

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD – 25th MARCH 2010

REVIEW OF SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY MANAGER

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to inform Scrutiny Leadership Board of the outcome of the review of scrutiny arrangements undertaken by Professor Steve Leach (Appendix 1) and the comments on the report and recommendations made by Scrutiny Assembly, Cabinet and Corporate Management Team.
- 1.2 For Scrutiny Leadership Board to consider any changes to the Scrutiny arrangements and recommend any changes to the Council's Constitution to Council Constitution Committee on the 13th April 2010 to go to Full Council on the 29th April 2010.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **Members of the Scrutiny Leadership Board consider the report and recommendations from Professor Leach and the comments from Scrutiny Assembly, Cabinet and Corporate Management Team.**
- 2.2 **Scrutiny Leadership Board agree any changes to the Scrutiny arrangements and recommend any consequent changes to the Constitution to Council Constitution Committee on the 13th April 2010.**
- 2.3 **Following any recommendations by Council Constitution Committee and the decision of Full Council on the 29th April Scrutiny Leadership Board agree to update the Scrutiny Handbook.**

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 3.1 AUC – 39 Audit Committee 3rd November 2009
SLB – 95 Scrutiny Leadership Board 19th November 2009

4.0 SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

- 4.1 The current arrangements were put in place in January 2009. Under this structure Scrutiny is undertaken through a number of mechanisms:

Scrutiny Leadership Board

Scrutiny Assembly

Sub Groups:

- Health Monitoring Sub Group
- Value for Money Sub Group
- Corporate Parenting Sub Group
- Campus Telford

Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with Shropshire

Special Interest meetings

Spotlight Reviews

In-depth Reviews

- 4.2 A list of the current reviews undertaken during 2009/10 is attached as Appendix 2.

- 4.3 The Scrutiny structure is also aligned to the Council priorities. Each of the 6 Lead Scrutiny Members on the Scrutiny Leadership Board are responsible for scrutiny of one or more of the priorities:

Housing, Regeneration and Prosperity -	Cllr. Alan Mackenzie
Children and Young People-	Cllr. Joy Francis
Active Lifestyles – Leisure and Culture -	Cllr. Karen Tomlinson
Adult Care and Support -	Cllr. Derek White
Environment and Rural Area -	Cllr. Roger Aveley
Community Protection and Cohesion-	Cllr. Karen Tomlinson
Efficient Community Focused Council	Cllr. Adrian Meredith

5.0 REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PROFESSOR LEACH

- 5.1 Professor Leach undertook the review of Scrutiny arrangements between 10th – 19 March 2010. The full report and recommendations is attached as Appendix 1. Professor Leach identified a number of strengths of Scrutiny and Telford and Wrekin – but also that Scrutiny should adapt to changing circumstances. The key issues from the report are:

- Retaining Scrutiny Leadership Board (possibly increasing Lead Members to 7) and Scrutiny Assembly
- Agendas for Scrutiny Leadership Board could be more focused and a system of briefing between SLB and other Scrutiny groups
- Formalising 3 Scrutiny Panels which would have clear remits, would be politically balanced and would meet formally quarterly

- The 3 Panels above could undertake informal work between meetings
- Establishing 2 new Scrutiny Panel's which would have a role in policy development – these Panels would not be politically balanced
- Twice yearly Joint Liaison Meetings with Scrutiny Leadership Board and Cabinet to agree areas where Scrutiny could undertake policy development
- Reviewing the process to agree the Scrutiny work programme of Reviews, Spotlight reviews and special Interest Meetings
- The role of Cabinet Assistants and Scrutiny
- Scrutiny recommendations that involve expenditure could also identify savings
- Reducing the number of Members required for a Call In
- Role of Lead Scrutiny Members and Sub Group Chairs
- All Scrutiny reports to be considered by Scrutiny Leadership Board prior to Cabinet
- Debates on major reports could be held at Scrutiny Assembly or Full Council
- Proposed structure and implication for work load and sustainable scrutiny support

6.0 VIEWS OF SCRUTINY ASSEMBLY, CABINET AND CORPORATE MENEEMENT TEAM

- 6.1 The report was circulated to all Members of the Scrutiny Assembly and Professor Leach presented the report to Members and Co-optees who attended the meeting on the 8th March 2010. Members generally welcomed the report and recommendations made by Professor Leach and the discussion focussed on how the proposed scrutiny arrangements could be implemented. The notes of the meeting are attached as Appendix 3.
- 6.2 The Chair of Scrutiny Leadership Board will present the report from Professor Leach to Cabinet on the 23rd March. A verbal report will be made to Scrutiny Leadership Board on the comments from Cabinet and also from Corporate Management Team.

7.0 LEAD MEMBER APPRAISALS

- 7.1 The Lead Member Appraisal forms were circulated to Members and Co-optees on all Scrutiny Sub Groups, Reviews and Special Interest Meetings. In total 25 forms were returned and 94.8% reported that the Lead Scrutiny Members skill level was either very good (56.6%) or good (29.2%).

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

- 8.1 As part of their work all Scrutiny Committees, Scrutiny Reviews and Special Interest Meetings consider the equality and diversity implications of the issue under consideration.

9.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- 9.1 This report does not have any direct environmental impact but Scrutiny will review the environmental implications of the issues under consideration.

10.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The Council has a duty to scrutinise its work and that of NHS and partner organisations and will have a responsibility to appoint a scrutiny officer by 1st April 2010 to:

- Promote the role of the authority's overview and scrutiny committees
- Provide support to the authority's overview and scrutiny committee or committees and the members of those committees
- To provide support and guidance to members of the authority, members of the executive of the authority, officers of the authority in relation to functions of the authority's overview and scrutiny committees.

- 10.2 The Local Authority may not designate any of the following under this section:

- Head of paid service
- Chief finance officer
- Monitoring officer

- 10.3 The Local Government (Overview and Scrutiny) Bill proposes to extend the powers of Scrutiny in relation to partner organisations.

11.0 LINKS WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 11.1 The work of the Scrutiny Reviews and Special Interest Meetings cuts across the corporate priorities. The Scrutiny function supports the priority 'An Efficient and Community Focused Council'

12.0 OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

- 12.1 The proposals from Professor Leach opens the opportunity for Scrutiny to become more involved in the development of Council policies. The Scrutiny Team will continue to support the Scrutiny arrangements

agreed through this process. Any reduction to the current support will require a reduction in the scrutiny work undertaken.

13.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

13.1 There are no direct financial implications from this report. The Scrutiny arrangements will be supported by the Scrutiny budget.

14.0 WARD IMPLICATIONS

14.1 There are no ward implications resulting directly from this report.

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