

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

20 June 2011

APPOINTMENTS TO BATCH 1 AND 2 INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUPS 2011/12

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY

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RECENT REFERENCES:

OS2 – Appointments to Informal Scrutiny Groups and External Bodies 2011/12

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This Report asks Members to agree the Informal Scrutiny Groups which will form batch 2 for consideration in 2011/12 as batch 1 ISGs draw to a conclusion.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That the Committee agree that the following ISGs are included in batch 2:
 - a) Delivery of support for a strong and vibrant community and voluntary sector coupled with arrangements for the Council's commissioning approach to service delivery.
 - b) Planning Management performance.
 - c) Local and National Performance Indicators and their value to the Council.
 - d) Planning Policy and Exception Sites.
 - e) Treasury Management/Financing of the HRA (subject to consideration of any comments from Cabinet at its meeting on 15 June 2011).
 - f) Public access to data and information via the WCC web site.
2. That the Committee appoint chairs to the batch 2 ISGs from the pool of Scrutiny Leads and considers other appointments.
3. That the Committee agree membership of batch 1 Informal Scrutiny Groups as set out in 3.1.

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1 June 2011

APPOINTMENTS TO INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUPS AND EXTERNAL BODIES 20010/11

Report of Head of Policy and the Head of Democratic Services

DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 At their meeting on the 1 June, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed the first batch of Informal Scrutiny Groups which would be undertaken in 2011/12.
- 1.2 Members asked that the Chair of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Leads recommend the second batch of ISGs for this meeting of the Committee for Members' approval.
- 1.3 It is suggested that once an ISG from batch 1 is drawing to a conclusion, the chair of that group can commence work on the ISG from batch 2 of which they are chair. There is not a need for all ISGs in batch 1 to be completed before the second batch can be started.

2 Proposed ISGs for batch 2

- 2.1 The following ISGs for batch 2 are proposed by the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Leads:
 - a) Delivery of support for a strong and vibrant community and voluntary sector coupled with arrangements for the Council's commissioning approach to service delivery.

It is suggested that this ISG look at:

- The Council's progress so far in becoming a commissioning organisation
- How the commissioning process is working
- What synergy there is with the City Council's grants programmes as one form of commissioning
- Whether commissioning is a successful way of delivering the Council's priorities

Members are advised that in order to have the maximum opportunity to review the commissioning process in action, it is suggested that the ISG start no earlier than January 2012.

- b) Planning Management performance.

This ISG was originally proposed by the former Environment Scrutiny Panel, focussing on the performance of the Planning Management service. The Head of Planning Management is currently developing a Planning Performance Improvement Plan, with particular emphasis on the speed of planning application decision making. It is suggested that the ISG scrutinise the effectiveness of the

proposed actions as well as looking at the service's workload in relation to its resources.

c) Local and National Performance Indicators and their value to the Council.

Following the change in Government last year there has been a change to the statutory requirements of Councils for performance monitoring. An ISG in this area could look at the following:

- What makes a useful measure of performance
- What performance measures should be retained from the previous performance monitoring regime as useful in measuring progress against the Council's priorities
- Whether there are any new indicators that should be collected in order to assist Members and residents in understanding the performance of the Council

d) Planning Policy and Exception Sites.

It is suggested that this ISG considers the emerging policies on affordable housing and exception sites, taking account of the Affordable Housing Viability Study 2010, Local Connections Housing Study 2010 and HARA (Hants Rural Affordable Housing).

The next version of the Core Strategy is due to be finalised by autumn 2011, so the ISG may wish to concentrate on more detailed policy level and implementation issues.

e) Treasury Management/Financing of the HRA.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 1 June 2011 asked Cabinet to consider the need for a detailed Member review of the significant treasury management implications of the re-financing of the Housing Revenue Account - arising from the proposals in the Localism Bill. Cabinet was asked to establish an appropriate body for this purpose or an alternative would be for The Overview and Scrutiny Committee to establish an Informal Scrutiny Group to undertake the task. Cabinet will consider this at their meeting on the 15 June and their decision will be conveyed to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 20 June.

f) Public access to data and information via the WCC web site.

This ISG was proposed to look at how applications made to the City Council (including licensing and planning) are displayed and made accessible on the website.

As officers are currently reviewing the website in conjunction with Test Valley, with a view to redesigning it, the chair of this ISG may also wish to liaise at an early point with the Head of Corporate Communications.

3 Appointments to batch 1 Informal Scrutiny Groups

- 3.1 Following consultation with group managers, nominations are sought for the following batch 1 ISGs. It is anticipated that nominations will be available at the meeting.

ISG	Chair	Lead officers
Asset Management	Cllr Wright	Kevin Warren
The application and weight of local criteria in housing allocation	Cllr Thompson	Andrew Palmer
Air Quality and Transport	Cllr Pearson	Dave Ingram
The City Council's efforts to reduce its carbon footprint	Cllr Hutchison	Robert Heathcock
Allocation of Gypsy/Traveller sites	Cllr Power	Steve Opacic
Young People and Employment/Training	Cllr Huxstep	Eloise Appleby

- 3.2 Nominations for the batch 2 will also be considered at the meeting.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

4 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CHANGE PLANS (RELEVANCE TO):

When establishing Informal Scrutiny Groups, the Committee should be satisfied that these arrangements are supporting or scrutinising the delivery of the Council's priorities, or working towards identifying future priorities.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

Scrutiny is currently undertaken within the existing staffing resources of the Council.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

None specifically.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

Files held in the Democratic Services Division.

APPENDICES:

None