

PERFORMANCE AND SCRUTINY OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
25th March, 2011

Present:- Councillor Whelbourn (in the Chair); Councillors Austen, Gilding, J. Hamilton, Jack, License, Steele, Swift and Whysall.

Apologies for absence were received from The Mayor (Councillor McNeely) and Councillors G. A. Russell and P. A. Russell.

148. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

149. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

There were no questions from members of the public or the press.

150. THE ROLE AND FUNCTIONS OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IN ROTHERHAM - FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS

Further to Minute No. 144 of the meeting of this Committee held on 11th March, 2011, Councillor Whelbourn introduced and Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny Adviser, presented the submitted report which set out the findings and recommendations of the scrutiny review into the role and function of overview and scrutiny in Rotherham and its future arrangements.

Highlighted were the background to, and rationale for, the review, membership, scope, key findings and recommendations, issues emerging from the review and a different way of working. The full report of the scrutiny review group was submitted.

Discussion and a question and answer session ensued focusing on the review recommendations and the following issues were covered:-

- need for, and frequency of, regular meetings between overview and scrutiny chairs and Cabinet
- value in scrutiny chairs attending cabinet member meetings and cabinet members attending scrutiny meetings unless specifically invited for a particular item
- perception amongst some elected members that the present governance arrangements of a cabinet system was non democratic and not as inclusive for members as the old 'committee' system
- need to develop clear work programmes
- citizenship sessions and need for elected members to inform partners/public about the role of a councillor/scrutiny
- need for a co-ordinated role and work programme regarding children and young people's services

- responsibility for scrutinising the crime and disorder function
- membership and commissioning role of the proposed overview and scrutiny management board
- optimum number of scrutiny panels
- whether or not a panel needed to be dedicated exclusively to children and young people's issues
- proposed scrutiny panels not to be aligned to directorates
- involvement of statutory co-optees
- extent of review work
- titles of the scrutiny meetings going forward

Resolved:- (1) That, as far as this Committee is concerned, approval be given to the proposal to establish an Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to lead and manage the overview and scrutiny function, coordinate its workload and commission pieces of work. Underpinning this Board, four select commissions with the following remit:-

- A select commission focusing on self regulation, value for money and budget transparency
- A health scrutiny select commission
- Improving Lives select commission focusing on children and young people and the wider 'Think Family' agenda
- Improving Places select commission focusing on wider environmental/regeneration issues

(2) That the select commissions meet on a six weekly basis.

(3) That, along with the views now discussed, the review, together with the findings and recommendations, be supported.

(4) That the review and its recommendations be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration and response within two months.

151. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 11TH MARCH, 2011

Resolved:- That the minutes of the meeting held on 11th March, 2011 be approved as a correct record for signature by the Chairman.

152. WORK IN PROGRESS

Members of the Committee reported as follows:-

- (a) Councillor Jack reported that meetings took place last week of the Domestic Abuse Forum and also the Women's Strategy Group who received a presentation from Mana Kaur – GROW Project. A meeting with NHS Rotherham to discuss keeping warm in later life was taking place later today.
- (b) Councillor Whysall reported that the severe weather review was almost complete and the next review to be undertaken by the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel related to pedestrian crossings.
- (c) Councillor Austen reported that the next meeting of the Democratic Renewal Scrutiny Panel was scheduled for 21st April, 2011.
- (d) Councillor License reported that the latest meeting of the Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Panel had considered:
 - restructuring of children's centres
 - first annual report from the Safeguarding Board.

153. CALL-IN ISSUES

There were no formal call-in requests.