



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Council
20 July 2017

APPENDIX 1

Overview and Scrutiny Restructure 2017

Responsible Officer: Tom Dodds	
email: tom.dodds@shropshire.gov.uk	Tel: 01743 253068

1.0 Summary

This report presents a revised structure for Overview and Scrutiny at Shropshire Council proposed by the Leader of the Council and considered by PSMG. It also includes a vision for Overview and Scrutiny and the refreshed Task and Finish Group Protocol. This follows a Peer Review by the Local Government Association (LGA) and the Centre of Public Scrutiny (CfPS) in February 2017.

2.0 Recommendations

That Council agrees:

- A. the vision of Overview and Scrutiny at Shropshire Council.
- B. the proposed structure for Overview and Scrutiny.
- C. the refreshed Task and Finish Protocol
- D. the review of the Overview and Scrutiny after 12 months of operation to ensure the expected impact and added value is being achieved.

Report

3.0 Context

- 3.1 The revised structure of Overview and Scrutiny seeks to provide renewed energy and focus. The objective is to provide all members with the opportunity to be involved in shaping and influencing how the Council responds to challenges and opportunities, responding appropriately and effectively to the changes and development the Council is making to develop the economy, sustain services and protect vulnerable people.

3.2 The start of the new Council and the Corporate Plan and the Strategic Action Plans provide the opportunity for Scrutiny to redesign itself to meet the new challenges. A Peer Review of Overview and Scrutiny was carried out by the LGA and CfPS in February 2017. The report of the Peer Review Team is included in the appendices.

4.0 Scrutiny Committees and Overview Committees

4.1 The Peer review identified that Overview and Scrutiny and the New Council will benefit from a shared vision:

“Through engagement with the public, service providers and other stakeholder, Overview and Scrutiny drives positive improvements to Council and other public services, securing better outcomes for Shropshire residents and communities.”

4.2 The proposal sets out 5 Committees. The proposed structure and remits of the Committees are included in the appendices.

4.3 There will be a Scrutiny Committee (Performance Management Scrutiny Committee), the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and three Overview Committees.

4.4 The distinction being that the Overview Committees will be focused on pre-decision scrutiny and developing evidence based recommendations which will inform the development of plans and decisions such as those related to the delivery of the Council’s Strategic Action Plans. The Scrutiny Committee will have a greater focus on the impact of the decisions and whether they are being achieved receiving performance and financial reports, as well as maintaining a view of corporate issues including IT.

4.5 The opportunity to review the Overview and Scrutiny arrangements after 12 months of operation will enable the impact and added value to be evaluated, and the identification of changes and developments.

5.0 Strategic Scrutiny Work Programme

5.1 The Strategic Scrutiny Work Programme provides the framework from which all planned Scrutiny activity is drawn, and in all cases all topics will be considered for inclusion by the Scrutiny Committee. It is proposed that Performance Management Scrutiny Committee would manage the Strategic Scrutiny Work Programme and commission work from the appropriate Overview Committee. In some instances it might be appropriate for joint working across Committees, as is currently the case.

5.2 The Strategic Work Programme will take account of the Corporate Plan and Strategic Action Plans to ensure that Overview and Scrutiny activity is tied into the key changes and developments that the Council is progressing. This will enable the identification of opportunities to undertake pre-decision scrutiny, engage with the public and communities, and identify learning and evidence the impact achieved.

5.3 Topics are expected to be drawn from a range of sources. They will be reported to and considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee who will confirm whether they will be added to the Strategic Scrutiny Work Programme, and will also decide on how and when the topic will be considered, e.g. a report to the committee or to be scope for Task and Finish Group work. As well as the Corporate Plan and Strategic Action Plans, sources include:

- Topics identified and proposed by Members of the Council
- Topics identified by Directors and/or Portfolio Holders
- Topics suggested by partners and stakeholders as specified by the Regulations e.g. by HealthWatch for topics related to Health or Adult Social Care.
- Topics arising from the Scrutiny Committee's consideration of performance reports, financial reports and customer feedback e.g. complaints comments and compliments, and survey results.
- Topics associated with any commissioning intentions that the Council confirms and publishes
- Call-ins as per the Constitution

6.0 Task and Finish Group Protocol

6.1 Task and Finish groups are valued by officers and Members for the opportunity they provide to explore issues in detail and add value. This was also recognised in the Peer Review of Overview and Scrutiny.

6.2 The Task and Finish group Protocol and the Protocol on the appointment of Members of Task and Finish groups have been refreshed to bring the protocols up to date and continue provide clear guidance. The refreshed protocols are included in the appendices.

7.0 Officer Support to Scrutiny Work

7.1 Dedicated officer support for Overview and Scrutiny has been identified as a requirement to enable the five Committees to realise the impact and add value to the Council and achieve positive outcomes for local people and communities.

7.2 The officer support would be 2 FTE posts fixed term for 2 years. The post holders would work with the Scrutiny Members supporting and enabling the research into topics, working with senior officers and the lead directors, contacting witnesses, and working with the Committee Officers to make the arrangements for Committee meetings and Overview and Scrutiny work.

List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)

Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)

Cllr Peter Nutting

Local Member

All

Appendices

- LGA Peer Review Report
- Proposed Structure for Overview and Scrutiny
- Refreshed Protocol: Task and Finish Groups
- Refreshed Protocol on the appointment of Members to Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups