

Meeting of the Full Council

Meeting to be held on 17 December 2015

Report submitted by: Director of Governance, Finance and Public Services

Part A

Electoral Division affected:
None

Revised Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements

(Appendix A refers)

Contact for further information:

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Executive Summary

Full Council is asked to agree to the establishment of a new "Children's Services Scrutiny Committee", and consequential amendments to the Terms of Reference of the scrutiny committees. In addition, the Council is asked to approve the appointment of a new "Scrutiny Officer", a statutory post the council is required to have.

Revised Terms of Reference for the scrutiny committees are attached at Appendix A.

Recommendation

The Full Council is asked:

- i. to approve the establishment of a Children's Services Scrutiny Committee, comprising thirteen county councillors, five non-voting district co-opted members and one non-voting co-opted Youth council representative.
- ii. to appoint a chair and deputy chair of the new Scrutiny committee for the remainder of the 2015/16 municipal year.
- iii. to approve the revised Terms of Reference for the scrutiny committees attached at Appendix A.
- iv. to approve the appointment of Paul Bond, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, as the Council's statutory Scrutiny Officer.
- v. to authorise the Director of Governance, Finance and Public Services to make any consequential amendments to the Constitution.

Background and Advice

1. New Children's Services Committee

Following the Ofsted inspection in September and October it is proposed to establish an additional scrutiny committee with the remit to consider matters relating to services for children and young people.

The new committee will be called the "Children's Services Scrutiny Committee" (CSSC), and will operate in addition to the existing committees. Its remit will cover all issues relating to children and young people's services, although specifically education matters will still be reserved for the Education Scrutiny Committee. The new CSSC will scrutinise services provided by the council and all partners, including the health service. To facilitate the new committee's work in relation to the health service, it is proposed that it be given the statutory powers of an overview and scrutiny committee as they relate to the NHS.

1.1 Membership

The committee will be made up of 13 county councillors, comprising six Labour, five Conservative, one Liberal Democrat and one Independent Group member. Political Groups will be invited to provide their nominations in writing to the Monitoring Officer.

As the committee, will be exercising statutory health powers, it is proposed that the committee include five non-voting co-opted district members, to be appointed by the five local Children's Partnership Boards.

In addition, it is proposed that the committee include a non-voting co-opted representative from the Youth Council. The total number of members will therefore be 19.

1.2 Frequency of Meetings

Meetings of the committee will be every six weeks, and will take place in the evenings. A full calendar of meetings will be produced in due course.

1.3 Chair and Deputy Chair.

Full Council is invited to appoint a Chair and Deputy Chair of the committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

2. Changes to other scrutiny committees

Minor changes to the remit and responsibilities of the other scrutiny committees are required as a consequence of the creation of the new committee. Principally, the Health Scrutiny Committee will now have statutory health scrutiny powers only in relation to services for adults and universal services for all ages. These are reflected in the revised terms of reference for the scrutiny committees set out at Appendix A.

The Scrutiny Committee will continue to take a co-ordinating role for all the other scrutiny committees in areas such as approval of task groups and arranging appropriate training for members.

3. Appointment of a Scrutiny Officer

The Council is required by law to have a nominated Scrutiny Officer. The role of the Scrutiny Officer is

- To promote the role of the authority's overview and scrutiny committees;
- To provide support to the authority's O&S function and to councillors;
- To provide guidance to members and officers of the council in relation to O&S's functions.

The scrutiny officer cannot be the authority's head of paid service, the Monitoring Officer or the Chief Finance Officer (s151 officer). The current holder of the role is shortly to leave the council, and a new appointment is therefore required. It is proposed that Paul Bond, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, be appointed as the Council's statutory Scrutiny Officer with immediate effect.

Consultations

N/A

Implications:

This item has the following implications, as indicated:

Risk management

The Council must ensure that it has adequate arrangements for fulfilling the statutory functions of overview and scrutiny, including scrutiny of the NHS, crime and disorder and flood risk management. The Council is also required by law to appoint a statutory Scrutiny Officer.

The new arrangements will be accommodated within existing staffing resources, and there will therefore be no significant financial implications.

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 List of Background Papers

Paper	Date	Contact/Tel
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N/A

Reason for inclusion in Part II, if appropriate

N/A

