

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

A meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was held on 15 June 2004.

PRESENT: Councillor Carr (Chair), Councillors Booth, Dryden, Mawston, Rogers, T Ward and Wilson.

OFFICIALS: J Bennington, L Bennison, M Brider, K Brooks, C Burnham, P Clark, T Gilling, D Wallinger and E Williamson.

****APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were submitted on behalf of Councillors Robson and Rooney.

**** DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made at this point of the meeting.

**** MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 8 June 2004 were submitted and approved.

SCRUTINY REPORT - EXECUTIVE FEEDBACK

As part of the scrutiny process the Executive Officer Manager reported that the Executive at its meeting held on 11 May 2004 had considered the findings of the former Resources and Audit Scrutiny Panel regarding the final report on the Audit and Inspection Letter 2003.

The Executive had considered and supported both the Service Response and the response of the Corporate Management Team and had agreed the proposed Action Plan.

NOTED

CORPORATE IDENTITY

Mike Brider, Communications Manager gave a presentation on the reasons for introducing and the proposals for implementing a new corporate identity and wider issues of branding for the Town.

Numerous examples were given of signs and correspondence currently used which clearly demonstrated a lack of consistency, lack of Council identity and the use of unsuitable images.

Indications were given as to how to develop a new corporate identity based upon the work undertaken by Robson and Brown on the vision document commissioned by the Mayor.

The Board was advised that informal discussions/briefings had already been held on the Robson Brown image to gain initial reactions. Formal approval would be sought from the Executive and a series of further briefings had been arranged. It was intended to establish a Steering Group to progress implementation of a new corporate identity on a phased basis.

The main points arising from the Board's discussion on the proposals were as follows: -

- the high costs involved in the overall process were acknowledged;
- careful attention would need to be given to the inclusion of the words 'Council' where appropriate on public access points and correspondence;
- the difficulties in achieving a consensus view on a design were acknowledged;
- although support was outlined for the Robson and Brown image in terms of its simplicity and clear image views were expressed that it didn't easily relate to Middlesbrough
- the importance of ensuring clarity of a design which could easily be communicated was stressed
- in terms of the Council identity a suggestion was made for the Coat of Arms to be used
- although mindful of the costs and the need for implementation to be undertaken on a phased basis it was considered that the introduction of a corporate identity should be carried out at the earliest opportunity across the Town.

ORDERED as follows: -

1. That the intention to implement a corporate identity to be applied across the Town be supported.
2. That a briefing report be circulated and Members' views sought to be incorporated into a response to be submitted to the Executive.

SCRUTINY REVIEWS - CONSIDERATION OF REQUESTS - EXECUTIVE/EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

It was confirmed that no requests for scrutiny reviews had been received from the Executive of Executive Members.

NOTED

SCRUTINY REVIEW S- CONSIDERATION OF REQUESTS - MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

In a report of the Senior Scrutiny Officer details were given of a request which had been received from a member of the public regarding the lack of toilet facilities in libraries.

The request had been assessed in accordance with the criteria previously approved by the Board.

ORDERED that consideration be given to the possible inclusion of an investigation when the work programme for the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel is determined by the Board later at this meeting.

EXECUTIVE'S FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

As part of the Board's remit in terms of holding the Executive to account a report of the Scrutiny Support Officer was submitted which identified the most recent entries to the Executive's Forward Work Programme since the last report to the Board.

NOTED

AUDIT COMMISSION - EXAMINATION OF SCRUTINY

In a report of the Senior Scrutiny Officer details were provided of the examination undertaken by the Council's external Auditors of the Overview and Scrutiny function in Middlesbrough.

A copy of the Auditor's report, Appendix A, had been circulated which outlined the key findings and associated recommendations where considered appropriate. A copy of the Auditor's action plan addressing nine areas of their examination was provided at Appendix B of the report submitted.

The Auditor's key recommendations were identified as follows: -

- (i) The OSB should review the number of projects being undertaken by the Scrutiny Function, so as to ensure a manageable workload and ability to deliver timely, quality reviews;
- (ii) More detailed project plans might help the direction and delivery of individual scrutiny reviews;
- (iii) The timing of Overview and Scrutiny training events for Members should be reviewed in consultation with the OSB and alternatives explored, so as to increase the level of Member take up; and
- (iv) Develop links so that Scrutiny reviews informs other corporate processes and reduces duplication of effort.

It was noted that the recommendations contained within the report had or were being addressed.

NOTED

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD - WORK PROGRAMME 2004/05

The Scrutiny Support Officer submitted a report, which outlined a draft work programme 2004/05 for the Overview and Scrutiny Board, which incorporated the monitoring and auditing role of the Board and also identified the suggested work programmes of the Scrutiny Panels.

Specific reference was made to the following:

- (a) Appendix 1 which detailed the dates of the Board scheduled in the Council Diary and identified additional dates of 3 August, 1 September, 13 October, 14 December, 15 February 2005 and 8 March to align with the submission of the various finance reports as part of the Board's monitoring and audit role;

- (b) Appendix 1 also gave brief details of the Policy Framework items although it was noted that this was subject to change pending revisions to the Constitution;
- (c) Appendix 2 which identified the suggested topics for review by the Board as follows:-
- (i) Branding
 - (ii) 24 Hour Economy
 - (iii) Community Engagement Framework
 - (iv) Asylum Seekers;
- (d) Appendix 2 also outlined the suggested work programmes for the Scrutiny Panels to be discussed later at this meeting;
- (e) Appendix 3, which outlined the Board's suggested work programme to undertake its monitoring and audit role.

