

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Appointment of Overview and Scrutiny Link Members

9 June 2009

Report of Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To consider the appointment of Overview & Scrutiny link members.

This report is public

Recommendations

- 1) To invite the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board to attend meetings of this Committee as necessary to give updates on key issues relating to the work of the Board.
- 2) That a pre-decision scrutiny link member be appointed;
- 3) That link members to existing Task & Finish Groups be appointed;
- 4) To invite Councillor Mrs Rose Stratford, as the Council's representative on the County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, to attend meetings of this Committee as necessary to give updates on key issues relating to health
- 5) To consider the future of the Executive Liaison arrangements.

Details

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for co-ordinating and managing overview and scrutiny at Cherwell District Council and ensuring that there is effective and timely scrutiny of both the Council and Executive of issues of concern and/or interest to the district. The appointment of individual

members to take the lead in specified areas will enable the Committee to achieve this objective. There will be a standard agenda item at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee meetings to allow the link members to give a verbal update on issues within their remit.

Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board Link Member

2. The designated link member to the Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board will:
 - Provide expertise and guidance;
 - Keep the Overview & Scrutiny Committee updated on progress;
 - Help facilitate the smooth running of the Overview & Scrutiny function;
 - Be a full member of the Resources & Performance Board and eligible to be the Chairman or Vice-Chairman.¹
3. Currently there is no member serving on both committees and so there is no one who is eligible to serve as a link member.
4. It would be appropriate for the Committee to invite the Chairman or Vice-Chairman of the Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board to attend meetings of this Committee as necessary to give a verbal update on countywide health issues. Alternatively the Committee could recommend to Council a change to the membership of the two overview and scrutiny committees which would meet the eligibility criteria for a link member.

Pre-decision Scrutiny Link Member

5. Much of the emphasis of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be on proactive policy review and development – working to get ahead of the Executive and help to shape new and review existing policies. A Pre-decision Scrutiny Member Lead Member, who will use the Forward Plan to identify key Council issues and Executive decision items well in advance, will be critical to the success of this process.
6. Last year this post was held by the Vice Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Task & Finish Group (T&FG) Link Members

7. At the first meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee following the Annual Council meeting and on the establishment of a new Task and Finish Group the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall in respect of each Task and Finish Group appoint one of its number to sit on each Task and Finish Group as the designated link member.

¹ Constitution, 2.3 Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules

8. The designated link member to the Task & Finish Groups will:
- Provide expertise and guidance;
 - Keep the Overview & Scrutiny Committee updated on progress;
 - Help facilitate the smooth running the overview and scrutiny function;
 - Be a full member of the Task & Finish Group and eligible to be their Chairman or Vice-Chairman.²
9. There are currently three active scrutiny reviews:
- 1) **Crime, Perception and Anti-Social Behaviour Task Group:** one member of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Councillor Smithson) serves on this Task & Finish Group. Alternatively the Committee could appoint a further member to the Task & Finish Group.
 - 2) **Concessionary Fares:** this Task & Finish Group review is nearing completion and is due to report to the June meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to the July meeting of the Executive. Councillor Clarke is the Chairman of the Task & Finish Group. Two members of this committee are members of the Task & Finish Group: Councillors Milne Home and L Stratford are eligible to serve as link member. Given the advanced status of this review the Committee may decide not to appoint a link member.
 - 3) **Private Sector Housing Strategy:** three members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Stevens (as Vice-Chairman) and Councillor Smithson and Councillor L Stratford serve on this Task & Finish Group and are eligible to serve as link member. Alternatively the Committee could appoint a further member to the Task & Finish Group.

County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny

10. Councillor Mrs Rose Stratford serves as the Council's representative on the County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This will continue to be an area of interest to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and it would be appropriate for the Committee to invite Councillor Mrs Stratford to attend meetings of this Committee as necessary to give a verbal update on countywide health issues.

Review of Executive Liaison arrangements

11. The Committee agreed to review the effectiveness of the Executive Liaison arrangements at the first meeting of the new municipal year. The previous Chairman of this Committee has written to all the Executive and Liaison members to gauge opinion. The Chief Executive will brief the Committee on the conclusions of the review at the meeting.

² Constitution, 2.3 Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules

Implications

- Financial:** There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific financial issues.
Comments checked by Denise Westlake, Service Accountant, 01295 221559
- Legal:** There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific legal issues.
- Risk Management:** There are no risk implications arising directly from this report. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific risk issues.
Comments checked by Rosemary Watts, Risk Management & Insurance Officer 01295 221566

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
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Background Papers	
None	
Report Author	James Doble, Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager
Contact Information	01295 221587 James.doble@Cherwell-dc.gov.uk