

Committee:	Executive	Agenda Item No.:	13.
Date:	12 th December 2011	Status	Open
Subject:	Shared Services Scrutiny		
Category:	2. Decision within the functions of Executive		
Report by:	Councillor Mary Dooley – Chair of the Scrutiny Management Board		
Other Officers Involved	Scrutiny Officer		
Director	Joint Chief Executive Officer		
Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor D. McGregor, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Efficiencies		

RELEVANT CORPORATE AIMS

STRATEGIC ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT – continually improving our organisation by scrutinising the shared arrangements entered into by the Authority.

PRIORITY

Demonstrate value for money through a culture of innovation.

VALUE FOR MONEY

It is suggested that there are a range of potential benefits with the proposed arrangements including:

- Encouragement of partnership working and opportunities to develop member knowledge and expertise;
- Joint ownership and understanding of recommendations emerging from scrutiny meetings;
- Minimising duplication of effort – services are looked at in a co-ordinated way;
- Readily supports future joint working arrangements

THE REPORT

The purpose of the report is to consider the future scrutiny arrangements for the three shared services of Building Control, Procurement and Internal Audit, and any other areas of joint working in place.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Arrangements for joint provision of the three shared services mentioned above, between Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District Council were established in 2006/2007.

In April 2008 at the request of the Chief Executives Group the three Councils considered the establishment of a joint scrutiny panel to scrutinise the provision of joint services between the three Councils. It was agreed to establish a joint scrutiny panel on a pilot basis which has operated for three and a half years. The panel is chaired, hosted and supported by each authority in rotation and meets quarterly. It is made up of nine members comprising three elected members from Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District Council.

Work undertaken during the year has included scrutiny of the annual reports and service plans for each of the three main shared services and quarterly monitoring of financial and performance information. It has also monitored the implementation of recommendations arising from the scrutiny review of the Shared Procurement Unit.

Additional activities supported by this approach include updating the other two authorities on scrutiny work being undertaken by Bolsover's Scrutiny Committees.

Identifying opportunities for joint member development might also be an additional function of the joint panel.

ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

At its meeting on 15th June 2011 the Scrutiny Management Board appointed Councillors Bennett, Heffer and Wallis as representatives to this body. Councillor Bennett has since been replaced by Councillor Turner. It is now proposed that the body be formally established as it has been in operation as a pilot for three and a half years. The number of shared services continues to grow and the panel has successfully overviewed shared services and supported continuous improvement within the services delivered jointly by the three Councils.

The panel would continue to monitor performance and it is hoped to undertake further spotlight reviews as and when appropriate. The implementation of the recommendations from the spotlight review on Shared Procurement would also continue to be monitored by the panel over the coming year.

The Chief Executives Group approved the proposal at their meeting on 11th October 2011 and at its meeting on 31st October 2011, the Scrutiny Management Board recommended that Executive be informed of the intention to formalise the pilot arrangements for the Shared Services Scrutiny Panel to scrutinise the joint services between the three Councils, Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District Council.

IMPLICATIONS

Financial: None

Legal: The Local Government Act 2000 originally required the Council to provide an Overview and Scrutiny function. The Council has chosen to continue with the Cabinet and Scrutiny Model. If the Council does not develop an effective scrutiny programme it will not effectively respond to the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Nor will its overview and scrutiny work support or add value to the work of the Council and its partners.

In addition new expectations for self inspection and assessment at local level strengthens the need for and importance of joint oversight and scrutiny in the future.

Human Resources: None

RECOMMENDATION

That the Executive note the intention to formalise the pilot arrangements for the Shared Services Scrutiny Panel to scrutinise the provision of joint services between the three councils, Bolsover District Council, Chesterfield Borough Council and North East Derbyshire District Council.

REASON FOR DECISION TO BE GIVEN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSTITUTION

Consideration and noting of a scrutiny report to formalise the joint scrutiny arrangements across the 3 Councils.

