

Wiltshire Council

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

6 June 2017

Review of the Overview and Scrutiny (OS) Councillor Induction 2017

Purpose

1. To invite the Committee's feedback on the OS information sessions held on 17 May and 24 May as part of the council's 2017 councillor induction.

Main considerations

2. Following the local elections in May, the council provided a fortnight of information and training sessions to help equip the elected councillors to undertake their role. Two sessions were provided on OS, delivered by the Scrutiny team (plus guest speakers) and aimed primarily at non-executive councillors:

Session 1: "Introduction to Overview and Scrutiny" – 17 May

- What is OS?
- Legislative and constitutional basis
- Roles, responsibilities and rights
- Principles of good OS
- Why OS is important

Session 2: "Overview and Scrutiny: Making a difference as a non-executive Wiltshire Councillor" – 24 May

- How OS works at Wiltshire Council
 - How you can make a difference through OS
 - How to influence the OS work programme
 - OS committees, task groups, rapid scrutiny exercises and project board reps
 - Officer support
3. Session 1 included remarks from the Deputy Leader on
 - The importance of OS to the good governance of the council
 - The risks of ineffective Scrutiny, as demonstrated by the Mid-Staffordshire and Rotherham scandals
 - A commitment that the Executive will engage positively with OS and its recommendations, and the need for good working relationships.
 4. Session 2 included remarks from one of the council's Corporate Directors on:

- The important contribution to shaping the Council OS can make
 - The need for OS to be involved in difficult decisions to come
 - The importance that OS ensures that all of its activities are adding value.
5. 22 councillors attended Session 1 and 16 councillors attended Session 2, with a high proportion of new non-executive councillors attending both.
 6. It should be noted that elsewhere on the agenda, Committee is asked to authorise the Chairman and Vice-chairman to re-visit the 4-year OS learning and development programme to ensure it remains fit for purpose, reflects identified needs and is deliverable with the available resources, with proposals brought back to Committee as appropriate.

Proposals

7. To provide any feedback on the OS information sessions provided as part of the 2017 councillor induction programme.

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