

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 March 2014

Attendance:

Councillors:

Pines (Chairman) (P)

Byrnes (P)
Cook (P)
Evans (P)
Learney (P)
Power (P)

Sanders (P)
Scott
Stallard (P)
Tait
Wright (P)

Deputy Members

Councillors Tod (Standing Deputy for Councillor Scott) and Read (Standing Deputy for Councillor Tait).

1. MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-COMMITTEES

The Chairman suggested that the number of members on the Flooding Informal Scrutiny Group should be greater than usual, as it should include Member representatives from the majority of the Wards that had been worst affected by the flooding. Due to the significance of the topic, he would also chair its meetings. Proposed terms of reference would be circulated in due course.

RESOLVED:

1. That the following membership of Informal Scrutiny Groups established by Council on 20 February 2014 be approved:

i) Flooding Informal Scrutiny Group

Councillors Pines (Chair), Rutter, Learney, Laming plus
Conservative nominations to be confirmed

ii) Fuel Poverty Informal Scrutiny Group

Councillors Power (Chair), Weir, Cutler, Hutchison plus
Conservative nominations to be confirmed

2. That the following changes to previously agreed membership of Batch 5 Informal Scrutiny Groups be approved:

i) How we respond as a City Council to Homelessness Informal Scrutiny Group

Councillor Scott (Chair) to replace Councillor Power

ii) Abbey House Informal Scrutiny Group

Councillor Sanders (Chair) to replace Councillor Scott

2. **MINUTES**

By way of an update, the Chief Operating Officer advised that following the Committee's earlier request, the Chief Executive had envisaged that representatives of Hampshire Pension Fund would be likely to attend either the June or July 2014 meeting of the Committee.

The Chief Operating Officer also responded to a query from a Member with regard to Resolution 3 of Minute 11 on pages 8 and 9. He reported that the External Auditor had indicated that Mr Wilson had yet to submit his additional written material to support his request that a formal investigation be undertaken of the matters raised. It was possible that officers would be requested to submit a written response. Members noted that an option was for the Committee to undertake its own separate review, but agreed that at this stage it was more appropriate for Officers to liaise with the external and internal auditors to ensure that any work on a response was undertaken in the most efficient and cost effective way possible.

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting of the Committee held on 17 February 2014, be approved and adopted.

3. **GOVERNANCE REVIEW – IMPACT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION ELECTORAL REVIEW**

(Report CAB2567 refers)

The Chief Operating Officer reported that Members would have the opportunity to ask representatives from the Electoral Commission detailed questions on the electoral review process at the Member Briefing to be held on 31 March 2014.

During further discussion, the Committee was also advised that a report was to be brought direct to Council on 2 April 2014 on the final outcome of the public consultation on the Council's Electoral cycle, together with any other relevant information.

RECOMMENDED:

THAT THE CURRENT POSITION OF THE COUNCIL WITH REGARD TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOUNDARY COMMISSION ELECTORAL REVIEW, BE NOTED.

4. **MEMBER INVOLVEMENT INFORMAL SCRUTINY GROUP -
RECOMMENDATIONS**
(Report OS96 refers)

As Chairman of the Informal Scrutiny Group, Councillor Wright introduced the Report.

During discussion, it was agreed that the proposed electronic forum was likely to be an acceptable solution to supplement existing opportunities for Member involvement in matters being brought forward for eventual decision.

The Chief Operating Officer also clarified that the forum facility was included within an electronic committee management system that was to be procured to provide efficiencies to Council's existing committee management processes. Guidance would be provided to Councillors in due course on the forum's use, including any potential impact with regard to freedom of information rules, etc.

RESOLVED:

That following recommendations of the Member Involvement Informal Scrutiny Group be supported by The Overview and Scrutiny Committee for referral to Cabinet for implementation:

1. That an electronic forum for Members, based around publication of the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions, be agreed as the basis for facilitating greater Member involvement in the Council's decision making.

2. That officers be asked to implement the necessary arrangements once a new (IT based) Committee Management System has been purchased.

5. **GOVERNANCE REVIEW – FINANCIAL LIMITS IN THE CONSTITUTION**
(Report CAB2562 refers)

The Chief Operating Officer reported on the changes agreed at Cabinet with regard to Chief Finance Officer delegated virement limits and also Cabinet authorisation limits for supplementary estimates, revenue estimates or virements.

RECOMMENDED:

THAT THE CHANGES TO THE CONSITUTION AS SET OUT IN APPENDIX 1 OF THE REPORT (AS AMENDED BY CABINET), BE SUPPORTED.

RESOLVED:

That the updated Schemes of Delegation to Portfolio Holders (Appendix 2), Cabinet (Housing) Committee and Head of Estates (Appendix 3), be supported.

6. **SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND APRIL 2014 FORWARD PLAN**
(Report OS71 refers)

RESOLVED:

That the Scrutiny Work Programme and Forward Plan for April 2014 be noted.

The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and concluded at 7.30pm.

Chairman