

# DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**At a Meeting** of the **Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee** held at County Hall, Durham on **Monday 21 July 2008** at **10.00 a.m.**

**Present:**

**Councillor J Armstrong** in the Chair

**Members:**

Councillors B Alderson, Arthur, Avery, Blakey, Burnip, Campbell, Chaplow, Hopgood, Moran, Murphy, D Myers, R Ord and Stradling.

**Other Members:**

Councillors Simmons and Williams.

**Co-Opted Members:**

Mr B Birch and Ms M Fish

**Faith Communities Representatives:**

M Sands

**Parent Governor Representatives:**

Mrs A Tallentire

**Other Co-Opted Members:**

Y Telford

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors E Bell, Stoker and Southwell, and Mrs L Bailey.

### **A1 Minutes**

The Minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2008 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

## **A2 Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **A3 Work Programme**

The Committee received a presentation from the Chairman and Head of Overview and Scrutiny about the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme (for copy of slides of presentation see file of Minutes)

The presentation included the key drivers, areas that the Committee must and should consider, and the programme of work for each Committee area.

Councillor Moran advised that an excellent piece of work had been undertaken on Worklessness and he welcomed members re-visiting this in light of the new economic climate.

In response to a question from Councillor D Myers about whether coast pollution could be considered as part of climate change, The Chairman advised that at their scoping exercise they should consider how to manage the workload. They should be mindful of the capacity issues, and could consider whether to look at coast pollution as a light touch review.

Councillor Hopgood advised that Durham City Council had undertaken a review on climate change and suggested that in order to avoid duplication the Committee should look at the work undertaken. The Head of Overview and Scrutiny advised that on 29 July there was to be a meeting with scrutiny officers from the District Councils to discuss the work programme and capacity.

Mr B Birch advised the Committee that they had received the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment on 10 July and responses to the 154 page document were required by 14 July. He explained that there were 5 issues that affect his community and that none of these had been dealt with properly. He wished that it had not been sent out with sections missing on equality and diversity, and health assessment. The Head of Overview and Scrutiny advised that he had spoken to County Council's equality and diversity section about the document that had been sent out by the PCT. The Assessment will be picked up as part of the Work Programme to enable this to be monitored.

### **Resolved:-**

The Committee agreed to the work programme and that work should commence as soon as possible.

#### **A4 Member Development Proposal**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny regarding a proposal for an Overview and Scrutiny Development Programme for Members of the Authority from the Centre of Public Scrutiny (CfPS) (for copy of slides of presentation see file of Minutes).

#### **Resolved:-**

That the report together with the recommendations included therein be approved.

#### **A5 Evaluation of Overview and Scrutiny**

The Committee considered a report of the Head of Overview and Scrutiny regarding a proposal arising from the Evaluation of Overview and Scrutiny in County Durham (for copy of slides of presentation see file of Minutes).

Members considered that further publicity should be given to the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny, and that this could be through 'Countywide'.

Members considered it important for officers and members to be familiar with the situation at local level, and therefore they should be working out in localities. As part of the scoping exercise of the Working Groups it would be important to identify who the key stakeholders were and for members/ officers to liaise with them.

The Head of Overview and Scrutiny advised that every piece of work undertaken is reported to the Executive, and the Committee monitors its progress. He pointed out that last year there was £1m of investment arising from the recommendations from Scrutiny Working Group reports.

The Chairman agreed that the next item could be considered in order to keep Members informed.

#### **A6 LGR Programme Update**

The Committee received a presentation from The Head of Overview and Scrutiny which provided an update on the LGR Programme (for copy of slides of presentation see file of Minutes).

The presentation included information on programme overview, programme arrangements, milestones, priorities, key decisions, draft Blueprint, Vision and Values.

The Committee was advised that over the coming months there would be many additional meetings of the Committee to consider Blueprint, LAA Review, Sustainable Community Strategy, and the Constitution.

In response to a question from Councillor Hopgood, the Head of Overview and Scrutiny explained the procedure for appointing Co-opted Members. He went on to explain that on 28 July an event for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of each Committee along with co-opted members was to be held to welcome co-opted members and to discuss their role.