

Information/Discussion Paper

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

29 February 2012

Work Planning 2012-2013 - going forward to the new Scrutiny Arrangements

Background

- 1.1** In December 2011, Council agreed a set of principles for the new scrutiny arrangements. The new structure supports a move away from the current three committee structure to a new structure based on one overarching committee and task and finish groups. It is not intended that all the work of the existing three committees would be passed over to the new committee but rather that the new committee would set up task and finish groups to do some of the more detailed work.
- 1.2** The next step is to develop the procedures, protocols and constitutional changes required to support those principles agreed at Council. This is being progressed through a series of scrutiny workshops and the constitution working group. A number of members and officers participated in the latest workshop on 20 February. One of the topics discussed was the workplan under the new scrutiny arrangements which would cover both the O&S main committee and all its task groups. The attendees felt that it was very important that all the current scrutiny committees had the opportunity to input to the new combined workplan.
- 1.3** As this is the last meeting of each of the existing O&S committees, members are asked to review their workplan and make suggestions for the following:
- Which outstanding items on the workplan should be considered for inclusion in the workplan for the new O&S committee? e.g. corporate strategy
 - Which items could be dealt with more effectively by a scrutiny task group i.e. a time limited working group to consider a particular topic and make recommendations at the end? e.g. review of Imperial Gardens at the end of the 2012 season
(a list of current working groups and those who have reported in the last 12 months is contained in Appendix 2)
 - Are there any issues which are periodically considered by this committee which members think should continue to be scrutinised under the new arrangements? e.g. Flood update.
 - Are there any regular items which could be dealt with as member briefings in the future? e.g. Civic Pride presentations or presentations from an outside organisation where members have a particular interest.
- 1.4** Once all three O&S committees have met, it is planned for the chair and vice chairs to meet with Democratic Services in March to finalise their input to the new workplan. The new O&S committee and the chair and vice-chair will be appointed at Selection Council in May and they will then take responsibility for the workplan and its delivery.

They may well want to make changes but the input from the existing committees will provide an excellent starting point.

Effectiveness of O&S

- 1.5** As this is the last meeting of this committee, it would also be helpful to have feedback from members of the committee on how they view the effectiveness of their scrutiny work overall and are there any learning points which they would want to be taken forward into the new arrangements.

Some questions they may like to consider are:

1. Do they feel they have had the right topics on the agenda?
2. Has the committee been in an effective position to scrutinise the Cabinet?
3. Has information being presented to scrutiny in the right form, and does it enable the right level of discussion?

Appendices

1. Draft work plan 2012-2013
2. List of existing Committee and Cabinet Member working groups

Background Papers

Contact Officer

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