

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Terms of Reference 17 March 2011

Report of the Chief Executive

PURPOSE OF REPORT

This is a further report requested by the Committee to provide details of revised draft terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

This report is public.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the Committee recommends to Council that the terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be revised as detailed in Appendix B from next Municipal year (2011/12) to incorporate the necessary scrutiny work previously undertaken by the Budget and Performance Panel and provide a mechanism for engaging with Members of the County Council on locality working.**
- (2) That the Committee recommends to Council that the Budget and Performance Panel be stood down at the end of this municipal year (2010/11).**

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Members will recall that a report was considered at the Committee meeting on 13 January 2011 regarding the future of the Council's two Overview and Scrutiny bodies, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Budget and Performance Panel. In summary, the report proposed changes to the terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to provide a mechanism for engaging with County Council Members on locality working and to incorporate the necessary scrutiny work currently undertaken by the Budget and Performance Panel, allowing that Panel to be stood down. The original report is appended in full for ease of reference at Appendix A.
- 1.2 Members expressed concern over the workload that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be presented with, and the lengthy meetings that might ensue, and the need to review the size of the Committee, and asked that a further report be presented to this meeting, containing more detail of the proposed changes to the terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This report has been produced in line with that request and the

proposed terms of reference are detailed at Appendix B. Amendments have been tracked and will show up in red onscreen.

- 1.3 The size of the newly constituted Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be a matter for Council, and it would be open to this Committee to make recommendations on size. There is no reason why the size of the Committee should not be increased to enable an appropriate number of members to be involved in the scrutiny process. However, Members may wish to consider the effect that significantly increasing the size might have on the length of debate and overall length of meetings.
- 1.4 The Budget and Performance Panel has met on six occasions to date during the current municipal year. Whilst in no way underestimating the value of the work of the Panel, officers are of the view that, if it were merged with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it would be possible to streamline the workloads without the need to add an equivalent number of meetings or to replicate the time spent on the Panel's business.

2.0 Proposal Details

- 2.1 The proposal, options, options analysis and conclusion remain as detailed in the original report.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

It is a requirement of Part 2, Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 that every Council operating Executive arrangements should have at least one Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee. Beyond that, the particular arrangements for the Overview and Scrutiny function are left to the individual Council.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

A Special Responsibility Allowance (currently £3,315) is available for chairing the Budget and Performance Panel. When the Independent Remuneration Panel met in January, it was aware of the proposal to merge the Panel with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and recommended that, in that event, the Vice-Chair of the reconstituted committee should receive a special responsibility allowance equivalent to that of the current Chair of Budget and performance Panel. There may be a small saving on refreshments and rooms, etc, from reducing the overall number of meetings if the Panel were to be stood down,. However it may be that any savings would be off set by the need for longer, or more frequent, Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings.

OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**Human Resources:**

None.

Information Services:

None.

Property:

None.

Open Spaces:

None.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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