

A review of the role and function of Overview and Scrutiny in Rotherham

“Improving lives, improving places”

Scrutiny Review Group:-

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1 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

As part of its 2010/11 work programme, Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee set up a review group to examine the role and function of scrutiny in Rotherham. This report sets out the process and findings, and makes recommendations for future arrangements.

2 KEY FINDINGS

2.1.1 With very few exceptions, Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) is seen to be a valuable part of the governance arrangements of the Council and has widespread support from both Members (Executive and non-Executive) and officers. The review is satisfied that O&S in Rotherham has delivered improvements to services and held decision makers to account. However, by the same token there is widespread agreement that it is necessary and desirable for it to be different. The Council, alongside other public sector organisations, has had to make substantial in-year cuts and has set a budget which requires all services to work differently. Given the new landscape, it is essential that arrangements and ways of working are reviewed to ensure that O&S works more efficiently and effectively and continues to provide value for money. The requirement to focus on priority areas is therefore more pressing in order that resources are directed to the areas where Members wish to make the maximum impact. Staying the same cannot be an option.

2.1.2 For O&S to be its most effective there needs to be confidence, trust and mutual respect between it and the Executive.

This could be demonstrated through:

- The willingness of the Executive to have its decisions examined and challenged constructively
- Open and timely access to information and processes, particularly given the backdrop of unprecedented changes to Council and other public services
- Coordinated workload planning with clear links to corporate processes, priorities and decision-making cycles
- Recognising and valuing scrutiny's role in continuous improvement and the self-regulation/transparency agendas.
- Willingness of officers and partners to open themselves up to constructive scrutiny and challenge
- Willingness of Overview and Scrutiny members to make scrutiny a positive and productive experience for all participants.

2.1.3 Reviews are the most constructive and effective part of O&S activity, leading to service improvements and better outcomes for the people of Rotherham. However, there needs to be greater alignment with Council or Borough priorities and for recommendations to be more timely and focussed. Given the demands on Member's time, it is suggested that there should be a greater focus on shorter reviews conducted within a limited timescale. There is an emerging consensus that select committee-style meetings focused on a single item or spotlight review could take place on a scheduled basis, instead of the routine full committees.

2.1.4 There is a view that the existing panel arrangements are no longer fit for purpose, and their alignment to portfolios and directorate mean they are largely inwardly

focussed on the Council. Although there is concern about the way that panels operate, there is little support to disband them in their entirety, rather the view is to build on the skills and expertise of Members and change the focus and approach that scrutiny takes.

- 2.1.5 Unlike the existing structures, we recommend in the proposed arrangements portfolio holders are purposefully not aligned to specific select commissions. We believe this will support the move towards greater coordination of work programmes and break the “silo’d” relationship between a panel shadowing a Cabinet Member and his/her directorate.
- 2.1.6 With the exception of co-optees, there are poor levels of public awareness and engagement in scrutiny. There is a need to raise the public profile in O&S, inviting attendance at meetings and their greater contribution to work planning. This could in part be facilitated through better use of new media and technologies.
- 2.1.7 The commissioning and delivery of services in local areas is changing rapidly, with the potential for decision-making moving away from individual organisations into partnership structures or more complex arrangements. What needs to be in place for O&S members to link with other networks or non-executive functions to ensure that accountability is ‘joined up’ and transparent.
- 2.1.8 There is a need for greater member understanding and participation in Scrutiny. In order to support members to undertake this ‘new’ scrutiny confidently and effectively, there should be a renewed emphasis in the Member Development Programme on consolidating core skills such questioning and effective chairing.

