

SCRUTINY MATTERS AND REVIEWS UNDERTAKEN BY THE COMMISSION

105/05 - URGENT ITEM OF BUSINESS – OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

DEVELOPMENT: The Chair, Councillor Andrew Jones, referred to an urgent item of business referred to the Commission at his request. The item related to proposals for the development of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny arrangements that would, if approved, affect the remit of each of the Council's three existing Overview and Scrutiny Commissions. The Chair referred to the reason why this item was considered to be urgent explaining that Members of the Commission should be given an opportunity to consider the report in advance of the next meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Board which would determine whether or not the proposals should be approved. The Co-ordinating Board would then consider all comments received from the Council's Scrutiny Commissions. The Chair then invited the Executive Director (Corporate Policy and Improvement) to refer to the report and highlight the reasons for the suggested development of the Overview and Scrutiny function. The Executive Director referred to the need to develop and improve scrutiny following the Corporate restructure and new departmental structures now in place together with the need to refocus Scrutiny Commissions' purpose to steer away from service reviews in light of improving service standards. It was anticipated that service reviews could still be undertaken, however it was now considered appropriate for Commissions to begin to review more pressing and wider ranging issues relating to value for money across the Council as a whole. The Executive Director then referred to Option 1 (a) set out as an appendix to the written report which was considered to be the preferred option for change. The Executive Director then invited Members' questions in that regard. Councillor Harrison queried whether the decision to approve the implementation of the proposals depended upon the agreement of the other two Scrutiny Commissions. It was noted that the final discussion in this regard would be held at the Co-ordinating Board meeting on the 24th April 2006. The Scrutiny Officer then referred to Appendix A of the written report which described the way in which the new Scrutiny Commissions would work and their anticipated remits including that of the Audit Committee role currently contained within the remit of the Council Resources Commission. It was noted that the frequency of meetings would be broadly comparable to existing arrangements and the Chair advised that in his view the proposed arrangements would help Commissions in their work and would also help to identify training needs.

The Chair then invited Members to consider a decision in this regard and it was **agreed** unanimously that the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Board should agree the report submitted by the Scrutiny Officer, together with the recommendations to restructure the three Overview and Scrutiny Commissions as detailed in Option 1a of the report.

(7.08 pm – 7.30 pm)