

Minutes Overview Committee

Tuesday, 20 March 2012 at 10am

Membership

- absent

Councillors

- Joyce Bosnjak (Chair)
- Martin Wright (Vice-Chair)
- Michelle Gent (Vice-Chair)
- Chris Barnfather
- Steve Carroll
- Ged Clarke
- Wendy Quigley
- Sue Saddington
- Liz Yates

Officers

Sue Bearman - Senior Solicitor PPCS
Martin Gately - Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Chris Holmes - Team Manager Governance and Scrutiny
Ruth Rimmington - Temporary Governance Officer

Also in attendance

Councillor V H Dobson

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 February 2012 having been circulated were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

2. Apologies for absence

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Michelle Gent (other reasons).

3. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

4. Transition to the New Committee System Briefing

Chris Holmes, Team Manager, Governance and Scrutiny and Sue Bearman, Senior Solicitor attended the meeting to provide members with a briefing on the proposed operation of the new committee system. Approval was being sought by Council to change the governance of the Council from the Leader/Cabinet Executive arrangement to a committee system. Mr Holmes referred to points within the report that was being published later that week for consideration by Council at its meeting on 29th March 2012. A copy of the outline committee structure had been tabled.

He referred to the fact that a number of issues had been identified through existing scrutiny committees as possible matters for future investigation and said that appropriate committees had been identified to consider them.

In terms of transition to the new system, it was expected that all the subjects listed within the work programmes would go forward to the relevant successor committee for consideration as a possible area for them to look at. The work programme for Scrutiny would conclude with the final Overview and Standing Committee meetings in April, at which any current reviews would present their final reports. It was also proposed that the Policy Committee would have responsibility for the exercise of residual Scrutiny powers under the system.

Members asked questions and comments which Mr Holmes and Ms Bearman responded to:-

- Under the new proposals, the statutory co-opted members on the Education Standing Committee would be replaced with non-voting added members on the Children and Young People's Committee.
- A further report to Council on the future arrangements for Standards Committee would be necessary once the regulations were available.
- The Police and Crime Panel would be a Joint Committee with the Boroughs/Districts and the County and City Councils, once the Police Authority was abolished in November.
- In terms of the Joint City/County Health Scrutiny, consideration would be given to another committee to cover the remaining areas of the County.
- Whilst members acknowledged the time delay was due to changes, they commented on the difficulties they faced in making plans without a diary of committee dates and not knowing what committees they would be on. Provided the report to Council was approved on 29 March then business managers could go ahead putting names on committees. The draft diary was also expected to be circulated after the meeting.
- There were a lot of meetings with differing frequencies, which provided members more opportunity to be involved in policy matters. It would be important for the business managers to be aware of the workloads involved.
- There would be a review of the whole system after six months.

The Committee thanked the officers for the briefing on the proposed new committee arrangements.

5. Development of the draft Annual Report

A copy of the draft annual report was circulated at the meeting. Members were invited to input their views on the achievements of Scrutiny from the last year and to highlight any lessons that had been learnt, that may be applicable to the development and operation of the new committee system.

It was agreed that each Committee Chair would provide the Scrutiny Coordinator, by the end of March, with their comments for inclusion in the Annual Report to be presented to the April Overview Committee meeting

6. Programme of Scrutiny

The Chair reported that the only unfinished business was that of the Shared Services Review Group whose draft final report was being presented to the April meeting of Overview Committee.

Councillor Sue Saddington, Chair of the Communities and Environment Committee reported that they had received the response to the recommendations of the Conservation and Heritage Review, all of which had been accepted by the Portfolio Holder. The committee had also received presentations on Newark Tourism sites, that included the history around the Workhouse site in Southwell and a short presentation on the current position regarding Nottinghamshire as a tourist attraction from the Chief Executive of Experience Nottinghamshire.

Councillor Liz Yates, Chair of the Education Standing Committee referred to an additional meeting of the Standing Committee held on 1 March that had been devoted to evidence gathering for the Child Poverty and Educational Attainment Review. Its meeting on 12 March further undertook information gathering that included contributions made by the Police to the Nottinghamshire's Child and Family Poverty Strategy.

There had been no Social Care and Health Standing Committee since the last meeting of the Overview Committee.

The meeting closed at 10.40am.

CHAIR

Ref: M 20 March 2012