3 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Council agrees that the primary function of Overview and Scrutiny in Rotherham is about “Improving Lives, Improving Places” and its priorities should be:
 - Holding decision makers and partners to account for delivery focusing on whether services make a difference in our communities
 - Ensuring value for money and budget transparency
 - Articulating and reflecting public voice

On the basis of this Council should agree O&S’ role and remit and its relationship with the respective parts of the Council’s governance arrangements;
2. To support the ongoing development of a positive and constructive relationship between O&S and the Cabinet, ensure that there are regular (at least quarterly) meetings scheduled between O&S Chairs and Cabinet to exchange concerns/forthcoming issues. These meetings should be scheduled in advance and published in the Council Year Book.
3. Ensure that O&S’ work reflects and articulates the public voice by:
 - Seeking ways to take O&S ‘out of the Town Hall’
 - Making the website more accessible
 - Establishing effective channels of communication with the community, including use of new media and technologies

- Developing ways to communicate scrutiny's work and raise its profile
 - Explore ways of further involving the community and other external stakeholders in the scrutiny process.
4. Develop the process for informing and approving O&S' work by:
- Developing a work programme that is informed by a range of stakeholders including the Cabinet, Senior Leadership Team (SLT), partners and the community. The work programme would ensure a balanced workload of different types of scrutiny work which would include internal/external focussed work, spotlight or more in-depth reviews, with capacity for responsive work as required.
 - Agreeing an annual work programme for 2011/12 that is endorsed by Council.
 - Having regular dialogue with the Chair of the Audit Committee, Chairs of Area Assemblies and Parish Councils to communicate respective work programmes, minimise areas of duplication and identify areas of joint working as appropriate.
 - Explore opportunities and agree approach for joint scrutiny with other authorities and non-executives/scrutineers from other bodies
 - Reviewing the current format of the Forward Plan of Key Decision's to see if it is fit for purpose
5. Deliver a Member Development programme to support O&S' development and raise awareness and understanding of the new roles, by:
- An initial "development day" event to inform the work programme and any future Member Development activity
 - Regular engagement and consultation – including workshops with and for scrutiny chairs
 - A programme of role development and skills training for members, including questioning skills and effective chairing
 - A programme of awareness raising sessions for officers and partners
6. Restructure the O&S function to better reflect the priorities of the Council and its partners, so as to be able to respond to major service and structural changes e.g. NHS reforms, Localism Bill and the emerging transparency/self-regulation agendas, by creating:
- an O&S Management Board to lead and manage the overview and scrutiny function, co-ordinate its workload and commission pieces of work;
- Underpinning the Management board are four select commissions:
- A select commission focusing on self-regulation, value for money and budget transparency;
 - A health scrutiny select commission;
 - Improving Lives Select Commission – focussing on children and young people and the wider 'Think Family' agenda;
 - Improving Places Select Commission – focussing on wider environmental/regeneration agendas.
7. Develop the roles and remits of the O&S Management Board and each of the 4 select commissions; including

- terms of reference for the Board and for each of the 4 select commissions – including any specific powers and responsibilities they have (e.g health scrutiny)
- role definitions/descriptions for the chair and vice chair of the O&S Management Board and for select commission chairs
- agree a meeting schedule for the Management Board and Select Commissions

Any agreed changes to be incorporated into the Council's Constitution.

8. Review the arrangement 12 months after implementation to see if they are 'fit for purpose'.

4 SCOPE OF THE REVIEW

4.1.1 The review group agreed to examine whether the overview and scrutiny function of the Council was fit for purpose in light of the changing local government landscape. The aim of the review was to

- explore how Overview and Scrutiny in Rotherham can best demonstrate relevance, challenge and accountability to the wider public;
- improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the scrutiny function, particularly in relation to the emerging self-regulation/ transparency agendas and resource pressures;
- examine if changes could be made to ways of working and structures to lead to greater focus and better outcomes for scrutiny and the wider governance arrangements of the Council;
- examine how scrutiny members are enabled and supported to take on new responsibilities or ways of working.

