

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

An excerpt of the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 17 March 2009 at the Town Hall, Royal Leamington Spa at 6.00 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillor Gifford (Chair); Councillors Barrott, Boad, Britland, Coker, Copping, Ms De-Lara-Bond, Mrs Gallagher, Hatfield, Mrs Higgins, Mrs Sawdon, Mrs Scarrott and Weed.

1. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest relating to these items.

9. **END OF TERM REPORT**

The Committee considered a report from Members' Services on the work which had been undertaken by the Committee and Audit & Resources Scrutiny Committee since June 2008, the Task and Finish Groups which had been established and the changes which had been made to scrutiny throughout the year.

The main change from the previous Committee style was to streamline the agenda and ensure that it was member led and the items included were those which members wished to receive.

There were a number of standard items on the agenda including the Forward Plan, consideration and comments on selected Executive agenda items, a report on the response the Executive made to the Committees' comments on the previous Executive agenda, and the work programme.

Four Task and Finish Groups had also been established. The agreed procedure was that all non-executive members were invited to join these Groups and they only met following prior approval of the scope by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Two scrutiny reviews had been completed in 2008/2009 and these were with regard to CCTV and Engaging Young People. The response from members had been positive and both of these Groups had produced meaningful and useful recommendations.

The third Group was the Royal Spa Centre Task and Finish Group and their work was currently on-going. The Group would be reporting to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2009 and the Executive in September 2009.

The fourth Task and Finish Group was with regard to tourism and the first meeting was due to be held on 19 March 2009.

At the meeting in February 2009, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee identified three items within the Forward Plan which members would like to have an impact upon, before the report was submitted to the Executive and the decision was made. These had been added into the Committees' work programme and members would now look at the Forward Plan at each

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

meeting. The Committee would also be able to identify any policies due for approval at a future meeting of the Executive and feed into those policies, where members wish to do so.

The Committee had also continued to consider the Executive agenda, but only those items which had been specifically selected by members. This had meant that only the Executive items which were of particular interest to members were commented upon and the Committees' time was spent more effectively.

A training session on questioning skills had also been arranged for all members in January 2009, which gave members the skills needed to interview witnesses who attend the Committee or Task and Finish Groups. This session was very well received by members and a second session would be arranged for later in the year.

RECOMMENDED that the report be noted.

10. FUTURE OF SCRUTINY 2009/2010

The Committee considered a report from the Chief Executive on the Scrutiny for 2009/2010 and the ideas for taking it forward into 2009/2010.

There have been many changes to scrutiny during 2008/2009 and the good work and improvements which had been achieved so far, provided a foundation for building upon into 2009/2010. These improvements were detailed within the report.

It had been suggested by CMT and the Scrutiny Chairs that Audit and Resources Scrutiny Committee becomes 'Finance and Audit Committee' with a remit with respect to finance and audit across all areas. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee would then have an overview of all portfolio areas, but leaving all finance and audit matters to the other committee. In practice this was how the Committees had been working anyway and this amendment to the Constitution would regularise the current position.

It was also suggested by CMT and the Scrutiny Chairs that with respect to the proposed Finance and Audit Committee, it should sign off the accounts on the behalf of the authority. This would remove the need for the very short Council meeting in June and would probably make for better scrutiny of the accounts.

The suggested terms of reference for the proposed Finance and Audit Committee were shown in appendix 2 to the report, and the amended terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were shown in appendix 3 to the report.

A Scrutiny Focus Group was held on 4 March 2009. This informal ad hoc Group consisted of 6 members, Councillors Crowther, Gifford, Guest, Illingworth, MacKay and Pratt, and all non-executive members were invited to attend. This issue of Audit and Resources Scrutiny Committee had been discussed and as well as the option above, it was also suggested that the Audit and Resources Committee could:

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

- continue with the same remit but meet more frequently so that meetings were hopefully shorter and there would plenty of time to consider all items on the agenda; or
- Audit and Resources splits into two separate Committees – one Committee for the audit function and the other for resources issues.

Of course the other option was for the Committee to continue with the present arrangement and make no changes at all.

It was officers' preference that the Committee changes to Finance and Audit Committee, as this was in practice how the Committee was operating anyway. It also made it clear that the overview and scrutiny function lies with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However, this did not prevent the Finance and Audit Committee from completing their own investigations into matters within their remit, but it would not have to be done so within the format of Task and Finish Groups.

The Chief Financial Officer also advised that there was not a good dividing line between audit and resources issues. The external auditor reports were often concerned with matters of financial management and practice, and the Committee had recently decided that a much more strategic approach was adopted towards internal audit. It was felt that there could be confusion between roles in this suggestion.

