

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COORDINATING GROUP HELD ON 7th JULY 2008

Present:

Members of the Group:

Councillors: David Booth
Ken Browne
Alan Cockburn
Richard Grant (Chair)
Mick Jones
Frank McCarney
Jerry Roodhouse
Bob Stevens

Officers: David Carter, Strategic Director Performance and Development
David Clarke, Strategic Director of Resources
Jim Graham, Chief Executive
Jane Pollard, Overview and Scrutiny Manager
John Wright, Committee Manager

1. General

(1) Apologies

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Richard Chattaway

(2) Members' Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

None.

(3) Minutes of the meeting held on 30th April 2008

The minutes of the 30th April 2008 meeting were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

(4) Matters Arising

Regional Scrutiny Arrangements

The Overview and Scrutiny Manager, reported that other County Councils in the region had not responded to the consultation and therefore it had not been possible to co-ordinate a joint response to the consultation on behalf of all relevant County Councils. Consequently a response to the consultation had been submitted on behalf of this Council, a copy of which was circulated at the meeting.

2. Order of Business

The Chairman informed the Group that he intended to take agenda item 4 Budget Scrutiny as the next item of business

3. Budget Scrutiny

The Group considered a report on the involvement of overview and scrutiny in the budget process. Members felt that the process adopted last year had been successful. Last year the budget had been scrutinised by the Chairs, Vice Chairs and Group Spokesmen of all the Overview and Scrutiny Committees meeting together. The Group discussed the timing and format of the meeting to be held and agreed it should be arranged between the Cabinet meeting on 11 December at which the budget would be initially considered and mid January 2009.

Resolved

- (1) That the budget scrutiny be undertaken at a special meeting of the Chairs, Vice Chairs and Group Spokesmen of all the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- (2) The meeting should last all day with strategic directors being invited to attend in the morning and portfolio holders in the afternoon
- (3) The meeting be held between the Cabinet meeting on 11 December at and mid January 2009

4. Representing the Future: The Report of the Councillors Commission

The Group considered a report that summarised the outcomes of the Councillors Commission review in to the incentives and barriers to serving on Councils. The report sought the views of the Group on whether or not a scrutiny exercise should be commissioned to assess what the Council currently did to support the recommendations of the Councillors Commission and what might be done in the future.

The Group considered the report and recognised that work needed to be done to improve various aspects of the roles and work of councillors and removing barriers to people becoming councillors. The Group were aware that work was currently underway on the improvement of the member development programme and on the development of an induction process for newly elected councillors. It was considered that the issues raised in the review should be taken in to account as part of this work

Resolved that the Strategic Director Performance and Development be requested to take in to account the issues raised in the Councillors Commission Review as part of the work currently underway on the improvement of the member development programme and on the development of an induction process for newly elected councillors

5. Joint Scrutiny Of LAA

The Group considered a report on scrutiny of the LAA. The Public Service Board had commissioned a joint scrutiny review of Area Based Grants and was expected to report in September 2008. It was suggested that the Group used the review as a pilot model for holding the Public Service Board to account in the future and that a Group should be established to identify further effective mechanisms for holding the Public Service Board to account.

Resolved Councillors Booth and Grant be nominated to work with the Overview and Scrutiny Manager over the summer to develop a model for LAA scrutiny to recommend to the Public Service Board in September 2008.

6. West Midlands Overview and Scrutiny Network Steering Group

The Group considered the notes of the meeting of the West Midlands Overview and Scrutiny Network Steering Group held on 11th June 2008.

Resolved that

- (1) The report be noted;
- (2) A report be submitted to the next meeting of the Group on the process for dealing with petitions submitted to the Council and on the processes adopted by other Councils for dealing with Community Calls For Action

7. Date of Next Meeting

The Group noted that their next meeting would be held on Wednesday 1st October 2008 at 2.00 p.m.

8. Any Other Business

None

9. Report Containing Confidential or Exempt Information

Resolved that members of the public be excluded from the meeting for item 9 below on the grounds that their presence would involve the disclosure of confidential or exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of the Local Government Act 1972.

10. Woodleigh Beeches site in Warwick.

The Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust had alerted the Chairs of the Health and Adult and Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committees of potential reconfiguration of services at the Woodleigh Beeches site in Warwick. This issue also potentially affected the Community Protection Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Group was asked to consider how the issue could best be examined should the proposal come forward.

Resolved that in the event that the Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership NHS Trust proposes to reconfigure services at the Woodleigh Beeches site in Warwick the issue be scrutinised by a panel of members comprising members of the Health, Adult and Community Services and Community Protection Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

.....
Chair

The Group rose at 3.15 p.m.