

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL – 3rd MAY 2012

CHANGES TO THE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

REPORT OF CHAIRMAN OF SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report to Full Council changes to the Scrutiny Committee structure agreed by the Scrutiny Management Board to be implemented in the 2012/13 municipal year.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

That Council notes the following changes to the Scrutiny Committee structure for the 2012/13 municipal year:

- 2.1 The merger of the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committees into the Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.2 That there will be eight elected Members on the Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.3 That the Co-optees on the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committees will automatically become co-opted members of the Health & Adult Care Scrutiny Committee, and that the Co-opted members of the Health Scrutiny Committee who also sit on the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee will remain the same.
- 2.4 The establishment of a Housing, Economy & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee. The remit of the Committee will include scrutiny of matters relating to housing, economic development, regeneration, environment, transport and where appropriate planning.
- 2.5 That there will be eight elected Members appointed to the Housing, Economy & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee.

3.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 3.1 Scrutiny Management Board, 5th March 2012
Scrutiny Management Board, 18th April 2012

4.0 SUMMARY

- 4.1 The current scrutiny arrangements have been in place since Annual Council in May 2011. Five Scrutiny Committees were established for Adult Social Care, Budget & Finance, Children & Young People, Co-operative & Communities and Health with a Scrutiny Management Board responsible for the strategic management and delivery of the scrutiny function and work programme.
- 4.2 Throughout the year, the Scrutiny Management Board, Scrutiny Chairmen and Scrutiny Members have formally and informally evaluated the efficiency and effectiveness of the scrutiny committees. Two key areas were identified where improvements could be made:
 - 4.2.1 There was a clear duplication of work programmes and overlap of interests between the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committees. This had not made the most efficient use of Member or officer resources in the effective planning and delivery of the work programmes.
 - 4.2.2 Key areas of Council services (housing, economic development, regeneration, environment, transport and (where relevant) planning) did not fall within the remit of a Scrutiny Committee. Scrutiny of issues in these areas had been incorporated into the Scrutiny Management Board's work programme which had limited its capacity to play a full strategic role or to conduct reviews requiring in-depth or follow-up work.
- 4.3 On 5th March 2012, the Scrutiny Management Board agreed proposals aimed at addressing these issues for consultation with Scrutiny Assembly members. The proposals were:
 - 4.3.1 To merge the Health and the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committees into a Health and Adult Care Scrutiny Committee;
 - 4.3.2 To establish a Housing, Economy & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee. The remit of the Committee would include scrutiny of housing, economic development, regeneration, environment, transport and (where relevant) planning matters.
- 4.4 At the same meeting, proposals relating to the involvement of Town & Parish Councils with Scrutiny were agreed and are under consultation with Scrutiny members and Town & Parish Councils until 10th May 2012. The response to the consultation will be discussed by the Scrutiny Management Board on 14th May and a further report will be made to Council regarding any consequent changes to the Scrutiny arrangements.

5. **PROCESS FOR MAKING THE CHANGES**

- 5.1 The Council's Constitution sets out that there will be a minimum of 2 and a maximum of 6 Scrutiny Committees including the Scrutiny Management Board.
- 5.2 Subject to this provision, the Scrutiny Management Board may make changes to the scrutiny structure and processes after consulting with the Scrutiny Assembly. The Scrutiny Chairman will report changes to the next full Council meeting and the Scrutiny Handbook will be updated to reflect the changes. Appointments to the Scrutiny Committees will be made at Annual Council.
- 5.4 The proposed changes remained within the provisions of the Council's Constitution and the process for making the changes was as set out below:

5 th March 2012	Scrutiny Management Board agrees the proposed changes for consultation, the method of consultation and consultees.
12 th March – 16 th April	Consultation with Scrutiny Assembly Members
29 th March – 16 th April	Consultation with Town & Parish Councils. This was in addition to consultation on the proposals to engage Town & Parish Councils with Scrutiny.
18 th April	Scrutiny Management Board considers feedback on the proposals and agrees the scrutiny committee structure.
19 th April	Scrutiny Assembly members and Town & Parish Councils informed of the decision.
3 rd May	Scrutiny Chairman reports changes to Full Council.
24 th May	Appointment of members to the Scrutiny Committees with immediate effect.
24 th May onwards	Scrutiny Handbook updated by Scrutiny Officers for approval by Scrutiny Assembly members.

- 5.5 The feedback from the consultation was all in agreement with the proposed changes.
- 5.6 The agreed structure is shown in Appendix 1 of this report.

6. **EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

There are no equal opportunity issues arising from this report.

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

There are no environmental impacts arising from this report.

8. LEGAL COMMENT

The Terms of Reference of the Scrutiny Management Board include the following provisions in relation to the decision which are for consideration in this report –

“Subject to the provision of Part 4, Section 5, paragraph 1.1 of the Council’s Constitution [there will be a Scrutiny Assembly, and a minimum of 2 and maximum of 6 Scrutiny Committees including a Scrutiny Management Board.], the Scrutiny Management Board may make changes to the scrutiny structure and processes after consulting with the Scrutiny Assembly. The Scrutiny Handbook will be updated to reflect the changes. Changes will be reported back to the next full Council meeting.

The Scrutiny Management Board may periodically review and make changes to the Policy for Co-opting Scrutiny Members.”

Section 21(10) of the Local Government Act 2000 provides that a Scrutiny Committee can include members who are not elected Members of the Authority. Such members cannot vote unless a scheme is made in accordance with Schedule 1 Paragraph 12 to the Act.

Officers will continue to monitor developments in relation to the enactment of the relevant provisions of the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and update the Board in relation to any future changes that may need to be made to existing arrangements.

9. LINKS WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The changes relate to the Council’s scrutiny function.

10. OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS

The changes present an opportunity to improve the effectiveness of scrutiny.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct costs associated with the proposed Scrutiny Committee structure. As set out in the Council’s constitution, a special responsibility allowance of £7,139 p.a is paid to the Chairs of Scrutiny Committees and co-optees receive £260 p.a. There is a revenue budget to meet the costs of member allowances and the changes do not increase the allowances payable.

12. WARD IMPLICATIONS

There are no ward specific implications arising from this report.

13. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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