

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

18 April 2016

INTRODUCTION TO THE DRAFT ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2015/16 -
CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

REPORT OF COUNCILLOR SIMON COOK, CHAIRMAN OF THE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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RECENT REFERENCES:

OS136 – Review of Scrutiny Process – Chairman's Report – 7 December 2015

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This Report provides an introduction to the Draft Annual Scrutiny Report for 2015/16 by the Chairman of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Simon Cook, which is due to be considered by the Committee at its meeting on 23 May 2016.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the draft introduction of the Chairman to the Draft Annual Scrutiny Report for 2015/16, be noted.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

1.1 By tradition the Annual Report for the immediate past Civic Year is presented to the first meeting of the The Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the new municipal year. This report is constructed by the officers on the information contained in the committee minutes for the year and provides a useful record of the work done during the year. However, last year I considered that it would be helpful to the Committee if an introduction was provided by me as the Chairman, which followed the practices in most other comparable local authorities.

1.2 Due to my impending retirement from the Council, I thought that it would be appropriate to provide an introduction to the Annual Scrutiny report, which I am providing as a Draft to the current committee for consideration.

2. Draft Scrutiny Annual Report 2015 /16 (Introduction) – Report of the Chairman

2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has covered many areas of work during 2015/16 which are recorded in the main report ***[due to be considered by the Committee at its meeting on 23 May 2016]***. However, a significant amount of time was concerned with the involvement in the Silver Hill project, which was a subject that featured as an agenda item in several meetings. This included the presentation of the Report of the Independent Review by the author to a packed public meeting with the Audit Committee on 10 February 2016.

This presentation was followed by a meeting to consider what recommendations to make to Cabinet, but in the event the committee decided to note the report, rather than endorse the recommendations. Subsequently, the Cabinet referred the issue back to the Committee, who at the meeting on 22 February 2016 revised and refined the recommendations to make them more practical in terms of implementation, and these were accepted for action. The Leader has since created a Task and Finish Group to implement the Claer Lloyd Jones recommendations as appropriate.

Prior to the receipt of the Report of the Independent Review, I carried out some research into the operation of the Overview and Scrutiny committee in other comparable local authorities and presented my preliminary findings (Report OS136 refers) to the December meeting. However the committee decided that changes were premature at that time in view of the

anticipated receipt of the long awaited Claer Lloyd Jones Report. Subsequently, after consideration of the Report recommendations, it is likely that there will be a review of the operation and process of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee during new Municipal Year.

The main report covers the work carried out during the year, which included a wide range of topics, with the Leader, Portfolio Holders and officers regularly the meetings to clarify specific issues and respond to questions points of detail. I have endeavoured to control these meetings and keep the length to a reasonable time, although the meeting at which the Claer Lloyd Jones Report was presented, proved something of a challenge! I have been greatly helped in my task in managing meetings by the Vice Chairman – Councillor Stallard, by our efficient committee support staff and by the general good humour of the members. My thanks to all who contributed to the work of The Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the Civic year 2015/6.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDICES:

None