

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2001 AT 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor J Prest (Vice Chairman); Councillors Bradley, Dodd (substitute for Councillor E Mallinson), Ellis, S Fisher (substitute for Councillor Jefferson), Guest, Knapton and C Rutherford.

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors L Fisher, Geddes and Mitchelson attended the meeting as observers.

OSM.18/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Jefferson (Chairman) and E Mallinson.

OSM.19/01 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2001 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

The Minutes of the meeting held 25 October 2001, copies of which had been circulated with the papers for the meeting, were noted.

Referring to Minute OSM.12/01 (Work Programmes for Overview and Scrutiny Committees), a Member asked whether any progress had been made on the request for Overview and Scrutiny Committees to each receive reports or presentations on those services and Council policies for which they were responsible.

The Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy indicated that the CMT would be drawing up a suitable programme.

OSM.20/01 POWERS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE IN RESPECT OF POLICY REVIEWS

The City Solicitor and Secretary submitted report TC.230/01 which sought to address issues raised at the last meeting of this Management Committee, ie:-

- (a) Whether the Constitution may be amended to extend the functions of this Committee to include carrying out policy reviews, especially of a cross cutting nature or, alternatively
- (b) Whether the Committee, in setting the work programmes for the Overview and Scrutiny

Committees, may provide for cross cutting reviews to be carried out by one or more Committees and for such Committees to have the power to co-opt Members of other Overview and Scrutiny Committees so as to bring to bear upon the Review a genuinely cross cutting input and perspective.

The City Solicitor and Secretary indicated that the present Constitution did not provide for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee to carry out individual Reviews. Where a Review had a cross cutting theme, it was for this Committee to determine which Overview and Scrutiny Committee should lead the Review. The lead Overview and Scrutiny Committee could then co-opt Members from the two other Overview and Scrutiny Committees as necessary.

RESOLVED – (1) That the City Solicitor and Secretary's report be noted and the current powers of this Management Committee with regard to policy reviews be accepted.

(2) That it is noted that a review of the operation of the new Constitution would be carried out in due course and that the option of extending the functions of this Committee to include carrying out policy reviews would form part of such review.

OSM.21/01 MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

AND REFERENCES TO MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

The Minutes of the following Overview and Scrutiny Committees were submitted for information:--

- (a) Community (Special) – 24 October 2001
- (b) Corporate Resources (Special) – 25 October 2001
- (c) Infrastructure – 1 November 2001.

There were two references from the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee of 1 November 2001. One was in relation to the work programme and was dealt with at Minute OSM.21/01 following.

The other reference sought guidance on whether a Review of time spent in attempting to secure grant aid to finance works such as drainage was appropriate.

The Chairman of the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee indicated that drainage was being used as an example and that the specific issue could be included in any wider Review which may be carried out in the future.

The Director of Environment and Development undertook to write to the Member who had raised the specific question relating to drainage to answer this query.

RESOLVED – That this Committee does not consider it to be appropriate to have a specific Review of the time spent by Officers in attempting to secure grant aid, and that this issue could be incorporated into a wider Review in the future.

OSM.22/01 WORK PROGRAMMES FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

Amended work programmes for all of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees were submitted.

The Committee's instructions were requested on whether a Review of Dog Fouling should be included in the work programme of the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The Committee was also asked to note that the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee had included in its work programme an investigation of the relationship between the City Council, the County Council and Capita.

The Committee's instructions were also requested on whether there should be a Review of the Use of SMART Cards within the Authority and, if so, which Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be nominated to lead the Review.

The City Solicitor and Secretary drew the Committee's attention to an item which had been included in the work programme for the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee relating to Audit Committee matters. He indicated that the City Treasurer would be submitting a report to the next meeting of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee identifying those audit issues which would need to be included in the work programme of that Committee.

RESOLVED – (1) That the amended work programmes for the Overview and Scrutiny Committees be noted.

(2) That a Review of Dog Fouling be included in the work programme of the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee but, in view of the cross cutting nature of this Review, that Committee be requested to consider co-opting Members from the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee as appropriate.

(3) That the inclusion of an investigation of the relationship between the City Council, the County Council and Capita in the work programme of the Infrastructure Overview and Scrutiny Committee be endorsed.

(4) That the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee be nominated to lead a Review of the use of SMART Cards within the Authority but, in view of the cross cutting nature of this Review, that Committee be requested to consider co-opting Members from the other two Overview and Scrutiny Committees as appropriate.

