

PRINCIPAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

5 December 2005

CABINET

14 December 2005

GOOD SCRUTINY GUIDE

REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

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RECENT REFERENCES:

PS169 - Review of Council Procedures for Overview and Scrutiny – 29 March 2005

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The production of a Good Scrutiny Guide was recommended following the review of Council procedures for overview and scrutiny. It seeks to provide guidance to Members, officers and members of the public on how overview and scrutiny is run at Winchester City Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That Principal Scrutiny Committee approve the Good Scrutiny Guide subject to any comments from Cabinet.
- 2 That Cabinet endorse the Good Scrutiny Guide as framework and guidance for the work of Principal Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Panels.

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## GOOD SCRUTINY GUIDE

### Report of Chief Executive

#### DETAIL:

##### 1 Background

- 1.1 The review of council procedures for overview and scrutiny, which reported to Principal Scrutiny Committee in March 2005, set out a number of recommendations. These included the production of a good practice guide for use by those carrying out scrutiny or policy development reviews.
- 1.2 It was also agreed that work would be undertaken to increase member and public involvement in identifying topics for scrutiny review and to develop a clear process for assessing which of these topics to take forward.
- 1.3 The Good Scrutiny Guide, attached as appendix 1, sets out the overview and scrutiny process for Winchester City Council. This includes new guidance for undertaking scrutiny reviews, a system for identifying topics for scrutiny review and criteria for selecting scrutiny review topics for Member endorsement.
- 1.4 Principal Scrutiny Committee, the Scrutiny Panels, Cabinet, senior managers and Committee Administration have been given the opportunity to comment on the draft Guide.
- 1.5 Members are asked to approve and endorse the Guide, in particular section three which contains new guidance and procedures on how scrutiny reviews and identified, selected and undertaken.

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

##### 2 CORPORATE STRATEGY (RELEVANCE TO):

- 2.1 The Corporate Strategy states that it will *“continue to demonstrate high standards in managing the taxpayers’ money - being open to scrutiny, providing services that are efficient and at reasonable cost, avoiding profligacy, maintaining sensible levels of reserves and planning ahead.”* The Good Scrutiny Guide sets out procedures to help undertake this work.

### 3 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 3.1 There are no specific financial implications associated with implementing this Guide. Staff time already dedicated to supporting overview and scrutiny will be required from the Chief Executive's Department and Committee Administration to ensure the effective use of the Guide.

### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

### APPENDICES:

Appendix 1 – Good Scrutiny Guide