4.1.2 The supporting evidence was gathered through

- Desktop review and analysis of legislation, policy directives and commentary
- Desktop review to explore best practice models and approaches
- Revisiting the 2006 Self-evaluation Framework (Centre for Public Scrutiny) to see if the findings were still relevant and what change had been enacted since its publication
- Questionnaires circulated to **all** Members and key officers
- Focus groups with PSOC Members, O&S members (invitation issued to all members), co-optees and partners
- Interview with Martin Kimber, Chief Executive
- Structured interviews with Cabinet Members and Strategic Directors conducted by Professor Heather Campbell and Dr Matthew Gebhardt, University of Sheffield

- Presentation and evidence from Jessica Crowe, Executive Director, Centre for Public Scrutiny

4.1.3 The review commenced in October 2010 and its findings are to be submitted to Council in April 2011.

4.1.4 The review group would like to thank all who contributed for their time, co-operation and willingness to engage in this process. In particular, we are grateful for the considerable time and commitment given by colleagues from the University of Sheffield. Having an independent view to constructively challenge and question how we work was invaluable and our review is more robust from their input.

5 BACKGROUND

5.1.1 Performance and Scrutiny Overview Committee (PSOC) and the five Scrutiny Panels have been in place for over ten years in Rotherham. During this time, the responsibilities of scrutiny have widened, including the addition of health and crime and disorder scrutiny powers.

The panels were realigned in 2005 to greater reflect the priorities outlined in the Community Strategy, however there is still a strong emphasis on scrutinising Directorates. Although minor amendments have been made to the panels' remits, the 'Our Future' organisational review and subsequent 2009 Constitutional review did not make substantial changes to the way that scrutiny is organised or structured.

5.1.2 PSOC currently meets fortnightly. Each of the panels has determined their own meeting schedule. Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel and Adult Services and Health meet every four weeks, whilst Democratic Renewal, Regeneration and Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Panels meet six-weekly. All panels will have additional meetings outside this schedule to conduct reviews or other scrutiny activities.

5.1.3 It has been custom and practice for each panel to develop its own work programme in conjunction with Cabinet Members and Strategic Directors. An outline of the work programme is published alongside the Annual Report and presented to Council early in the new Municipal Year.

5.1.4 Since scrutiny's formation, Overview and Scrutiny Members have been directly supported by a small team of advisers located in Scrutiny Services and Member Support. The team has recently reduced by 1.5 full-time equivalents and will have further managerial change in the near future. There will be 3 FTEs supporting the overview and scrutiny function. Each of the formal panel meetings are minuted by a Democratic Services Officer in addition to the support given by the Scrutiny Advisers.

5.1.5 Scrutiny in Rotherham has previously been nationally recognised by a number of bodies including the Local Government Information Unit, Centre for Public Scrutiny and IDeA (now Local Government Improvement and Development).

The last full corporate assessment carried out in 2006 stated "*Scrutiny is strong... and is particularly effective in the area of policy development. There is a high level of acceptance of scrutiny recommendations by the cabinet, and a number of important policy changes have stemmed from scrutiny work, for example in areas such as*

domestic violence, and corporate parenting” (Audit Commission, 2006). There has not been another corporate inspection since 2006, however, overview and scrutiny has contributed to several other assessments and corporate governance activities.

5.2 Current legislative requirements and challenges

A great deal has been written about the current Government’s legislative programme and policy framework. It is not intended to duplicate this. In summary, some of the main challenges for O&S are as follows:

- redefining its role in self-regulation; the abolition of CAA and National Indicator Set offers opportunities for O&S to play a role in peer reviews, offer challenge to self-assessment and renew its focus on improvement;
- ensuring that community empowerment aspects of the Localism Bill are truly representative and reflect wider community interests;
- potential for changing governance arrangements;
- O&S’ relationship to the wider health community, in light of changes to governance and commissioning arrangements and Public Health responsibilities;
- local policing arrangements and their governance;
- place-based/community budgeting/commissioning - bringing significant changes to the way services are delivered in local areas, with decision-making moving away from individual organisations into partnership structures; are there opportunities to link with other networks or non-executive functions to ensure that accountability is ‘joined up’?;
- grant settlement; ensuring that the difficult decisions taken about spending and resource allocations are robust;
- the ‘Big Society’ and active involvement of the public in service delivery.

