

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2008

Present: Councillors P Connolly (Chairman); Mrs Y R T Clarkson; J Kane; M McVeigh and C Whiteside.

Officers: N White, Scrutiny Support Officer; H Mitchell, Head of Policy and Performance; M Jepson, Head of Legal and Democratic Services; T Capper Democratic Services Manager; J Crellin, Head of Finance and Business Development.

Minutes

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2008 be signed as a correct record subject to the addition of Councillor M McVeigh being marked as present at the meeting on 19 September 2008.

MGT 41/08 Budget 2008/09

The Committee considered four reports that had gone to the Council's Resource Planning Working Group on the Council's draft 2008/09 budget.

These covered:

- Review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Agreed priorities
- Risks identified
- Budget timetable

The Committee expressed concern at the effect of the current economic climate on the council's budget and that it may mean reduced income in this and next year's budget.

The Committee noted the report was the start of the Scrutiny budget process for this year and a report on how to develop Scrutiny's role in the budget process for the rest of this year and future years would be submitted to a future meeting.

RESOLVED - that the report be received.

MGT 42/08 Update Communities in control: Real people, real power Improving local accountability consultation

The Committee considered the first in a series of Communities in Control (Real people, real power) consultations flowing from the recent white paper (July 2008).

The consultation also covered the implementation of the overview and scrutiny provisions in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health

Act 2007. It seeks views on how to develop overview and scrutiny powers; to hold local officers to account and how to facilitate the work of councillors.

The Committee considered the eight questions and a draft response to those questions in the consultation on the overview and scrutiny process. The Committee agreed with the response which council would consider at its meeting on 21 October 2008 along with the other four questions in the consultation.

RESOLVED – that full council be advised that the Committee’s response to the overview and scrutiny questions within the Communities in control consultation be as set out in Appendix “A” to the report.

MGT 43/08 Procedure for Consultation on OSC/Task and Finish Group Reports

The Committee considered a proposed procedure from the Council’s corporate team to introduce arrangements which give overview and scrutiny and task and finish group members the opportunity to take advice from officers when formulating their reports and recommendations.

It noted that there was a procedure in place for screening and signing off of reports by Officers to Executive and Council but not for Overview and Scrutiny Committees or Task and Finish Groups which the procedure sought to rectify.

The Committee felt that the time for receiving appropriate advice particularly from the council’s Monitoring Officer and the Section 151 Officer was after the task and finish group had reported to its parent Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED - that an amended procedure taking on board the committee’s comments be submitted to a future meeting.

MGT 44/08 Forward Plan

RESOLVED – The Forward Plan of key decisions September – December 2008 be noted.

MGT 45/08 Work Plan

Consideration was given to the Work Plan of the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Committees. During consideration of this item Members were advised that it was proposed to organise some training for the committee on listening and questioning skills. The Committee agreed that this training should be on the same day as one of its scheduled meetings.

RESOLVED – that the Work Plan be noted.

MGT 46/08 Executive Decisions

(Councillor Mrs Y Clarkson declared a personal interest in property related matters due to her position as a business rate-payer)

RESOLVED – that the decisions made by the Executive at its meeting on 14 October 2008 be noted.

Chairman..... Date.....