

CABINET

23 October 2013

FINAL REPORT OF THE FINDINGS OF THE INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP ON  
STATUTORY SERVICES - RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CABINET

REPORT OF CHAIR OF THE ISG, COUNCILLOR ROBERT SANDERS

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RECENT REFERENCES:

[OS83](#) - Review of Statutory Services Informal Scrutiny Group – Recommendations,  
23 September 2013

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

At its meeting held on 23 September 2013, The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the recommendations of the Statutory Services ISG (Report OS83 refers). The Committee agreed to refer the recommendations to Cabinet for implementation and these are as set out below.

Report OS83 is attached as Appendix 2 to this report and Cabinet should refer to its content as background to its consideration of the recommendations of the Group.

Cabinet should also refer to the relevant extract of the minutes of the meeting of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 September 2013 which is set out in Appendix 1 and supports the recommendations of the ISG.

RECOMMENDATION:

That Cabinet consider the recommendations of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and decide which of the following actions should be implemented:

1. That Cabinet together with the Leaders of other parties on the Council:

- i) consider potential changes to the electoral cycle to move to all-out elections every four years, having regard to a potential average annual saving of £45,000 per annum, and the appropriate timing for possible implementation
  - ii) consider a significant reduction in the number of Members of Winchester City Council from 57 to say, 40, having regard to the likely savings of associated base costs of approximately £100,000 per annum plus potential for further cost savings accrued from across the organisation.
2. That having regard to the high gross costs to the Council from providing a Pest Control Service, Cabinet consider the appropriateness, or otherwise, of each the following:
- (i) increase the level of charges to further offset the costs to the Council from providing the service.
  - (ii) reduce the number of staff responsible for delivering the service.
  - (iii) undertake a service review to look at options to reduce costs further.
3. That in light of the recent legislative changes, with regard to Public Health, Cabinet be asked to review the Council's position with regard to supporting the County Council in delivering its new responsibilities.

#### OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

1. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CHANGE PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

The subject of the ISG is directly relevant to delivery of the priority outcomes of the Sustainable Community Strategy as well as supporting our aim to be an Efficient and Effective Council.

2. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The additional resource implications of the ISG recommendations were considered by The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (report OS83 refers) as follows:

If the recommendations are pursued this will require significant officer time. This would be particularly the case for an electoral review (the cost of which could be in the order of £25,000) and a detailed assessment will be made if Members wish to pursue the options further. An outline of the potential savings is included in Appendix 1 of OS83.

3. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

3.1 There are no significant risk management issues associated with this report.

#### 4. EQUALITIES

- 4.1 An assessment will need to be made if the recommendations for further investigation go to the next stage.

#### BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None.

#### APPENDICES:

**Appendix 1** - Relevant extract of the minutes of the meeting of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 September 2013

**Appendix 2** - *is attached for Cabinet Members and Group Leaders only, with a copy available on-line via the following links:*

[OS83](#) - Review of Statutory Services Informal Scrutiny Group – Recommendations, 23 September 2013

[OS83 – Appendix A](#)

[OS83 – Appendix B](#)

[OS83 – Appendix C](#)

**Extract of the minutes of the meeting of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23 September 2013**

**1. REVIEW OF STATUTORY SERVICES INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP – RECOMMENDATIONS**

(Report OS83 refers)

As Chairman of the Informal Scrutiny Group (ISG), Councillor Sanders introduced the Report. He suggested that there might be additional savings to the Council from reducing the number of Members because of a corresponding reduction in the level of some work generated for officers.

During discussion, although the Committee was broadly supportive of the proposals to reduce the numbers of Members of the Council, reference was made to increasing populations in some areas due to new housing developments. There might also be a disparity in the amount of case work for Ward Councillors between some Wards.

With regard to moving to all-out elections every four years, Councillor Wood suggested that this would be likely to assist with continuity of projects, as more frequent elections were often disruptive.

The Chief Executive reminded the Committee that subsequent to the ISG's investigations, the Local Government Boundary Commission had contacted the Council and would soon be reviewing ward boundaries. Therefore, the proposals within Recommendation 1 would need to be considered as part of the Council's response to this work.

**RESOLVED:**

That the following recommendations of the ISG be recommended to Cabinet:

1. That Cabinet together with the Leaders of other parties on the Council:
  - i) consider potential changes to the electoral cycle to move to all-out elections every four years, having regard to a potential average annual saving of £45,000 per annum, and the appropriate timing for possible implementation
  - ii) consider a significant reduction in the number of Members of Winchester City Council from 57 to say, 40, having regard to the likely savings of associated base costs of approximately £100,000 per annum plus potential for further cost savings accrued from across the organisation.
2. That having regard to the high gross costs to the Council from providing a Pest Control Service, Cabinet consider the appropriateness, or otherwise, of each the following:

(i) increase the level of charges to further offset the costs to the Council from providing the service.

(ii) reduce the number of staff responsible for delivering the service.

(iii) undertake a service review to look at options to reduce costs further.

3. That in light of the recent legislative changes, with regard to Public Health, Cabinet be asked to review the Council's position with regard to supporting the County Council in delivering its new responsibilities.