ATTACHMENTS: Y – Draft Terms of Reference – Shared Services Scrutiny Panel

FILE REFERENCE:

SOURCE DOCUMENT:

Draft Terms of Reference of the Joint Scrutiny Panel

Bolsover District Council **Chesterfield Borough Council** **North East Derbyshire District Council**

The Joint Scrutiny Panel will be made up of 9 members (3 from each authority). They will be responsible for the scrutiny function of the joint working/shared services. The terms of reference will be agreed by each authority's Scrutiny Committee and the Joint Scrutiny Panel.

Appointment

The Joint Scrutiny Panel of each authority will nominate 3 members to make up the joint committee.

Role

The Joint Scrutiny Panel will be responsible for overview and scrutiny arrangements for the three shared services of Building Control, Procurement and Internal Audit, and other areas of joint working (Crematorium, Home Improvement Agency) or additional shared services developed, covering the following elements:

- Monitoring – regularly receiving progress reports and updates against targets or objectives, and offering challenge and/or recommendations;
- Holding decision-makers to account - challenging decisions and performance;
- Adding value as a consultee – being consulted/engaged on policy proposals, draft strategies and proposed decisions;
- In-depth or spotlight reviews – a project based approach to reviewing an issue and gathering evidence to inform a report and recommendations – could be undertaken if the above activity identifies a need to;
- Monitoring progress for completed reviews and consultations.

The Joint Scrutiny Panel may:-

- Conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options;
- Consider and encourage community participation in the scrutiny function;

- Question members of the Joint Board and the Consortium/Service Managers about their views on issues and proposals affecting the area;
- Liaise with other external organisations operating in the area, whether national, regional or local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working;
- Review and scrutinise the performance of the joint services in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas;
- Question members of the Joint Board and the Consortium/Service Managers about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects;
- Make recommendations to the Joint Board arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process

The Joint Scrutiny Panel may create a working group as required.

The Joint Scrutiny Panel may scrutinise the finances for the joint services.

The Joint Scrutiny Panel will report annually, by way of a report to the Joint Board and each Council, on their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods as appropriate.

Meetings of the Panel

The Joint Scrutiny Panel will meet quarterly for the business stated. Additional meetings will be arranged as required.

The date and time of each meeting will be agreed by the group.

The Joint Scrutiny Panel is not subject to statutory Access to Information rules, it may meet in private but where ever possible shall allow access to the public.

The host authority will be responsible for issuing the papers and producing the meeting notes to all the attendees.

Quorum

The quorum for the Joint Scrutiny Panel shall be 3 members with a minimum of 1 representative per authority.

Chair of the Joint Scrutiny Panel

The Chair of Joint Scrutiny Panel will be rotated amongst each authority. The host authority members will agree the chair for each meeting.

Any working group created will elect their chair.

Agenda items

The Joint Scrutiny Panel shall consider the following:

- Minutes of the last meeting;
- Declarations of interest (including whipping declarations);
- Reports from the three shared services;
- Feedback from any reviews;
- Consideration of any matter that may be referred to each authority's Scrutiny Committee for a decision in relation to call in of a decision;
- Responses of the Joint Board to reports of the Scrutiny Committee;
- Business otherwise set out on the agenda for the meeting;
- Communication that will be issued from the group.

Additional items for the agenda

- Identifying and overseeing shared scrutiny reviews for the 3 authorities;
- Member development opportunities.

Members of the Joint Scrutiny Panel

Each member of the Joint Scrutiny Panel will also be responsible for:

- Updating their respective authorities on the services;
- Presenting reports on the services to their respective authorities;
- Identifying and overseeing shared reviews for the 3 authorities;
- Contributing to member development activities for scrutiny.

Work Programme

The Scrutiny Panel will determine what items it will include in its work programme and in doing so shall take into account the wishes of Scrutiny Members. Cabinet Members will not decide the Joint Scrutiny Panel Work Programme. However, the Joint Scrutiny Panel will consider whether to include requests on the agenda from any other relevant stakeholder.

Call In

The Joint Scrutiny Panel will have no 'call in' powers. However the members of the panel may identify joint service items to call in by their respective authority.

Review of the Panel

The Joint Scrutiny Panel will review its progress and the terms of reference on an annual basis as part of the annual report to the Joint Board.