6 ISSUES EMERGING FROM THE REVIEW

6.1.1 With very few exceptions, Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) is seen to be a valuable part of the Council machinery and has widespread support from both Members (Executive and non-Executive) and officers. However this is not a formal review of governance arrangements and should not be read as such. Although it is worth stating that whilst the Localism Bill (currently before Parliament) gives the opportunity to opt for different models (i.e. return to decision making by Committee), there was little appetite for this in the responses.

6.1.2 The Centre for Public Scrutiny has established four core principles to explain the most important activities of scrutiny. They are accepted standards of good practice and a useful tool against which we can measure the effective of arrangements in Rotherham:

1. provides ‘critical friend’ challenge to executive policy-makers and decision-makers

2. enables the voice and concerns of the public and its communities
3. is carried out by 'independent minded governors' who lead and own the scrutiny process
4. drives improvement in public services

There is no single definition of overview and scrutiny, but it may be helpful to differentiate the two parts of the process. The former, "overview", is a constructive and consensual process; in Rotherham this is largely undertaken in reviews, making recommendations to Cabinet or other bodies. "Scrutiny," on the other hand, is more directly related to examining the decision making of the executive or holding to account, which on occasions may be more seen as perhaps more challenging. In Rotherham, whilst O&S Members clearly valued their role in reviews (or overview) there was a strong commitment that one of their primary functions is 'holding decision makers to account' whether that be inside of the Council or across the Borough.

6.2 Provides 'critical friend' challenge to executive policy-makers and decision-makers

- 6.2.1 For O&S to be its most effective there needs to be confidence, trust and mutual respect between it and the Executive.

This could be demonstrated through:

- The willingness of the Executive to have its decisions examined and challenged constructively
- Open and timely access to information and processes, particularly given the backdrop of unprecedented changes to Council and other public services
- Coordinated workload planning with clear links to corporate processes, priorities and decision-making cycles
- Recognising and valuing scrutiny's role in continuous improvement and the self-regulation/transparency agendas.
- Willingness of officers and partners to open themselves up to constructive scrutiny and challenge
- Willingness of Overview and Scrutiny members to make scrutiny a positive and productive experience for all participants.

- 6.2.2 The responses from the questionnaires, focus groups and interviews demonstrated a mixed view about how 'critical friend' challenge is given and received and if the relationship between Cabinet, O&S and SLT is functioning effectively at present.

There was universal agreement from all contributors that a greater emphasis should be placed on co-ordinating scrutiny's work programme to enable scrutiny to look at priorities, examine key issues and minimise duplication.

This could be achieved through the following:

- Advance planning of the annual work programme drawing together the views of O&S Members, the Cabinet, senior officers and partners to enable scrutiny to be more "forward looking", and contributing to the wider priorities of the Council identified in the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy. This could be

facilitated through a workshop-session with a six month evaluation. Whilst greater coordination would be welcome, it is not suggested that the work programme should be inflexible and prescriptive, as this may undermine O&S ability to be respond to unforeseen events or concerns (e.g. 2007 flooding or 2010 winter resilience).

- Greater management, co-ordination and prioritisation by (currently) PSOC to identify and delegate areas of work and act as a conduit should O&S Members, Cabinet, Audit Committee or SLT pinpoint concerns or issues that may warrant further attention.
- Greater use of the Forward Plan of Key Decisions (FPKD): A common view from scrutiny members is that information is received “after the horse has bolted”. Conversely, the view of many Cabinet Members and senior officers is that too much time is spent examining decisions *after* they have been taken, which was seen to be “unnecessary and ineffective”, particularly as the window for reconsidering the decision (call-in) had often passed.

If the FPKD was used to its full potential (alongside better work planning), scrutiny could be consulted at a stage where meaningful input can be made, particularly in areas of concern or sensitivity. There is considerable overlap in support of this approach across all interviewees (whether O&S Members, Cabinet or Senior Officer). If this approach is not taken, there is a risk that the working patterns which are widely considered to be ineffective will continue.

