

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

COUNCIL CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE – 13 APRIL 2010

REVIEW OF SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY MANAGER

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 For the Committee to consider the proposed changes to the Scrutiny arrangements as agreed by Scrutiny Leadership Board and recommend these arrangements to Full Council.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Committee recommend to Full Council on the 29th April 2010 the model for Scrutiny arrangements as agreed at Scrutiny Leadership Board on 25th March 2010.
- 2.2 That the Committee agrees the process set out in Section 7 of the report to agree any consequent changes to the Constitution regarding Scrutiny.

3.0 SUMMARY

- 3.1 Scrutiny Leadership Board agreed to undertake a review of the new scrutiny arrangements introduced in January 2009 when they had been in operation for 12 months. Professor Leach was engaged to undertake the review and his report was completed in February 2010. The report and views from Scrutiny Assembly and Cabinet were discussed at Scrutiny Leadership Board on the 25th March 2010. Scrutiny Leadership Board recommend to Council Constitution Committee that the recommendations made by Professor Steve Leach are implemented taking into account the comments made by the Scrutiny Assembly on the 8th March 2010.

4.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 4.1 AUC -39 Audit Committee 3rd November 2009
SLB -95 Scrutiny Leadership Board 19th November 2009
SLB - Scrutiny Leadership Board 25th March 2010

5.0 BACKGROUND

- 5.1 The current Scrutiny arrangements were introduced in January 2009. It was agreed that this would be reviewed after 12 months. Professor Leach undertook the review of Scrutiny arrangements during February 2010. The full report and recommendations is attached as Appendix 1.

6.0 VIEW OF SCRUTINY LEADERSHIP BOARD

- 6.1 Scrutiny Leadership Board considered the report and the views of Cabinet and Scrutiny Assembly. The draft minutes of the Scrutiny Leadership Board meeting on the 25th March, Appendix 2, will be circulated to Members prior to the Council Constitution meeting on the 13th April 2010.

7.0 PROPOSED PROCESS TO AGREE CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES REGARDING SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS

- 7.1 Further work is required to the Constitution regarding the Scrutiny arrangements, but this can only be done once the Scrutiny model has been agreed by Council. Accordingly, it is proposed that Council Constitution Committee recommend to Full Council on the 29th April 2010 the Scrutiny arrangements as agreed by Scrutiny Leadership Board as summarised in Appendix 1 page 21.

- 7.2 Currently there is no provision in the constitution for Interim Scrutiny arrangements. Appendix 3 (to follow) proposes to add to the constitution the provision for an Interim Scrutiny Committee that will be politically balanced and have the power to undertake the scrutiny function required under legislation. It is proposed that the Interim Scrutiny Committee will include all the Lead Scrutiny Members appointed at Annual Council and Statutory Co-optees. Until officers have clear directions from Members regarding the amendments to the Constitution regarding the scrutiny arrangements it is proposed that the interim arrangements come into effect following Annual Council. Following Annual Council the Interim Scrutiny Committee will consider the Scrutiny arrangements and recommend the detail of these arrangements to Council Constitution Committee. Council Constitution Committee will then consider these and recommend the consequent revisions to the Constitution to Full Council. Once the Scrutiny arrangements are agreed by Full Council the interim arrangements will be revoked.

- 7.3 At the meeting of the Audit Committee on the 30th March 2010, Members recommended the Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee with Shropshire Council, the Value for Money Scrutiny Group and the Corporate Parenting Scrutiny Group are retained in their current format until the final scrutiny structure is agreed in order to continue to provide an interim scrutiny facility in key risk areas whilst final arrangements for any new scrutiny structures are being worked out.

8.0 OTHER INFORMATION

Equality & Diversity	Scrutiny will continue to consider the equality and diversity issues relating to the services under scrutiny.
Environmental Impact	Scrutiny will continue to consider the environmental issues relating to the services under scrutiny.
Legal Comment	The Council has a duty to scrutinise its work and that of NHS and partner organisations
Links with Corporate Priorities	Professor Leach's report, Section 4.6 and 4.7, sets out options for the relationship between Scrutiny and the Corporate Priorities.
Opportunities & Risks	<p>It is anticipated that the NHS in Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire will consult on the proposals for acute services in the new municipal year. It is important that the necessary scrutiny arrangements are in place to enable Members to continue to scrutinise the proposals through the Joint HOSC with Shropshire Council.</p> <p>Audit Committee identified further risks regarding Value for Money Scrutiny and Corporate Parenting if the Scrutiny arrangements are not confirmed until after Annual Council.</p>
Financial Implications	There are no direct financial implications from this report however the support provided to the Scrutiny by the Scrutiny Team, Democratic Support and other officers will be affected by the savings required across all areas of Council services.
Ward Implications	There are no ward implications resulting from this report.

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report prepared by Fiona Bottrill (Scrutiny Manager: 01952-383113)