

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY 17 JANUARY 2002 AT 2.00 PM

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

## ALSO

PRESENT: Councillors L Fisher, Firth, Mrs Geddes, Mitchelson, Mrs Pattinson and G Prest attended the meeting and took part in consideration of the items on Scoping the Organisational Assessment Best Value Review and Scoping the Strategic Approach to Housing Best Value Review.

## OSM.01/02 CHAIRMAN'S COMMENTS

The Chairman welcomed Executive Members and Mr Gerald Davies and Ms Carloyn Whiteside, HACAS Chapman Hendy, to the meeting.

## OSM.02/02 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mrs E Mallinson and Mrs C Rutherford.

## OSM.03/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest affecting any item on the Agenda.

## OSM.04/02 MINUTES

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meetings held on 25 October, 22 November and 20 December 2001 be signed by the Chairman as correct records of the meetings.

## OSM.05/02 MINUTES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

## AND REFERENCES TO MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the following Overview and Scrutiny Committees be noted:

1. Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Special meeting) on 8 January 2002.
2. Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Special meeting) on 8 January 2002.

## OSM.06/02 WORK PROGRAMMES FOR OVERVIEW AND

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

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

RESOLVED – That the amended work programmes for the Overview and Scrutiny Committees be approved.

### OSM.07/02 MONITORING OF THE FORWARD PLAN

The Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy gave a verbal report that no new Forward Plan had been published since the last meeting of the Management Committee. A new Forward Plan would be published on 18 January 2002 and a report on any departures from, or modifications to the previous Forward Plan would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee.

RESOLVED – That the verbal report be noted.

### OSM.08/02 PROPOSALS FOR VALUE FOR MONEY AND PERFORMANCE REVIEW STUDIES

The City Treasurer submitted Financial Memo 2001/02 No 126 advising Members of the agreed allocation of time, within the Strategic Plan for Internal Audit, for Value for Money and Performance Review Studies.

The Audit Manager attended the meeting and asked members to consider any Value for Money or Performance review Studies which they wished to propose for inclusion in the Internal Audit Plan for 2002/03.

The Head of Corporate Policy and Strategy advised that the Management Committee on 20 December 2001 had stated that it did 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. He suggested that the time spent by officers in securing grant aid and the co-ordination and management of applications could be the subject of a Value for Money Review.

RESOLVED – That the time spent by officers in securing grant aid and the co-ordination and management of applications be proposed as a Value for Money study for inclusion in the Internal Audit Plan for 2002/03.

### OSM.09/02 SCOPING THE ORGANISATIONAL ASSESSMENT BEST VALUE REVIEW

In accordance with the protocol for carrying out Best Value Reviews, the Leader and Executive Members nominated by him attended the meeting to express the Executive's views and provide their input to the Scoping of the Organisational Assessment Best Value review.

The Town Clerk and Chief Executive then submitted Report TC.12/02, which contained a report by HACAS Chapman Hendy setting out work to date, which had focussed on consultation, information gathering and diagnostic. The Town Clerk and Chief Executive also tabled a letter from Unison on the report.

Mr Gerald Davies gave a presentation on the report and commented that this sort of Review is a positive exercise which the Council had entered into freely and it showed a commitment to identify areas in need of attention and achieve improvements.

Mr Davies then answered various Members' questions in relation to specific aspects of the report. There was discussion on the following specific issues raised:

- Views expressed by staff and the awareness of staff that their views would be published, but not attributed to any individuals;
- Support for Non-Executive and non-Overview and Scrutiny Members and their role within the overall organisation;
- Area Committees – including the potential role for Members and the potential overlap with Parish Councils;
- The key issues requiring attention and the prioritisation of these issues;
- Corporate working and the need for a cultural change;
- The acceptance by all of the need to change;
- The means for involving staff and achieving their acceptance of the need for change;
- Recognition that this type of review should not be a one off.
- The need for Members to work together and set an example to staff by moving forward together.

Mr Davies accepted that he had only consulted one of the local MP's. He commented that the other MP would be consulted, but that in view of the timescales a report had to be submitted to this meeting. The results of the staff workshops would also be included in future reports.

Members then scoped the Review and agreed that the following issues requiring attention should be prioritised:

- Strategic;
- Cultural;
- Management and Organisational (including the DSO);
- Financial resources.

The Chairman moved and Councillor Mrs J Prest seconded that:

"Due to the Council wide implications of this review, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee considers that it is the appropriate Scrutiny Committee to undertake this review.

In order to facilitate this arrangement, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee will recommend to the Council that a suitable amendment is

incorporated into the present Constitution. In addition, it is proposed that the Council should have the discretion to assign future major reviews to this Scrutiny Committee."

Councillor Guest moved and Councillor Mrs Bradley seconded an amendment that:

"That the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee be delegated the setting up of a Sub-Committee to deal with the Organisational Assessment review. The Sub-Committee would be politically balanced at 3-1-1 and the Chairmen of the other two Overview and Scrutiny Committees would be co-opted on as non-voting Members."

Following discussion, Councillor Guest left the meeting and asked that it be recorded that he had left. Following voting, the amendment of Councillor Guest was lost and the motion of the Chairman was AGREED.

RESOLVED – (1) That, in scoping the Review, the following issues for the organisation requiring attention should be prioritised:

- Strategic;
- Cultural;
- Management and Organisational (including the DSO);
- Financial resources.

(2) That due to the Council wide implications of this review, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee considers that it is the appropriate Scrutiny Committee to undertake this review.

In order to facilitate this arrangement, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee recommends to the Council that a suitable amendment is incorporated into the present Constitution. In addition, it is proposed that the Council should have the discretion to assign future major reviews to this Scrutiny Committee.

(3) That it be noted that, in accordance with the Work Programme approved at OSM.06/02, and the fact that the Council had not yet considered the Committee's proposals at (2) above, the report on the Review, along with the Unison letter circulated by the Chief Executive be referred to the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 24 January 2002.

#### OSM.10/02 SCOPING THE STRATEGIC APPROACH TO HOUSING BEST VALUE REVIEW

In accordance with the protocol for carrying out Best Value Reviews, the Leader and Executive Members nominated by him attended the meeting to express the Executive's views and provide their input to the Scoping of the Strategic Approach to Housing Best Value review.

The Director of Housing submitted Report H.010/02 detailing the current position regarding the Best Value review of the Strategic Approach to Housing. HACAS Chapman Hendy had agreed an extension in their contract to include this review and the Director provided details

of the direction they had been given in carrying out the review. The Review was on target to achieve completion in time for integration into the main review of the Council's structure.

Members were asked to consider the direction given to HACAS Chapman Hendy and suggest any variations they considered to be necessary.

RESOLVED - That the current direction being given to consultants HACAS Chapman Hendy in carrying out a Best Value Review of the Strategic Approach to Housing be approved.

(The meeting ended at 3.30pm )