



## **SOCIAL**

### OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**21st March 2007**

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## **MINUTES**

### **Present:**

Councillor M Shurmer (Chair) and Councillors Boyd-Carpenter, Field, Hill and Passingham.

### **Officer:**

M Bough.

### **Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer:**

I Westmore.

### **25. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Brunner and Thomas.

### **26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP**

There were no declarations of interest nor of any Party Whip.

### **27. FEEDBACK FROM TASK AND FINISH GROUPS REPORTING TO THIS COMMITTEE - APPEALS**

The Committee received the draft final report from the Appeals Task and Finish Group which was introduced by Councillor Field, a Member of the Group.

Councillor Field explained the reasoning behind the recommendation contained within the draft report which was, in effect, to maintain the status quo and review the situation at the end of the calendar year. The basis of the recommendation was the contention that it was appropriate to retain Member involvement in the process but that the involvement of Members should not become too burdensome and the handling of appeals and possible appeals should not be delayed unduly.

The potential numbers of homelessness appeals to be considered by Members should the Council move to a single stage appeals process was highlighted to the Committee as an example of why the present recommendation had been made. Officers noted that the other viable

alternative would be to move to a single stage but without Member involvement.

The second recommendation, that all Members of the Council receive training in the attendance of quasi-judicial meetings, was broadly welcomed although there was no accurate conception of the extent to which such training had been provided to the present Membership.

There was some discussion as to the precise contents of the final report to be submitted to the Executive Committee. It was agreed that the more comprehensive alternative should be adopted. Officers added that there were some final amendments to be made to the report prior to submission to the Executive Committee

## **RESOLVED that**

**The draft report of the Appeals Task and Finish Group be submitted to the Executive Committee for consideration, subject to final additions and amendments being made by Officers.**

## **28. COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

The Committee considered a report that set out a proposed method of producing the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Members were content with the course of action proposed and for Officers to draft a report on their behalf.

## **RESOLVED that**

**the overall structure and the form of its proposed contribution to an annual report to Council from the Overview and Scrutiny Committees be approved.**

## **29. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered the programme of future work. Officers apologised for their inability to arrange the meetings to discuss Domestic Violence, Detached Youth Provision and evening provision of Passenger Transport following the last meeting of the Committee. In explanation, Members were informed that the present lack of dedicated Overview and Scrutiny staff was being addressed.

Members engaged in a short discussion of the proposals that were to be considered by the Council regarding the move to a single commissioning Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the implications of that.

The Committee discussed other possible topics for consideration, including the provision of sheltered accommodation for the BME community and services for looked after children. The latter was particularly singled out as deserving of review as Redditch had the

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highest number of looked after children in the County and the Committee therefore agreed that this item be added to the programme of future work.

### **RESOLVED that**

**subject to the addition detailed above, the Committee's Work Programme be approved**

The meeting commenced at 7.00 p.m.  
and closed at 8.12 p.m.

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CHAIR

