

**Overview and Scrutiny Board
14th March 2012**

Scrutiny Action Plans

Recommendation

- 1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Board consider the two Scrutiny Actions Plans and determine whether any of the recommendations have been completed.

1.0 Background Information

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Action Plan document has been introduced to provide members with an effective procedure for the monitoring of recommendations that have been formulated by previous Task and Finish Groups and subsequently approved by Cabinet. The document will allow members to receive regular progress updates at Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Information from the relevant Portfolio Holder / Head of Service responsible for the implementation of the recommendations will include key timescales, milestones and outcomes. Members are encouraged to raise questions in terms of the progress of recommendations.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Action Plan will be applied to all new Task and Finish Group reviews. The document has also been applied retrospectively to two reviews that were completed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board within the current municipal year. These are, as follows:
 - Communication with the public and financial accountability
 - Public Service Reform

2.0 Communication with the public and financial accountability

- 2.1 The review of Communication with the Public and Financial Accountability was commissioned by the Task and Finish Group on 10th July 2010. Due to its scope, the review was undertaken in two phases, as follows:
 - Phase One – consideration of how the Council convey the messages of the hard times ahead to the people of Warwickshire and staff.
 - Phase Two – an examination of financial accountability; how financial information is presented and the extent to which those in power are held to account for the decisions they make.
- 2.2 The Phase One recommendations were approved by Cabinet on 27th January 2011, followed by approval of the Phase Two revised recommendations on 13th October 2011. A copy of the Scrutiny Action Plan, which includes the list of recommendations and an outline of progress, is attached at Appendix A.
- 2.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to consider whether any of the recommendations included in the Scrutiny Action Plan has have been completed and determine appropriate timescales for future updates.

3.0 Public Services Reform Task and Finish Group

3.1 The Public Service Reform Task and Finish Group was commissioned by the Overview and Scrutiny Board in July 2010. Due to its scope, the review was undertaken in two phases, as follows:

- Phase One – public reform in adult social care, health, education and police services.
- Phase Two – the benefits to the Council of adopting a strategic commissioning model of service provision.

3.2 The Phase One recommendations were approved by Cabinet and subsequently, the Council adopted a strategic commissioning model as part of its Corporate Business Plan 2011-13 in February 2011.

3.3 The Phase Two recommendations were submitted by the Task and Finish Group in May 2011 and were subsequently approved by Cabinet on 30th June 2011. A copy of the Scrutiny Action Plan, which includes the list of recommendations and an outline of progress, is attached at Appendix B.

3.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to consider whether any of the recommendations included in the Scrutiny Action Plan has have been completed and determine appropriate timescales for future updates.

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Recommendation	PfH Comments	Cabinet Comments	Target Date for Action	Lead Officer	OSC Update	Progress Notes
<p>R1 Holding the Portfolio Holder to Account</p> <p>That, to facilitate effective scrutiny of the council's finances overview and scrutiny committee agendas should include monitoring of both financial performance and service delivery. To this end the Portfolio Holder should present a report on performance, financial position and any anticipated challenges each quarter.</p>	<p>N/a</p>	<p>Approved revised recommendations – 13th October 2011</p>		<p>Virginia Rennie</p>	<p>14th March 2012</p>	<p>The Corporate Performance and Financial Monitoring Report is now presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Board. Chairs of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees have an opportunity to analyse this and identify any areas they would wish to examine in greater detail.</p> <p>Portfolio Holders (including the one for finance, Governance and IT) attend the Overview and Scrutiny Board meetings to present the report.</p> <p>Experience to date suggests that greater attention is given to the Corporate Performance and Financial Monitoring Report at the Overview and Scrutiny than it received when it was presented to individual Committees.</p>

