

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENT PLAN
DECISIONS APPROVED OCTOBER 2003**

- (i) Sufficient resources are available to carry out overview and scrutiny work within the Council, given that the allocated budget for support is currently unspent.

Budget remains largely unspent

- (ii) “Cultural” change within the Council is required to maximise the effectiveness of overview and scrutiny by recognising its importance and independence.

Ongoing

- (iii) Chief Officers and others who are not specifically supporting the scrutiny process should not attend meetings of the Panel unless specifically invited to do so.

Implemented

- (iv) A number of measures can be introduced to encourage Panel Members to contribute more effectively to the scrutiny process including –

- ◆ induction arrangements for new Members of the Panel after the Annual Meeting of the Council.

Implemented

- ◆ briefing sessions with the Chairman/Vice-Chairman; and

Implemented

- ◆ quarterly discussions on potential areas for studies and specific issues relating to the scrutiny process.

Yet to be implemented

- (v) Support for overview and scrutiny should be provided via the existing staffing resources within the Democratic Services Section of the Central Services Directorate in 2004/05, subject to review thereafter.

Ongoing

- (vi) Subject to the outcome of the review referred to in (v) above, an MTP bid be made for additional funding for the scrutiny process in 2005/06.

MTP bid unsuccessful

- (vii) For a six months trial period, pre and post meeting briefings with Members of each Panel be held supported only by Democratic Services Section staff but within the time constraints of 7pm and 9.30pm.

Implemented only by Planning & Finance Panel and continued after trial period

- (viii) Democratic Services Section staff draft questions on a confidential basis for Panel Members to be addressed to persons invited to Panel meetings.

Implemented

- (ix) A facility should be provided on the Council's website inviting members of the public to raise specific topics for consideration by the Panel

Implemented

- (x) Town and Parish Councils be invited to attend Panel meetings to learn of work of the Panels and to generate ideas for studies.

Ongoing

- (xi) Consideration be given to publicising overview and scrutiny more widely in the press, including the submission of suggested topics for study.

Implemented as part of annual report

- (xii) Voluntary organisations be encouraged to submit suggestions for studies.

Yet to be implemented

- (xiii) A forum for all Members should be held twice each year at which views on overview and scrutiny can be exchanged.

Yet to be implemented

- (xiv) Arrangements be made to brief non-Cabinet Members about current issues affecting the Council. Relevant issues should be identified at the six monthly briefing/training sessions.

Ongoing

- (xv) Meeting/training events should be held for Members who do not sit on either Panel to explain the overview and scrutiny process and how other Members can contribute.

Ongoing

- (xvi) Local authority practitioners, rather than academics in future be invited to assist in overview and scrutiny training sessions and arrangements should be made for Panel representatives to visit other authorities with a view to researching the effectiveness of their overview and scrutiny processes.

Ongoing

- (xvii) Executive Members should be accompanied by relevant officers at Panel meetings where appropriate.

Implemented

- (xviii) A summary be compiled outlining successful outcomes from studies to demonstrate the effectiveness of overview and scrutiny within the Council.

Annual report produced and distributed