

**TO: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION
29 MARCH 2018**

**Proposed merger of Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel
with Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel
(Director of Resources)**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report seeks agreement to merge the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel with the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel, update the terms of reference for the Panels and report these changes to Council.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That the Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel be combined into a single panel called Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel;**
- 2.2 **That the logistics of the new panel would be as set out in paragraphs 5.5 to 5.10;**
- 2.3 **That the terms of reference for Overview and Scrutiny Panels be updated as set out in Appendix A;**
- 2.4 **That this change to panels and their terms of reference be reported by the Chairman of the Commission to Council;**
- 2.5 **That these changes would take effect from the Annual Council meeting on 23 May 2018 and would be reviewed before May 2019; and**
- 2.6 **That the Commission recommends to Council that the Constitution be amended to reflect these changes as set out in Appendix A.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To respond to the proposals of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's Working Group which was formed to consider the whether the Adult Social Care and Housing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panels should be merged.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The Commission could decide not to accept the recommendations of the Working Group and continue to operate four Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 It had been observed that there was an increasing duplication and overlap in the agenda items and work of these two panels. It was raised at meetings of both panels and in response the Overview and Scrutiny Commission formed a Working Group consisting of members from both panels to consider whether combining the work of

the two panels would be logical, beneficial and more effective and then the logistics of such a merger.

- 5.2 Once the principle of merging the panels was agreed, the Working Group were keen that this process was not delayed and that instead the new panel's operation was reviewed after a year to ensure that the proposed practices set out below were fit for purpose.
- 5.3 As set out in the Constitution at Part 3, Section 3 relating to Overview and Scrutiny Panels where the Overview and Scrutiny Commission seeks to discontinue or appoint overview and scrutiny panels other than as set out in the Constitution, it may do so provided that it has consulted with interested parties, if appropriate. Any change would then be reported to the proper officer and then to the next meeting of the Council by the Chairman of the Commission, so that the Constitution may be amended accordingly.
- 5.4 The Working Group proposed changes to the current terms of reference within the Constitution as set out at Appendix A.
- 5.5 The Working Group considered the size of the new panel and proposed that a larger membership would be required to respond to the increased scope of the panel. The Working Group recommended an increase from the current panel size of nine members to 12. This should enable the new panel to benefit from the knowledge and experience of members from both of the existing panels.
- 5.6 The Working Group was keen that the current Co-option of Dr Norman be continued on the new Panel. They also recognised that it was vital that the role of HealthWatch to observe and contribute at meetings be maintained.
- 5.7 The Working Group considered the scope of the new panel and felt strongly that it would be difficult to cover this in only four meetings each municipal year. It was proposed to increase the number of meetings to six per year but this would be kept under review.
- 5.8 It was proposed that the meetings should be held on existing Panel dates with the addition of the dates in bold: 5 June, **24 July**, 11 September, **6 November**, 15 January 2019 and 26 March 2019.
- 5.9 It was proposed that the new Panel's name should be the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel.
- 5.10 The work programme for Overview and Scrutiny during 2018-19 was still very much under development. Therefore it was proposed that the two draft work programmes of the existing Panels be combined and put before the new panel when it first meets to prioritise. This would be part of the new panel's challenge to identify the key activities it wishes to undertake in its first year to start having an impact in this key area.
- 5.11 The Working Group considered that it would be important to undertake an induction process to support the new panel members to become effective.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The proposed amendments to the Constitution reflect the Commission's role to determine how its Panels will be constituted.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The proposal to merge these panels would reduce the number of Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairman from four to three and this would deliver a potential saving of £5,701. The proposals also reduce the number of overall meetings by two per year but this will have a minimal impact on resourcing which is difficult to quantify.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 None.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 If the Overview and Scrutiny Commission does not align these two panels there is a recognised risk that opportunities to join up strategic thinking across these service areas will be missed and duplication across both panels would continue.

7 CONSULTATION

7.1 Principal Groups Consulted

- Raised at meetings of Adult Social Care and Housing and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panels.
- Discussed with Director of Adult Social Care, Health and Housing.
- Through working group discussions.

Background Papers

None.

Contact for further information

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