ORDERED as follows: -

1. That the topics outlined at (c) above be included in the overall Work Programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Board 2004/05 with the exception that item (ii) be undertaken by an Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel to comprise Members of the Board and Members from the Scrutiny Panels who wished to participate.
2. That the suggested work programme for the Board to undertake its monitoring and audit role including the dates for additional meetings of the Board as outlined in Appendices 1 and 3 be approved.

SCRUTINY PANELS - WORK PROGRAMMES 2004/05

A report of the Chair of each Scrutiny Panel was submitted which outlined the background to the formulation of suggested Work Programmes for each Scrutiny Panel. The reports included details of appropriate timescales for undertaking the reviews for consideration.

It was acknowledged that in addition it might prove necessary for Panels to respond to emerging issues and undertake reviews on an ad hoc basis throughout the year. It was also noted that with the exception of the Health Scrutiny Panel the following had been included into each work programme: -

- Quarterly Performance Clinic Outturn 2004/05
- Integrated Performance and Budget Clinic Outturn.

The suggested topics for review were reported as follows: -

Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) Education of Children Looked After
- (b) Building Schools for the Future (Consultative role)
- (c) Middlesbrough Youth Service
- (d) 14-19 Agenda

- (e) OFSTED Inspection Reports
- (f) Annual Standards Report

Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) Active Middlesbrough Strategy
- (b) Clairville Leisure Centre
- (c) AIMS
- (d) Drugs and Drug Treatment

Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) Neighbourhood Shopping Centre Study
- (b) Middlehaven to Wilton Master Plan
- (c) Local Transport Plan
- (d) Local Strategic Partnership
- (e) Car Parking in Middlesbrough

Environment Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) Bi-Yearly Monitoring Report on the recommendations of the Street Cleansing scrutiny investigation
- (b) Review of the Green Budget in the context of the Housing Stock Transfer
- (c) Review of the Allotments Policy
- (d) Review into the Understanding of the Best Value Performance Indicator 199 (BV199) - 'The percentage of local streets and land classified as unclean'.

Health Scrutiny Panel:

Year 1 (2004/05):

- (a) Hospital Episode Statistics
- (b) Healthy Living
- (c) Emergency admissions to James Cook University Hospital
- (d) Substance misuse
- (e) Dental Health

Year 2 (2005/06):

- (a) Tackling crisis and suicide
- (b) Dampness in housing

Social Care and Adults Services Scrutiny Panel:

- (a) Direct Payments
- (b) Home Care Standards (using Working Teams in conjunction with Direct Payments)
- (c) User/Carer Involvement Policy
- (d) Fair Access to Care Services.

In determining the work programmes of the Board and the Scrutiny Panels, Members were mindful of the Audit Commission's report which indicated the importance of not setting an over ambitious work programme to ensure a 'manageable workload and ability to deliver timely, quality reviews.'

ORDERED as follows: -

1. That the work programme for the Children and Learning Scrutiny Panel as outlined be approved and that (a) be regarded as the first priority.
2. That the work programme for the Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel be approved in the following order of priority:

(a), (d), (c) and (b).
3. That steps be taken to ensure that the work undertaken by the Community Safety and Leisure Scrutiny Panel in terms of 'drugs and drug treatment' is complementary to that of the Health Scrutiny Panel's investigation in respect of 'Substance Misuse'.
4. That the work programme of the Economic Regeneration and Transport Scrutiny Panel as outlined be approved and that an additional scrutiny topic as requested by a member of the public in respect of the lack of toilet facilities in libraries be included in the programme.
5. That the work programme of the Environment Scrutiny Panel be approved and that a topic in respect of Recycling be included in the programme as a third priority and subsequent suggestions for investigation made in respect of Street Furniture and Sustainable Energy be also included in the programme.
6. That the work programme of the Health Scrutiny Panel as outlined be approved.
7. That the work programme of the Social Care and Adults Services Scrutiny Panel as outlined be approved.

ESTABLISHMENT OF AD HOC SCRUTINY PANEL - REHABILITATION SERVICES

The Chair of the Health Scrutiny Panel presented a report, which outlined a suggested topic for investigation by an Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel.

Reference was made to a meeting of the Health Scrutiny Panel held on 2 June 2004 when consideration had been given to the formulation of its draft work programme.

One of the suggestions from the South Tees Hospitals Trust concerned the rehabilitation services available to people who were discharged from hospital after intense, possibly lengthy, medical treatment. It had been noted that this was particularly relevant to patients with spinal injuries but also applied to a range of medical conditions.

The Panel had agreed that the topic should be included in the work programme and it was considered appropriate to establish an Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel comprising Members of the both the Health Scrutiny Panel and the Social Care and Adult Services Scrutiny Panel.

ORDERED an Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel be established as outlined to undertake a scrutiny investigation in respect of Rehabilitation Services.

CALL IN REQUESTS

It was confirmed that no requests had been received to call-in a decision.

HEALTH SCRUTINY OFFICER

The Chair on behalf of the Board congratulated Tim Gilling following his recent appointment to the Centre for Public Scrutiny and wished him every success and best wishes for the future.

NOTED