

BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

27 MARCH 2008

PROPOSED CHANGES TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Report from: Neil Davies, Chief Executive

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Summary

This report provides Members of the Committee with an outline of the proposed changes to the Council's overview and scrutiny committees, on which a decision is to be made at Council on 17 April 2008 and at the Annual Council meeting.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 With the exception of minor changes, all changes to the Constitution are a matter for decision by the Council following consideration of the proposals by the Monitoring Officer.
- 1.2 This report is being brought to the Committee as a matter of urgency as its views are sought before the decisions in relation to the changes to overview and scrutiny are made at the Council on 17 April 2008.

2. Background

- 2.1 On 28 February 2008 the Council agreed to implement a new two-directorate structure. One covers Children and Adults and the other Regeneration, Community and Culture. The Business Support Department remains in place with the addition of Housing and Registrars and Bereavement.
- 2.2 In December 2005 the Council established the principle of aligning the Overview and Scrutiny Committees with the Council directorate structure to ensure clear links between the functions of the authority. This also promotes clear lines of executive and directorate accountability. Since that time the Council has brought together the scrutiny of health and adult social care under the Health and Adult Social Care Sub Committee of the Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and the scrutiny of children's health and children's

social care under the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This change was agreed in light of the degree to which health and social care services are becoming more integrated at both commissioning and provider levels, and to give a heightened focus to the scrutiny of children's health.

- 2.4 In order to preserve the principles established in previous reviews of the Council's constitutional arrangements and to reflect the new directorate structure it is now proposed to recommend the following for approval:
- (i) the disestablishment of the Community Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (noting that as a consequence, the Health and Adult Social Care Sub Committee will not be reappointed)
 - (ii) a change of the name of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Children and Adults Overview and Scrutiny Committee with continuing responsibility for scrutiny of children's health.
 - (iii) a change of the name of the Regeneration and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee to the Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - (iv) the establishment of a Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee which will have the same terms of reference as the existing Health and Adult Social Care Sub Committee and to increase the size of that Committee from 10 to 12 Members.
- 2.5 Appendix A to this report shows the changes required to the terms of reference of Overview and Scrutiny Committees if the recommended reconfiguration is approved.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 In addition to this report being presented to the Committee tonight there is a similar report, being taken to Cabinet on 1 April 2008 before the final report is taken to the 17 April 2008 Council meeting for a decision.

4. Financial and legal implications

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from the proposed changes to Overview and Scrutiny Committee arrangements. However, a reduction in the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings is consistent with the recent disestablishment of a post in the Overview and Scrutiny Team equating to a 25% reduction in capacity.
- 4.2 The constitutional changes proposed in this report are consistent with requirements in the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 relating to political balance, the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 The Committee is asked requested to comment on the report and consider the recommendations being proposed to Council as set out in paragraph 2.4 to take effect from the Annual Council meeting on 7 May 2008.

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Background papers

- Council – Constitutional changes – 8 December 2005
- Council – Fit for Business: Review of Senior Management Structure - 28 February 2008
- Cabinet – Constitutional changes – 1 April 2008