- Regular dialogue between O&S and Cabinet Members. These would promote more effective forward planning and provide regular opportunities for joint problem solving. Previous efforts to undertake this have not been successful.
- Regular dialogue with the Chair of the Audit Committee, Chairs of Area Assemblies and Parish Councils to communicate respective work programmes, minimise areas of duplication and identify areas of joint working as appropriate.

6.2.3 There is a common perception amongst officers that routine scrutiny panels are on occasions adversarial rather than an interchange of ideas; whereas reviews were cited for their constructiveness. If this perception of routine meetings has foundation, then it is unlikely that officers will be open and willing to engage with the scrutiny process or scrutiny members; and necessarily the effectiveness of the function will be undermined.

6.2.4 Most respondents indicated that scheduled panel meetings are too long, with too many routine items on the agenda that are for noting rather than action, with little opportunity to influence or add value. Many also commented on the timeliness of information and the reluctance of some Cabinet Members and officers to engage. Again this points to the need to examine closely how work programmes are constructed and communicated.

6.2.5 There is a widespread acknowledgment that scrutiny of outside bodies is going to be an even greater necessity. The commissioning and delivery of local services is rapidly changing and becoming increasingly complex, with potentially multiple providers. With few exceptions, the focus of scrutiny has been largely inward looking rather than on wider partnerships or outcomes for the borough. Many respondents suggest that there should be an increased focus on health scrutiny to address the emerging health agenda both in terms of commissioning arrangements and public

health responsibilities. Members of the Local Strategic Partnership recognised the importance of accountability across the board, not just a focus on health, particularly ensuring that scarce resources are being wisely spent on the 'things that matter and make a difference'. However, they expressed concerns about duplication and timeliness, which again point to how priorities are determined.

6.3 Enables the voice and concerns of the public and its communities

- 6.3.1 The coalition Government has shifted in the way it relates to Local Government. Councils will be expected to be more "transparent" and "accountable" to the communities they serve (for example by publishing all expenditure above £500). However, simply publishing a set of figures on a monthly basis is not enough. For the figures to mean something they need to be explained and contextualised. The challenge is therefore to show how the expenditure supports (or not) the priorities which the community has called on the council to adopt. O&S is ideally placed to do this.
- 6.3.2 With public faith in institutions, both nationally and locally, at a low, how to generate trust and openness is a contentious issue. Having a strong overview and scrutiny function which is outwardly focused in its engagement with the public while inwardly focused to hold the local authority to account, could be the key to achieving credibility for self regulation. The more that it can demonstrate the willingness to hold poor performance or poor practice to account the more it will be trusted. Other authorities (e.g. Cardiff) have spoken of the "need to build organisational confidence", developing a view of scrutiny as a safeguarding or preventative function. This is very much in line with the developing thinking around self-regulation and could define a role for scrutiny in self-assessment and performance improvement, looking beyond councils' own services to the wider outcomes that need to be achieved.
- 6.3.3 The main way in which members of the local community currently participate in scrutiny is as co-optees or as expert witnesses. Their contribution to the effectiveness of scrutiny in Rotherham is extremely valuable. Co-optees come from a wide range of backgrounds and are elected bi-annually to provide some degree of continuity. In addition, other co-optees are recruited to reviews on an 'as needed' basis.
- 6.3.4 Aside from co-optees and their input into reviews, public involvement in scrutiny is generally poor (as indeed it is in many other democratic arenas) although there have been notable successes in areas focussing on particular issues or concern (e.g. post office closure or water fluoridation). The need to move scrutiny from an introspective process, with most subject matter selected by Members and Officers, to one where issues are identified by the wider community is an ongoing challenge.
- 6.3.5 Jessica Crowe, Executive Director of the Centre for Public Scrutiny made the following observations. The abolition of the Audit Commission and CAA gives an opportunity for scrutiny to "shine a light on poor performance". She suggested that the scrutiny members can ensure that public concerns are aired and debated, holding all providers to account. Given the pressures on resources and the difficult decisions that are to be made, this role is all the more critical in as much as O&S can provide evidence based recommendations for improvement and savings, measuring and articulating what matters to local people.

