
Proposed New Model for Scrutiny

Committee considering report:	Special Governance and Ethics Committee on 24 April 2017 Council on 9 May 2017
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Graham Jones
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	10 April 2017
Report Author:	Andy Day
Forward Plan Ref:	C3311

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To outline proposed changes to the way that scrutiny operates within the Council.

2. Recommendations

That Council approve the proposed new model for scrutiny as outlined in sections 6 and 7 of the report and that this be implemented with immediate effect.

3. Implications

- 3.1 **Financial:** There are no new financial implications associated with the proposal for a new model of scrutiny.
- 3.2 **Policy:** N/A
- 3.3 **Personnel:** N/A
- 3.4 **Legal:** The proposed new model for scrutiny accords with the Local Government Act 2000.
- 3.5 **Risk Management:** N/A
- 3.6 **Property:** N/A
- 3.7 **Other:** N/A

Executive Summary

4. Introduction / Background

- 4.1 As part of the feedback on the Council's LGA Peer Review undertaken over the period 1 to 4 July 2014 scrutiny was identified as in need of improvement. At its meeting on 19 May 2016 the Council agreed to introduce three new Select Committees to support the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC). The Three new Select Committees were:
- (i) Resources Select Committee
 - (ii) Environment Select Committee
 - (iii) Communities Select Committee
- 4.2 In introducing the three new Select Committees it was acknowledged that there were no additional officer resources available to support these and, as such, each Select Committee would only meet twice a year. The total number of available meeting dates would equate to the same number of meetings previously allocated to the OSMC, namely, 9 meetings a year. It was agreed that a review of the new structures would be undertaken within 12 months.
- 4.3 The Local Government Act 2000 places a duty on the Council to establish a model of scrutiny which both has the ability for Members to challenge decisions of the Executive (Call-in) whilst undertaking policy development activities too.
- 4.4 Whilst there are call-in provisions as part of the Council's Constitution it is acknowledged that holding the Executive to account is difficult to achieve given the current proportionality of the Council.

5. Progress

- 5.1 In carrying out a review of the new model it is clear that this has had limited success. The lack of available officer resource and other governance arrangements which the Council operates are the main reasons for this. That is not to say that the work undertaken to date has not been productive.
- 5.2 Concerns have also been expressed by the Scrutiny Chairmen that it has been difficult to formulate a work programme of activity and to get this supported.

6. Proposal

- 6.1 Given the above it is now proposed that the Council integrates its policy development activities associated with scrutiny into its work which is already ongoing.
- 6.2 It is proposed that the Council appoints a group of "scrutineers" who would, inter alia, be incorporated into the individual project groups associated with the Corporate Programme.
- 6.6 This new model would also recognise other current policy development activities ongoing such as the work associated with the Planning Policy Task Groups etc. This new model would retain an Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission

which would meet quarterly to review performance reports etc whilst also being responsible for call-ins.

6.7 The Select Committees would be disbanded as part of this proposal.

7. Conclusion

7.1 It is proposed that the Council moves to a new model of scrutiny which is based on work which is already ongoing. Scrutiny would therefore become more policy development orientated and look to add value to the Council's Corporate Programme of work.

8. Appendices

8.1 Appendix A – Supporting Information

8.2 Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment

8.3 Appendix C – Corporate Programme April 2017 – October 2017