

Briefing Note – Overview & Scrutiny Review Panels

Introduction

At its meeting on the 21st June 2007, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee considered ways of working and the scope of the Committee's work.

The Committee requested that procedures be drawn up to deal with the carrying out of reviews and Overview & Scrutiny Review Panels (originally referred to as Member Teams).

These procedures were approved at the Council meeting on the 16th October 2007.

Setting up an Overview & Scrutiny Review Panel

When first discussed, it was envisaged that Overview & Scrutiny Review Panels would only be set up when there was not the officer capacity to service a task group or where a lighter touch approach than a full blown task group was required.

Bearing this in mind the following steps should take place to set up a Panel:

- 1) Define the area and issues to be considered.
- 2) Provide an indication of the information to be produced for the Panel.
- 3) Indicate the individuals (internal or external) that the Panel would like to interview.
- 4) Present Terms of Reference to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for approval. A 'Lead Member' should also be appointed to lead/chair the Panel.

The Work of Overview & Scrutiny Review Panels

When carrying out its work, a Panel should adhere to the following principles:

- a) That the review will be conducted fairly and all members of the Committee, Advisory Body or Overview & Scrutiny Review Panel, as appropriate, will be given the opportunity to ask questions, contribute and speak;
- b) That those assisting the review by their attendance be treated with respect and courtesy;
- c) That the review be conducted so as to maximise its efficiency.

Meetings of Overview & Scrutiny Review Panels

After any meeting of an Overview & Scrutiny Review Panel, members will need to produce notes of the meeting. A template for notes will be provided by the Democratic Services Team. Notes will need to be sent to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Administrator within 10 days of the meeting.

Reports to and from the Panel will need to be produced in the Council's standard report format. A template for which can be provided by the Democratic Services Team (and is available on MARIS).

Reports and Notes will be available on MARIS, but not for public dissemination.