

# **Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**



**Date of meeting:** 6 September 2011

**SCRUTINY**

**Portfolio Holder:** Leader



**Report of:** Constitution and Member Services SSP

**Subject:** Council Procedure Rules – Reports on Outside Organisations and Future Work Programme

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## **Recommendations:**

**(1) That Council Procedure Rule 2 be amended by substituting the existing paragraph (ix) with the following:**

**“(ix) receive from Council representatives written reports circulated in advance with the agenda for the meeting concerned on the business of joint arrangements and external organisations and to receive answers to any questions on those bodies which may be put without notice “**

**and by adding the following new rule (to be numbered (x)):**

**“(x) request written reports from representatives on joint arrangements and external organisations for future meetings;**

**and that the following sub paragraphs of Rule 2 be renumbered accordingly.**

**(2) That the Committee note that the Panel intends to conduct further reviews during the current Council year on:**

**(a) outside organisations on which the Council is represented; and**

**(b) arrangements for circulation of written material to Councillors.**

## **Report**

1. Council Procedure Rule 2 sets out the order of business at ordinary Council meetings, paragraph (ix) of which states that the Council will:

"receive reports about and receive questions and answers on the business of joint arrangements and external organisations".

2. We have noted that the nature of the report (whether oral or written) is not specified. The Panel's attention was drawn to reports by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman and Portfolio Holders at Council meetings under Rule 2 (viii) which are required to be in writing and therefore circulated with the Council agenda. This is because under Rule 11.1, those reports can be the subject of questions without notice by other Councillors.

3. We feel that these reports should be in writing and circulated in advance of Council meetings and open for other Councillors to ask questions on them without notice. As an adjunct to this, we are also recommending that each Council agenda should have provision for members to request similar reports for future meetings.

4. We recommend as set out in (1) at the commencement of this report.

### **Future Work Programme**

5. We ask the Committee to note two additions to the SSP's work programme for the current year. The first of these arises from the earlier item in this report on reports of the work of outside organisations. We are concerned that the Council does not receive enough feedback on such bodies and we therefore wish to review ways in which this could be improved.

7. The second new item relates to circulation of written material for members. It is some years since postal and messenger distribution was reviewed. In a climate of seeking savings, we feel that a further review would be useful at this time.