At the heart of any discussions about O&S' work programme, should be the question

“What difference will this make to the people of Rotherham?”

6.3.6 With few exceptions, O&S rarely publicises its activities, which may partially explain the poor levels of public awareness. The opportunities to use new media and technology to raise the profile of scrutiny both externally and internally should be explored.

6.3.7 There may be opportunities to assess the scope for more localised scrutiny, developing better links with Area Assemblies and Parish Councils, with wider participation and increased attendance.

6.4 Is carried out by ‘independent minded governors’ who lead and own the scrutiny process

6.4.1 There was a strong consensus that if O&S is to be an ‘independent voice’, the scrutiny work programme should be ‘owned’ by O&S Members, and determined through a mutual understanding of borough wide priorities and a focus on the areas where a difference can be made.

In focus groups and from questionnaire responses, three priorities emerged:

- Holding decision makers and partners to account for delivery
- Budget transparency
- Articulating and reflecting public voice

It is suggested that the approach taken in its work programme reflects these themes.

6.4.2 One of the key roles of scrutiny is to ensure that the Council is using its resources wisely and getting value for money. The pressure to make savings makes the need to provide analysis and challenge on behalf of the public all the more critical. Several respondents (cross-party) said that the process could and should be improved by scrutiny being involved at an earlier stage asking “Has the money spent made a difference to the public of Rotherham?” If detailed budget options particularly around sensitive areas, are not discussed with all stakeholders in advance, the likelihood of protests and negative coverage increases. O&S could have a role in examining impact and how proposals link to wider priorities. The current approach does not do this.

6.4.3 The call-in procedure provides a clear route for decision makers to be held to account. However, this process is seen as being adversarial (and in some instances ineffective) and perhaps the low-numbers of call-in over the 10 years of scrutiny demonstrates that there is a reluctance to use it. If call-in is not used, then the public questioning of decisions and decision makers at scrutiny panels is inevitable. However, if pre-decision was used to best effect then the challenge is more likely to be focussed, timely, informed and constructive.

6.4.4 Although the changing landscape could lead to a significant expansion of scrutiny’s role, it was noted that not all members are actively involved in scrutiny at present. Any changes to approach or arrangements should be mindful of member’s capacity to meet any new requirements alongside their other community leadership roles.

6.4.5 Furthermore, there is a wide recognition that in order to support members to undertake this ‘new’ scrutiny confidently and effectively, there should be a renewed emphasis in the Member Development Programme on consolidating core skills such

questioning and effective chairing. The programme should continue to be open to co-opted members.

- 6.4.6 It is a shared view that without dedicated scrutiny officer support, the scrutiny function would not be as effective. However, as with other areas of the Council, the core function has been reduced to make savings and further changes are planned in its management. The requirement to focus on priority areas is therefore more pressing in order that officers and resources are directed to the areas where Members wish to make the maximum impact.

