EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL HELD ON 22 MARCH 2012

COSP.34/12 OVERVIEW REPORT AND WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer (Mrs Edwards) presented report OS.09/12 which provided an overview of matters relating to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel's work and included the latest version of the work programme and Forward Plan items which related to the Panel.

Mrs Edwards reported that:

- The Forward Plan of Executive Key Decisions, covering the period 1 March to 30 June 2012 had been published on 16 February 2012 and there had been no items in the Forward Plan within the remit of this Panel.
- Two Minute Excerpts from the Executive held on 13 February 2012 had been included in the report:
  - EX.016/12 Housing Strategy 2012-16
  - EX.023/12 Disabled Facilities Grants
- The Homelessness Task and Finish Group had completed their evidence and a draft report had been circulated to the Panel. Members thanked Panel members and officers for the hard work that had been put into the report. Members were impressed with the level of services currently being offered by the City Council and feedback from partners and statutory and voluntary organisations had been complimentary. An e-mail had been received from an officer of the County Council requesting that the Task Group consider making a recommendation to exempt single room rates for care leavers up to the age of 24 in line with leaving care legislation. It was agreed that that support should be included in the report after its validity had been checked with Officers within the benefits section.

Members believed that the recommendations within the report were achievable and sensible. It was agreed that a copy of the background information should be kept with the report to enable people referring to the report to access that information.

The Chairman thanked the members of the Homelessness Task and Finish Group for their work. The final report would be presented the next meeting of the Executive for a formal response to the recommendations.

- A briefing note prepared by the Director of Community Engagement which provided an update on the Women and Families Accommodation had been included in the Overview Report for information. The Environment and Infrastructure Portfolio Holder advised that work on the accommodation was on track.

- The draft of the Scrutiny Annual Report had been attached to the report and aimed to summarise the work carried out in the Civic Year and discuss issues for the future. Suggestions made by the three Overview and Scrutiny Panels would be used to amend the draft before it was considered by the Scrutiny Chairs Group for agreement prior to being submitted to full Council.

There was a concern that on occasion issues were made available for scrutiny after the decision had been made by the Executive. Mrs Edwards advised that the main issue was the formatting of the Forward Plan and suggested that issues be made available for the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Panel but not specify a date for scrutiny.

With regard to scrutiny support members were satisfied with the level of support they received from officers but added that if that was an issue for members of other Panels the issue would need to be addressed.

Mrs Edwards advised that the report would be discussed with the Environment and Economy and Resources Panels before being finalised by the Scrutiny Chairs Group at their meeting on 11 April 2012. The report would then be submitted to Council on 1 May 2012 for implementation by the new Panels in May/June.

- A meeting of the Joint CDRP has being scheduled for 28 March 2012 and the minutes will be circulated at a future meeting of the Panel.

RESOLVED – 1) That, subject to the issues raised above, the Overview Report incorporating the Work Programme and Forward Plan items relevant to this Panel be noted.

2) That the following minute excerpts from the Executive held on 13 February 2012 be noted:

EX.016/12 Housing Strategy 2012-16
EX.023/12 Disabled Facilities Grants

3) That the current position regarding the Women and Families Accommodation be noted.

4) That the Homelessness Task and Finish Group Report be forwarded to the Executive for their comments on the recommendations.

5) That the draft Scrutiny Annual Report be amended to incorporate comments above.