In effect what was being suggested was that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee carry out the Council's overview and scrutiny function. The proposed Finance and Audit Committee would continue to carry out investigations and other work as the Committee sees fit within their remit, but do not have the full overview and scrutiny responsibilities.

Further suggestions for developing scrutiny for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were detailed in the report.

RECOMMENDED that

- (a) the report and the developments for scrutiny in 2009/2010 be noted; and
- (b) the Committee supports the change from Audit and Resources Scrutiny Committee to Finance and Audit Committee, subject to agreement by the Audit and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

11. REVIEW OF THE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered a report from Members' Services on the Committees' work programme for 2008/2009.

At the Committees' meeting on 3 February 2008, it was agreed that in addition to standard items on the agenda, the Committee would receive the following reports in March 2009:

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

- LAA/LSP – Deferred to June 2009 because the current LAA agreement WAs being refreshed as per the item on the Executive agenda
- Waste Management – Deferred to June because a scrutiny had been undertaken by Audit & Resources Scrutiny Committee
- A scoping document with regard to Maintenance of WDC Trees
- Engaging Young People Task and Finish Group report

Engaging Young People Task and Finish Group – The Group had now concluded their scrutiny of CCTV and the draft report was a separate item on the agenda.

CCTV Task and Finish Group – This report was on the agenda for the March meeting of the Executive.

Tree and Woodland Task and Finish Group – As agreed at the last meeting of the Committee, the Group had been disbanded because the scope was too wide.

Royal Spa Centre Task and Finish Group – The Group have had their second and third meetings and had had a site visit to the Civic Hall in Bedworth. Their final report would now be submitted to the Executive in July 2009 and not June as originally planned.

At each meeting, the Committee considered their work programme and made amendments where necessary, and also made comments on specific Executive items, where notice has been given by 9am on the day of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting. The Committee also received a report detailing the response from the Executive, on the comments the Committee made on the Executive agenda in the previous cycle.

On a quarterly basis, the Committee received performance reports and had previously received the Forward Plan on this basis too. However, to ensure the Forward Plan was used effectively to allow the Committee to become involved in the Executive decisions to be taken, this was now a standard item on each agenda.

For information, at each meeting of the Executive, there would be a report on their agenda detailing the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Audit and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and the following amendments be made to the work programme:

- (i) Business Improvement Programme (BIP) – Report detailing Information on the BIP programme with specific details about the Culture Trust – June 2009;
- (ii) Portfolio Holder Areas – Report on how the new Portfolio Holder areas fit with the Council's structure – June 2009;

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

- (iii) Royal Spa Centre Task and Finish Group – Reporting to the Committee in July 2009 and to the Executive in August 2009; and
- (iv) Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG) - Details of the process for dealing with DFG's and specifically how the back log is being/has been dealt with – June 2009.

RECOMMENDED that the work plan, as attached at Appendix A, for the municipal year 2009/10 be noted.

(The meeting ended at 8.30pm)

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Work Programme 2009/2010

June 2009

	Title	Area of investigation	Format	Lead Officer	Membership of Task & Finish sub group and/or additional persons to attend	Next report date if applicable	Completion date
1	Work programme	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	July 2009	On-going
2	Report on Executive responses from March 2009 & identification of Executive Decisions to be Scrutinised	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	July 2009	On-going
3	Consideration of specific Executive agenda items	Standard Item	Comments	Theresa Goss	N/A	July 2009	On-going
4	Forward Plan	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	July 2009	On-going
5	Performance Report	Performance targets – Quarter 4	Report	Dave Barber	N/A	July 2009	On-going
6	Warwick BID	Forward Plan – Requested by the Committee in February 2009	Report	Paul Pinckney	N/A	TBC	TBC
7	Local Area Agreements/ Local Strategic Partnership	Forward Plan – Requested by the Committee in February 2009	Report	Bill Hunt	N/A	TBC	TBC

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

8	Recycling and new refuse collection scheme	Previous Committees' work programme	Report	Theresa Goss	To be appointed	TBC	TBC
9	Business Improvement Programme (BIP)	Information on the BIP programme with specific details about the Culture Trust	Report	Dave Barber/ Maxine Gregory	TBC	TBC	TBC
10	Disabled Facilities Grants	Details of the process for dealing with DFG's and specifically how the back log is being/has been dealt with	Report	Paul Leeman/ Satnam Kaur	N/A	TBC	TBC
11	Portfolio Holder Areas	How do the new Portfolio Holder areas fit with the Council's structure	Report	Chris Elliott	N/A	TBC	TBC