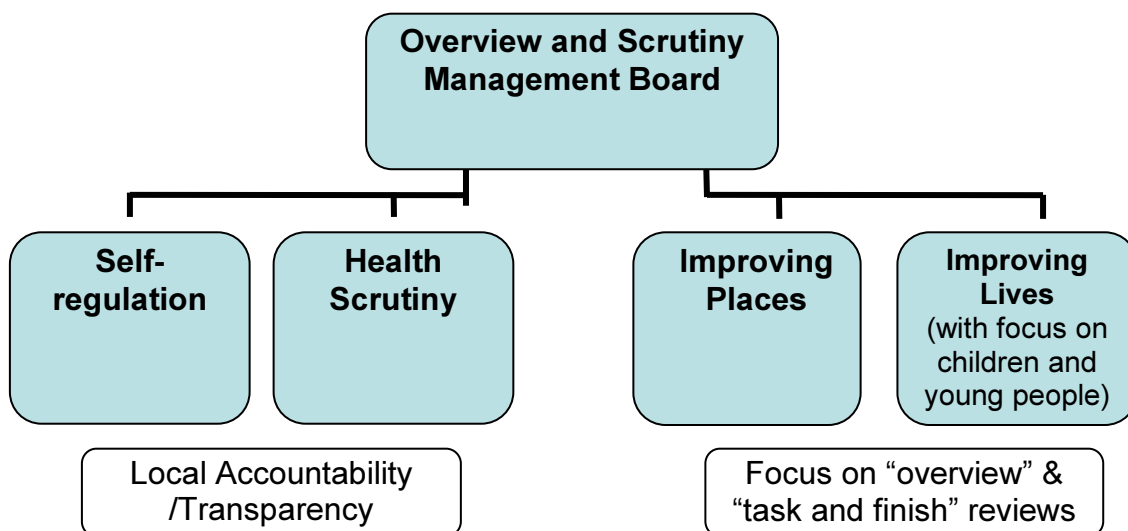
6.5 Drives improvement in public services

- 6.5.1 Scrutiny reviews were viewed to be the most successful aspects of scrutiny's work. This is because of the flow of ideas, debate and focus on making a difference. Members also prepare in advance, develop understanding and insight in the subject area and have a practical investment in seeking solutions. There was overwhelming agreement that reviews have had a real impact leading to service improvements across the board. A great deal of scrutiny activity will often influence policy or resource decisions some years after the recommendations have been made (for example the Scrutiny Review into the Future Challenges of the Youth Service has been recently used to influence a wholesale review of the service some three years after its submission to Cabinet).
- 6.5.2 Although this was seen as the most constructive aspect of its work, there was a view that some reviews had taken too long to complete and consequently had lost impact and relevance. Given the demands on Member's time, it is suggested that there should be a greater focus on shorter reviews conducted within a limited timescale. There appears to be an emerging consensus that select committee-style meetings focused on a single item could take place on a scheduled basis, instead of the routine full committees. This approach would not necessarily preclude more in-depth work as required.
- 6.5.3 Many contributors commented that there were questions about how the agreed recommendations were implemented and monitored. Although a high proportion of recommendations are accepted by the Executive, the implementation of some reviews has been patchy. Further work should be undertaken to ensure that there is greater organisational ownership of the implementation of agreed recommendations.
- 6.5.4 It was questionable whether 'routine' panels were viewed as being as effective as reviews. Some members clearly valued the opportunity to regularly question Cabinet Members and officers on aspects of service delivery. However, routine panel meetings seldom hear people's experiences of services or firsthand from those who deliver them. Whilst it would not necessarily be appropriate to become involved in operational minutiae, by understanding the context of services and their effectiveness, scrutiny can add value and inform the Executive's decisions about how scarce resources are allocated.
- 6.5.5 Although there is criticism of the way that panels operate, there is little support to disband them in their entirety, rather the view is to build on the skills and expertise of Members and change the focus and approach that scrutiny takes. Given the pressure on resources, the requirement to focus on priority areas is therefore more pressing in order that limited resources (both officer and financial) are directed to the areas where Members wish to make the maximum impact.

7 A DIFFERENT WAY OF WORKING

The recommendations in Section 3 outline the cultural changes that need to be put in place to ensure that O&S is fit for purpose. To support this change, we are suggesting a different way of working. There was general consensus among interviewees that the current organisation of the scrutiny panels (restructured in 2005) and their alignment with Cabinet member portfolios and directorates is not ideal. We have purposefully moved away from this.

