

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

## *Committee Report*

**Public**

**Date of Meeting:**

**15th August 2002**

**Title: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TRAINING**

**Report of: Town Clerk and Chief Executive**

**Report reference: TC 151/02**

### **Summary:**

The report recommends a programme of training following consultation with the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

### **Recommendations:**

That the programme and funding sources be agreed and Overview and Scrutiny Support Officers take it forward in consultation with the responsible Portfolio Holder.

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### **2. Introduction**

At the last meetings of each of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees Members have considered their training needs. This is against the background of the experience gained during last year and reflecting those issues which are in the Work Programme.

This process has identified a number of topics and indications of Members' preferences as to how those topics should best be addressed.

### **3. Suggestions**

The training topics supported by Members are:-

Overview and Scrutiny Skills (including role of the opposition in O&S)

Best Value

Performance Management

Council Budget (particularly relevant for Corporate Resources)

Those Members who had participated in last year's O&S training provided by North West Employers were strongly supportive of further sessions by that provider

It was also clear that most Members felt that, at least initially, the other topics were best tackled by in-house sessions provided the appropriate lead officer(s).

#### 4. Proposed programme

Reflecting the above views the following programme is proposed:-

Topic	Provider/Potential Lead Officer	Timescale
O&S Skills	Northwest Employers	Autumn*
Best Value	Policy Officer (Performance)	As soon as can be arranged+
Performance Management	Policy Officer (Performance) /Performance Officer	Early in New Year#
Council Budget	City Treasurer/CIPFA	As soon as can be arranged\$

Notes: \* - Earliest practical date

+ - To get benefit before new reviews start

# - Once new system in place after Organisational Review

\$ - So as not to be too late for Budget process

As far as the in-house sessions are concerned then the content will reflect the authority's specific approach on these topics. As regards the O&S Skills training then it is proposed the O&S Support Staff work up a suitable programme for the event with North West Employers Director/ Deputy. The approximate cost would £400 - £500.

The City Treasurer has obtained a quote from CIPFA to provide a suitable session on Council Budget. The likely cost ranges from £800 for a standard content to £1500 for a tailored one.

The sessions on Best Value, Performance Management and Council Budget could well be of wider interest to Members who are not on Overview and Scrutiny and,

subject to capacity, could be made available to all Members if the committee so wishes. The content should nevertheless be tailored at O&S needs.

At each event there should be evaluation of how well Members' needs have been addressed and whether further sessions on the particular topic are required e.g. if in-house events identify follow-on or external training needs.

## **5. Duration and Funding**

It is proposed that all in-house sessions should be a maximum of a half a day and be delivered in the Civic Centre to keep costs down. These in-house events will therefore have little or no cost, such costs as there are can be met from existing operational budgets.

It is suggested that it is desirable to maximise take-up for the external event on O&S Skills which is, of course, important for all O&S Members. For this reason and to preserve Members' individual training budgets, the costs, which are not particularly high, could be met from the Overview and Scrutiny Budget (at least in this first full year of O&S operation) if Members so wished.

If the Council Budget Training (principally but not exclusively for Corporate Resources Members) is to be provided externally then the costs for this would need to be found. It may be that the costs could be covered centrally rather than recharged to Members' individual training budgets and this could be taken up with the Portfolio Holder.

## **6. Recommendation**

That the programme and funding sources be agreed and Overview and Scrutiny Support Officers take it forward in consultation with the responsible Portfolio Holder.