July 2009

	Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer	Membership of Task & Finish sub group and/or additional persons to attend	Next report date if applicable	Completion date
1	Work programme	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	August 2009	On-going
2	Report on Executive Responses from June 2009 & identification of Executive Decisions to be Scrutinised	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	August 2009	On-going

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

3	Consideration of specific Executive agenda items	Standard Item	Comments	Theresa Goss	N/A	August 2009	On-going
4	Performance Report	Performance targets – Full report	Report	Dave Barber	N/A	August 2009	On-going
5	Forward Plan	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	August 2009	On-going
6	Royal Spa Centre	Overview and Scrutiny Committee – December 2008	Task and Finish Group – draft report	Theresa Goss/Rose Winship	Cllrs Coker, Ms Dean, De-lara-Bond, Gifford and Mrs Gallagher	N/A – final report	July 2009

August 2009

	Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer	Membership of Task & Finish sub group and/or additional persons to attend	Next report date if applicable	Completion date
1	Work programme	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	October 2009	On-going
2	Report on Executive Responses in July 2009 & identification of Executive Decisions to be Scrutinised	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	October 2009	On-going
3	Consideration of specific Executive agenda items	Standard Item	Comments	Theresa Goss	N/A	October 2009	On-going

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

4	Performance Report	Performance targets – Quarter 1	Report	Dave Barber	N/A	October 2009	On-going
5	Forward Plan	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	October 2009	On-going
6	Future Catering Arrangements in Cultural Services	Forward Plan – Requested by the Committee in February 2009	Report	Rose Winship	N/A	TBC	TBC
7	Scrutiny of Flooding	Task and Finish Group report. Progress report submitted to the Committee in February 2009.	Report	Graham Leach/Alwin McGibbon	Warwick District Councillors Boad, Britland, Gifford, Gill, Illingworth, Mobbs and Weed. Warwickshire County Councillors Doody, Mrs Goode and Naylor	TBC	On-going

October 2009

	Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer	Membership of Task & Finish sub group and/or additional persons to attend	Next report date if applicable	Completion date
1	Work programme	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	December 2009	On-going

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

2	Report on Executive Responses from August 2009 & identification of Executive Decisions to be Scrutinised	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	December 2009	On-going
3	Consideration of specific Executive agenda items	Standard Item	Comments	Theresa Goss	N/A	December 2009	On-going
4	Forward Plan	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	December 2009	On-going
5	Future Catering Arrangements in Cultural Services	Forward Plan – Requested by the Committee in February 2009	Report	Rose Winship	N/A	TBC	TBC
6	Scrutiny of CCTV	Progress report – Requested by the Committee in February 2009	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	TBC	TBC

December 2009

	Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer	Membership of Task & Finish sub group and/or additional persons to attend	Next report date if applicable	Completion date
1	Work programme	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	February 2010	On-going

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

2	Report on Executive Responses from October 2009 & identification of Executive Decisions to be Scrutinised	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	February 2010	On-going
3	Consideration of specific Executive agenda items	Standard Item	Comments	Theresa Goss	N/A	February 2010	On-going
4	Performance Report	Performance targets – Quarter 2	Report	Dave Barber	N/A	February 2010	On-going
5	Forward Plan	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	February 2010	On-going

February 2010

	Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer	Membership of Task & Finish sub group and/or additional persons to attend	Next report date if applicable	Completion date
1	Work programme	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	March 2010	On-going
2	Report on Executive Responses from December 2009 & identification of Executive Decisions to be Scrutinised	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	March 2010	On-going

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MINUTES (Continued)

3	Consideration of specific Executive agenda items	Standard Item	Comments	Theresa Goss	N/A	March 2010	On-going
4	Performance Report	Performance targets – Quarter 3	Report	Dave Barber	N/A	March 2010	On-going
5	Forward Plan	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	March 2010	On-going

March 2010

	Title	Where did item originate from	Format	Lead Officer	Membership of Task & Finish sub group and/or additional persons to attend	Next report date if applicable	Completion date
1	Work programme	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	June 2010	On-going
2	Report on Executive Responses from February 2010 & identification of Executive Decisions to be Scrutinised	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	June 2010	On-going
3	Consideration of specific Executive agenda items	Standard Item	Comments	Theresa Goss	N/A	June 2010	On-going
4	Forward Plan	Standard Item	Report	Theresa Goss	N/A	June 2010	On-going