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<p>R2</p>	<p>Holding all Councillors to Account</p> <p>(a) That the Strategic Director for Resources produces a one page quarterly bulletin, for display in the group rooms and dissemination electronically, that highlights financial performance both good and bad.</p> <p>(b) That the Performance Reference Group be asked to consider how performance and financial information can be best communicated to members.</p>	<p>N/a</p>	<p>Approved revised recommendations – 13th October 2011</p>		<p>Virginia Rennie</p>	<p>14th March 2012</p>	<p>a) A one-page financial summary is now regularly presented to Cabinet. This is not enlarged and put on the wall in Group rooms. It is, however, placed in group rooms along with the detail behind it.</p> <p>b) Concerns over the need for protocols to decide what should be a high priority means that this has not been progressed.</p>
<p>R3</p>	<p>Informed Financial Management</p> <p>That the Member Development Steering Group agrees training sessions for all members on County Council finance and also considers the appropriateness of including in that The Open Data initiative, the emerging Local Government Association’s Knowledge Hub and Graphical tools e.g. “Many Eyes” software.</p>	<p>N/a</p>	<p>Approved revised recommendations – 13th October 2011</p>		<p>Virginia Rennie</p>	<p>14th March 2012</p>	<p>A briefing session was provided to Council ahead of its full meeting to consider the budget. In 2012, this session was relatively straightforward as the budget setting was largely a roll-over of the previous years. In 2013, the situation will be complicated by the introduction of the new local government finance system.</p> <p>Consideration is being given to the provision of a financial training session to be held on a Council day. The date for this has yet to be agreed. In addition with work commencing on the induction programme for the 2013 elections consideration is being given</p>

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							to a major review of financial training. This will take account of new methods of presenting information such as those listed in the recommendation.
R4	Informed Financial Management To assist in the budget setting process, a half day is set aside, early in the budget setting round, for senior officers to brief all members on the underlying financial position, emerging budget issues and the implications of these on service users. The political groups may then choose to have follow up sessions.	N/a	Approved revised recommendations – 13 th October 2011		Virginia Rennie	14 th March 2012	As the 2012/13 budget setting round was essentially a roll over of the previous year the political groups decided to scale down their discussions with Strategic Directors. It was agreed that for this year there was no need for a major event. As noted above 2013 will be different and a more though training programme will be required.
R5	Maintaining Standards That Cabinet recognises the valuable and important function of the Audit and Standards Committee and confirms there is no plan for any further restructuring at present and that it will be retained for the foreseeable future.	N/a	Approved revised recommendations – 13 th October 2011		Virginia Rennie	14 th March 2012	The Localism Act 2011 contains elements that will have a significant impact on the form and function of the council's Audit and Standards Committee. This is currently being examined as part of a wider review of the council's governance arrangements and Constitution.

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	Recommendation	PfH Comments	Cabinet Comments	Target Date for Action	Lead Officer	OSC Update	Progress Notes
R1	The Cabinet should review whether there is sufficient capacity to carry out the data analysis required by a strategic commissioning model and should review with public sector partners whether there are additional resources that could be shared.	N/a	Approved – 16 th June 2011	May/June 2012	Phil Evans	14 th March 2012	This issue will be considered as an element of the Strategic Commissioning and Performance Management Review as it is integral to that review process.
R2	The Cabinet should review with public sector partners whether commissioning cycles can be better aligned particularly around gap analysis and planning phases of the cycle to ensure we are able to maximise the information we hold and our resources.	N/a	Approved – 16 th June 2011	Ongoing	Phil Evans	14 th March 2012	This issue will be considered as an element of the Strategic Commissioning and Performance Management Review as it is integral to that review process.

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R3	The Overview and Scrutiny Board should scrutinise the transition plan to assess whether it is fit for purpose having regard to the seven principles set out by the Cabinet Office (Appendix 2 in the report) and the issues raised by partners in Section 9 in the report.	N/a	Approved – 16 th June 2011	N/A	Phil Evans	14 th March 2012	A Strategic Commissioning Action Plan has been developed to act as an overarching guidance document in relation to the Transformation through Strategic Commissioning Journey. The engagement to date with the O&S Board to date is felt to have discharged the scrutiny intended by the recommendation. Notwithstanding the above the document is available for review should Members request it.
R4	In developing the strategic commissioning model for the Authority, Cabinet should be alert to the need to strengthen the following around procurement: - Activity around demand management; - Contract management to drive improvement; - Changing the culture of the organisation to look at cost not just price; and - Market management and market intelligence	N/a	Approved – 16 th June 2011	May/June 2012	Phil Evans	14 th March 2012	This issue will be considered as an element of the Strategic Commissioning and Performance Management Review as it is integral to that review process.