

## OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY REVIEW TASK AND FINISH PANEL: TERMS OF REFERENCE

### **Origin:**

At its meeting on 7 April 2012 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) decided to establish a new Task and Finish Scrutiny Panel to review Overview and Scrutiny operations generally within the Council with particular reference to relations between the Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny. This decision was made following attendance by a number of members at a joint training session on Overview and Scrutiny convened jointly with Harlow Council.

### **Draft Terms of Reference:**

1. To scrutinise the current processes of Overview and Scrutiny and to what extent the functions could be improved.
2. To examine and review operational aspects of Overview and Scrutiny, in consideration of:
  - a) Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen of Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
    - Developing the relationship with the Leader;
    - Policy on appointment and political allegiance;
    - Leader / OSC liaison.
  - b) Cabinet Liaison:
    - Arrangements for pre-scrutiny of Cabinet business;
    - Meeting arrangements;
    - Questioning Portfolio Holders;
    - Annual Cabinet priorities.
  - c) Scrutiny Panels:
    - Membership / role of Standing Panels;
    - Progress reporting and achieving outcomes from Panels;
    - Managing Scrutiny Panel business.
  - d) Call-in procedures:
    - Presentation of Call-ins;
    - Responses by Portfolio Holders;
    - Briefing by Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny.
  - e) Scrutiny of External Organisations:
    - Engagement with the public;
    - Layout of the Chamber;
    - Selecting the right forum for external scrutiny;
    - Following up on undertakings given;
    - Avoiding pre-prepared presentations;
    - Preparation: liaison with the public and other councillors;
    - Managing Questions / setting of objectives.

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- f) Budget Scrutiny:
  - Assessing the effectiveness of the present Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel;
  - Determining the correct role of Overview and Scrutiny in budget preparation and monitoring;
  - Budget documentation for OSC;
  - Programming O&S involvement in budget making.
- g) Public Profile of OSC:
  - Public awareness;
  - Determining the work plan each year (including the PICK system);
  - Questions from the public for Portfolio Holders / OS Committee.

3. To examine and review any other operational aspects of Overview and Scrutiny.

**Aims and Objectives:**

- (a) To report findings to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and to submit any final reports in the proposed Corporate Format for consideration by O & S and Council by April 2014.
- (b) To gather evidence and information in relation to the topic through the receipt of data, presentations and by participation in fact finding visits if necessary;
- (c) To have due regard to the relevant legislation Council procedure rules.
- (d) To consult political groups and independent Councillors at the final stage of the review.

TIMESCALE	ESTIMATED	ACTUAL
Commencement: Dec 2012	April 2013	
<u>Finish</u> 1. As a time limited review – to be approved by Council and implemented by the 2014/15 municipal year.	April 2014	First meeting held on 6 December 2012