(5) That it is noted that the City Treasurer would be submitting a report to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee relating to audit matters.

OSM.23/01 REFERENCE FROM EXECUTIVE – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Referring to Minute OSM.5/01 details of the response of the Executive to the

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme requests were submitted as follows:-

1. The Executive noted that items on Golden Jubilee celebrations and the Local Plan had been included in the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees' Work Programmes.
2. The Executive had accepted that the request to review Cemeteries and Crematoria income and expenditure should be dealt with as part of the Bereavement Services Best

Value Review.

3. The Executive could not agree to revisit Large Scale Voluntary Transfer but would consider any publication or White Paper which may be issued by the Government in the future on this issue.

RESOLVED – That the response of the Executive be noted.

OSM.24/01 SCOPING THE HEALTH AND SAFETY AND RISK

MANAGEMENT BEST VALUE REVIEW

The Director of Environment and Development submitted report EN.175/01 setting out current performance and objectives for a Best Value Review to be undertaken into Health and Safety and Risk Management.

The Director suggested that the objective of this Best Value Review should be as follows:-

"To produce an appropriate, effective means of delivery for a Risk Management Strategy within the Authority, building on and developing Best Practice."

He considered that there were three main principles to incorporate within the objective:-

1. A number of systems/procedures were already in place, particularly in financial and health and safety management, and these needed to be reviewed and the benefits defined.
2. Systems needed to be developed to improve strategic and operational management.
3. Both of the above needed to be integrated into the way the Council operated and Risk Management should be "owned" by staff and members and not seen as a "bolt on" to what they do now.

The Director of Environment and Development indicated that one way forward would be to develop and implement a Risk Management Strategy whilst in the course of undertaking a Best Value Review.

The Corporate Best Value Officer indicated that if this approach was acceptable to Members, then the Best Value Inspectorate would provide advice on scoping issues and the most appropriate method of undertaking the Review.

A Member considered that Officers should investigate implementing a suitable training programme for Members and Officers on Risk Management issues during the Review.

RESOLVED - (1) That the three main principles and objectives for the Best Value Review as detailed above be approved.

(2) That the Risk Management standard for Best Value as detailed at Appendix 7 to report EN.175/01 be agreed.

(3) That it be agreed that a Risk Management Strategy be developed and implemented alongside the Best Value Review and the Director of Environment and Development and Corporate Best Value Officer be requested to seek guidance from the Best Value Inspectorate on the most appropriate way to proceed.

OSM.25/01 MONITORING OF THE FORWARD PLAN

Consideration was given to the content of the Leader's Forward Plan of Key Decisions which the Executive intended to take during the period 1 December 2001 to 31 March 2002.

Members indicated that, in order to properly monitor Key Decision making in the Forward Plan, a standing report should be submitted to this Committee identifying any deletions, modifications and departures from the Forward Plan, together with the reasons.

Following a question from a Member, the City Solicitor and Secretary indicated that he was working up a draft protocol to identify the most appropriate way of introducing business under the new Committee Structure. The protocol would seek to identify the types of report which would normally be considered at Overview and Scrutiny Committee before the Executive and vice versa. He indicated that the draft protocol would be circulated to Group Leaders for comment and subsequently be reported to this Committee.

RESOLVED – (1) That the Forward Plan of Key Decisions of the Executive for the period 1 December 2001 to 31 March 2002 be noted.

(2) That a standing item be included on future Agendas for this Committee identifying any deletions, modifications, deferrals and departures from the Forward Plan, together with the reasons.

(3) That the City Solicitor and Secretary be requested to submit a report to a future meeting of this Committee detailing a protocol for dealing with the introduction of business to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees/Executive.

OSM.26/01 REVIEW OF LAYOUT OF THE SLUPSK ROOM

The Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy verbally reported that investigations had been carried out into an alternative layout for the Slupsk Room for meetings. The current circular table had proved unpopular as it was difficult for the public to observe proceedings effectively and the number of people who could be seated around the table was limited.

It would be possible to have a "horseshoe" layout which would improve meetings for observers, but this would further limit the number of people who could be seated.

He indicated that meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committees were now being scheduled for the Flensburg Room wherever possible.

A review of the accommodation arrangements for meetings would be undertaken in the New Year.

A Member considered that the use of Rooms A, B and C could be a further option for Overview and Scrutiny Committees when the Flensburg Room was not available.

RESOLVED – That the current position be noted.

(The meeting ended at 2.55 pm)

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