice given to Suffolk County Council's Monitoring Officer no later than 10.00 am eight working days before a Panel meeting, require the Panel to consider a motion about a matter within the Panel's terms of reference.
- 5.2 An amendment to a recommendation or motion on the agenda for the Panel may be given by any two Panel members by no later than 10.00 am two working days before the date of the meeting, but amendments arising from a debate at the meeting will always be considered.

6. Voting

- 6.1 Any matter will be decided by a simple majority of those Panel members present in the room and voting at the time the question was put.
- 6.2 If there are equal numbers of votes for and against, the Chairman will have a second or casting vote.
- 6.3 The Chairman has the discretion to conduct a vote either by a show of hands or, if there is no dissent, by affirmation of the meeting.

7. Election of Chairman

- 7.1 The Panel shall elect a Chairman and a Vice Chairman at its first meeting.
- 7.2 The Chairman and Vice Chairman shall hold office for twelve months unless they resign by giving notice in writing to Suffolk County Council's Monitoring Officer or cease to be a member of the Panel.

8. Openness

- 8.1 All meetings shall be in public, unless the business requires confidentiality, and shall take place at a venue accessible to the public.
- 8.2 All meetings shall take place at venues which are fully accessible to all.
- 8.3 The Panel shall ensure that active consideration is given to the use of alternative formats for all its communications so that information is fully accessible to all.

9. Appointments and Substitutes

- 9.1 In the first instance the initial members of the Panel shall hold office for not less than two years and not more than four years with an option, to be exercised by the Monitoring Officer after consultation with the Panel, for a further two years of tenure, to ensure that knowledge, expertise and learning is retained within the Panel.
- 9.2 Suffolk Local Government Association shall appoint and remove representatives of local authorities at its first meeting following the local authority elections. Independent Community Members shall be appointed by the Appointments Panel (Protocol, paragraph 4) in accordance with the criteria set out in Appendix 1. Removal of Independent Community Members shall be at the discretion of the Appointments Panel.
- 9.3 Permanent replacement of any local authority representative shall be arranged by the local authority they represent. Any such replacement must be advised to Suffolk Local Government Association and must preserve the political balance referred to in Appendix 1, at point (a) in the section headed membership.
- 9.4 In the event of any Panel member being unable to attend a meeting, there will be no substitutions made.
- 9.5 Similarly if a casual vacancy occurs it will not be filled unless a nominated member can satisfy the Monitoring Officer that he has received sufficient training.

10. Venue and Time

- 10.1 Meetings will be held in appropriate locations for the business, as decided by the Panel.
- 10.2 Meetings will start at a time to be agreed by the Panel.

11. Interpretation of Rules of Procedure/Terms of Reference

Suffolk County Council's Monitoring Officer is responsible for making a determination over matters of interpretation of the rules of procedure and the Panel's terms of reference.