

REPORT OF CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE

KEY ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES IN SCRUTINY

1. This report updates Members on the work of scrutiny and on the implementation of recommendations made in scrutiny reviews, including updates on the work of the three standing committees.

Overview

2. On 20th December Overview Committee undertook the annual scrutiny of budget consultation. The aim of the consultation is to:
 - raise awareness and an understanding of the difficult financial challenges the Council is faced with;
 - give the public and relevant stakeholders an opportunity to give their views on where they think budget variations should be made;
 - encourage the public to consider and propose innovative solutions.
3. A key objective of the consultation process is to ensure that the budget proposals are made available to all residents and stakeholder groups across the county. It is crucial that the consultation exercise:
 - demonstrates that the authority is committed to a meaningful and purposeful dialogue;
 - involves residents and the wider community throughout the process;
 - ensures that employees and their representatives are effectively engaged in the process;
 - communicates the challenges inherent in setting the budget effectively, leading to an understanding of the constraints in which the authority must operate.
 - complies with legal requirements
4. The Overview Committee heard that the level of response to the consultation was as follows: as at 28 November 2011, a total of **3,476 consultation responses** have been received - 395 via the budget conversation, 86 via the budget simulator, 2,800 via the citizens' panel and 195 via the budget proposals.
5. It was suggested that Members might be able to help the Council to improve participation by raising the issue of the budget consultation in areas with a poor response. Local newsletters might be a useful means of achieving this.

Standing Committees

Communities & the Environment

6. On 23rd January the Communities and the Environment Standing Committee will receive briefing on the Bassetlaw tourism offer and the Chesterfield Canal as part of the Tourism Review.
7. The Standing Committee will also receive the final report of the Seasonal Canine Illness/Dog Deaths Study Group.
8. The first meeting of the Water and Gas Emissions from Disused Mines Study Group took place on 12th January. The study group undertook a scoping exercise and received briefing.

Education

9. On 30th January the Education Standing Committee will receive briefing on Key Stage 2 attainment and undertake evidence gathering for the Child Poverty and Educational Attainment Review.
10. A sub-committee examining the issue of the recruitment and retention of Governors will meet on 24th January to consider induction and under-representation as well as gathering evidence from a Head Teacher.

Social Care and Health

11. On 9th January the Social Care and Health Standing Committee received a briefing on the operation of the operation of the Health and Wellbeing Board.
12. A review group of the Social Care and Health Standing Committee examining issues associated with rota visits met for the first time on 4th January to undertake a scoping exercise.

Joint Health

13. On 10th January the Joint City and County Health Scrutiny Committee commenced the annual examination of the development of Quality Accounts for the following organisations:
 - East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust
 - Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust
 - Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
 - NHS Nottingham Treatment Centre
14. Further consideration of Quality Accounts will take place in May.

COUNCILLOR JOYCE BOSNJAK
CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW COMMITTEE