- 7.1.1 The review examined different ways of models of workings, assessing the risks and benefits attached to each. Jessica Crowe’s (Centre for Public Scrutiny) input on the challenges facing O&S functions and how different authorities are responding was most helpful. The review group recognises that the greatest impact has been made in reviews and wants to build on this expertise by ensuring that this activity is focused on the “right things, in the right way and at the right time”. It also recognises the need to be ‘ahead of the game’, particularly in respect of the self-regulation and transparency agenda.
- 7.1.2 As the commissioning and delivery of local services changes rapidly and becomes increasingly complex, it is important that O&S is able to focus outwardly on improving outcomes across the Borough rather than focusing on those areas delivered by the Council. To do this successfully, there will need to be greater flexibility and coordination in approach.
- 7.1.3 With this in mind, recognising the need to streamline meetings and focus on activity where value can be added we propose the following option (agreed by PSOC at its meeting of March 25, 2011):



- 7.1.4 The suggested focus of these bodies is outlined in Table 1, however it is recognised that further work should be undertaken to develop the respective roles and remit of the Management Board and each of the Select Commissions.

Table 1: outline of O&S remit

O&S Management Board

- Call-in
- Councillor Call for Action
- Designated crime and disorder committee
- Co-ordinate and prioritise O&S' work programme
- To assign overview and scrutiny work as it considers appropriate, to the various commissions
- To make recommendations to the Cabinet or to any partner organisation on issues scrutinised relevant to those bodies, and where appropriate, direct to Council

Self-regulation	Health	Select Commissions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To scrutinise and raise issues as part of the self regulation process or through external assessments (peer review, inspection etc) • To monitor and hold to account the performance of service delivery within RMBC and its partner etc with particular reference to the Corporate Plan and Community Strategy • To monitor whether efficiency savings are achieved or exceeded • To scrutinise the annual budget setting process • Monitor the Council budget and MTFS 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To carry out in depth overview and scrutiny of issues as directed by the O&S Management Board • To be the Council's designated scrutiny body for any issue relating to health and the public health agenda 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To carry out overview and scrutiny of issues as directed by the O&S Management Board. These issues shall relate to the Select Committee theme <p>Improving Lives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any issue relating to the Every Child Matters agenda (note Health Scrutiny Committee responsibilities) • any issue relating to the 'Think Family' and early intervention/prevention agendas • any issues relating to non-health related adult social care <p>Improving Places:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any issue relating to cohesion, leisure, neighbourhoods, environment, local economy, regeneration and employment (including skills and training)

7.1.5 It is proposed to review the arrangements and ways of working 12 months after implementation to judge if they are 'fit for purpose', are responding to the changing landscape and have led to improved ways of working.

8 TIMETABLE

Review group agreed scope and terms of reference	22 October
Interview with Martin Kimber	26th November
Questionnaire: all Members key officers Co-optees	Sent 17 January (closing date 31 January) Sent 19 January (closing date 4 February) Sent 25 January (closing date 8 February)
Focus Group 1: PSOC	28 January
Focus Group 2: invitation to all members	3 February
Focus Group 3: co-optees	9 February
Focus Group 4: partners	24 February
<p>Interviews conducted by Prof Heather Campbell and Dr Gebhardt</p> <p>Leader, Councillor Roger Stone Deputy Leader, Councillor Terry Sharman Cabinet Member, Safeguarding and Developing Learning Opportunities for Children – Councillor Lakin Cabinet Member, Adult Independence Health and well Being – Councillor Doyle Cabinet Member, Community Development, Equality and Young Peoples issues – Councillor Hussain Cabinet Member, Safe and Attractive Neighbourhoods Councillor Akhtar Cabinet Member, Regeneration and Environment – Councillor Smith Cabinet Member, Culture, Lifestyle, Sport and Tourism – Councillor St. John Executive Director for Children and Young People's Services – Joyce Thacker Executive Director for Neighbourhood and Adult Services – Tom Cray Executive Director for Finance Services – Andrew Bedford Executive Director for Economic and Development Services – Karl Battersby Matthew Gladstone, Director of Policy, Performance and Commissioning</p>	10 and 11 February (originally scheduled for early December but postponed due to snow)
Emerging issues fed back to review group	4 March
Presentation to PSOC from Jessica Crowe, Executive Director, Centre for Public Scrutiny Endorsement of emerging findings and recommendations	11 March
Consideration of draft report: PSOC	25 March

9 THANKS

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