

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 24 January 2012

Subject: Terms of Reference and Work Programme 2011/2012 and 2012/2013



Officer contact for further information: P Millward (01992 56 4338)

Committee Secretary: M Jenkins (01992 56 4607)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

That the revised Terms of Reference and Work Programme for the Planning Services Scrutiny Standing Panel be approved.

Report:

The Terms of Reference and the Work Programme of the Planning Services Scrutiny Standing Panel had been amended in the past although these could be characterised as relatively minor in nature.

Panel Member Councillor A Lion suggested that the Terms of Reference should be amended and provided officers with a draft. However, officers from Planning & Economic Development have met with colleagues from Democratic Services and considered a more fundamental set of amendments which reflected:

- The Terms of Reference and Work Programme of the other Standing Scrutiny Panels, securing consistency.
- Whether the most recent arrangements have been manageable, or whether the arrangements have ended up being rather unwieldy.
- The aligning of the work of the Panel with other work streams, such as the Business Plan, and the refocusing/simplifying of the Panel's work.

Accordingly, attached as Appendices 1 and 2 are the suggested revised Terms of Reference and an amended Work Programme; these are drawn from relevant sections and action areas in the existing Business Plan. Because of continuing change to the overall resources available to the Council, there may well be changes to future Business Plans.

At the Planning Services Scrutiny Standing Panel on 20 December 2011 Members discussed the proposed Terms of Reference and Work Programme. They supported the amendments and recommend these to this Committee.

Reason for decision:

The Terms of Reference and Work Programme are, or can be, reviewed at each meeting, and have been the subject of relatively minor changes in the past. Councillor Lion's suggestion have prompted a more fundamental review by Officers.

It will be important to embark upon work that is expected by the Terms, and to concentrate on achieving that by reference to the Programme. Extra work can be added by this Panel, but in ways which are manageable.

Options considered and rejected:

Not to amend the Terms of Reference and the Work Plan at all, to amend them as suggested by Councillor Lion, or to amend them in some other way.

Consultation undertaken:

There has been internal consultation amongst officers, then with Councillor Lion and consideration by the Planning Services Scrutiny Panel.

Resource implications:

Budget provision: From existing resources

Personnel: From existing resources

Land: Nil

Community Plan/BVPP reference: The Council's Constitution sets out details of how work and performance of Directorates is to be scrutinised; by aligning what is put into the Planning Directorate Business Plan with what the Scrutiny Panel considers, is considered a useful step for this Directorate.

Relevant statutory powers:

Background papers: The report's attachments sets out the revisions.

Environmental/Human Rights Act/Crime and Disorder Act Implications: None.

Key Decision reference: (if required) N/A