

AGENDA ITEM: 11a

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD
8 FEBRUARY 2005

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD – PROGRESS REPORT

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1 To inform members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board of progress made to date.

PROGRESS ON THE WORK PROGRAMME

- 2 The following issues have been dealt with by the Overview and Scrutiny Board:
 - 2004/05 second quarter capital budget outturn
 - 2004/05 second quarter revenue budget outturn
 - consolidated performance report
 - Implementing e-Government
 - 2005/06 Revenue Support Grant settlement
 - medium term financial plan
 - Audit Commission report on Cultural Services.
- 3 The Executive Board has considered and supported the OSB report on the draft Licensing Policy, and Panel reports on Direct Payments, the educational attainment of Children Looked After, and the East Middlesbrough Primary Education review.
- 4 Following OSB's report on the call-in request of the decision on a BMX facility in Beechwood, the service department is preparing a response, and both reports will be considered by the Executive at its meeting on 22 March.

GENERAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ISSUES

- 5 I have continued my regular meetings with the Scrutiny Support Team to discuss issues relating to the overview and scrutiny function.
- 6 The chairs of scrutiny panels met on 27 January 2005 to discuss general progress of the work of scrutiny. The following points were agreed:
 - all final reports should include an executive summary
 - OSB and panels should arrange regular monitoring meetings to check on progress of recommendations
 - panels should consider joint investigations with other public agencies and/or other local authorities
 - members of CMT should be invited to attend scrutiny meetings on an occasional basis
 - panels might consider publishing interim reports as a means of gaining feedback on proposals
 - next year's training programme should include some element of "peer review" by panel members.
- 7 Following Cllr Bloundele's presentation to OSB on possible reform of Council meetings, a further meeting with the CEO, senior officers and the Deputy Mayor is being arranged to consider in detail what proposals might be put forward for the Council's annual meeting.
- 8 On 1 February, Cllr Ward and I met with Audit Commission inspectors as part of the review of the Council's Corporate Performance Assessment. We gave a detailed account of the progress that has been made in the development of overview and scrutiny in the last two years.
- 9 In my formal role as chair of OSB, since the last meeting I have agreed that the following report to the Executive Board could be treated as an "urgent" report:
 - the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North East.

It was, therefore, not available for scrutiny under the call-in procedure (though it had, in fact, been considered by the OSB at its meeting of 11 January 2005).

COUNCILLOR MICHAEL CARR
CHAIR OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD
February 2005