

SCRUTINY PROGRAMME BOARD

4 November 2009

26 SCRUTINY TRAINING

Further to minute 15 (5) (14 September 2009), the Director of Law, HR and Asset Management reported upon the need identified by Members for improved overview and scrutiny training opportunities and to identify and learn from good practice adopted by overview and scrutiny committees in other local authorities. He commented that a number of Council's had produced overview and scrutiny newsletters, which illustrated best practice and provided examples of the way the scrutiny function was operating elsewhere.

Members indicated that more specific training was needed, particularly in relation to scoping. However, Members informed that initial scrutiny training from an external provider had fallen far short of the standard expected and that training on other topics provided by Council officers had been, in comparison, more beneficial and cost effective. Views were also expressed that some Members of the Council appeared reluctant to become actively involved in the overview and scrutiny function and had refused to take up training and development opportunities that had been provided. Specifically mentioned was the Elumos Equality and Diversity package.

Members referred to the work undertaken by the Members' Training Steering Group and noted that at present, one political group was not participating in it. It was noted that the Council had been accredited with the Member Development Charter at level one, three years ago. It was now time to apply for re-accreditation at level one or level two (exemplar status) but unfortunately, without all party support this could not happen. Concerns were also raised around the budgetary and funding arrangements for Members Training and Development. Members also questioned whether decisions in relation to Members training should be devolved to Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Resolved –

- (1) That examples of overview and scrutiny newsletters published by other Councils be provided for Members consideration.**
- (2) That a report be presented to the next meeting of the Board upon the delivery of successful scrutiny training for Members, taking account of best practice in other local authorities.**
- (3) That the Cabinet be recommended to –**
 - a. review the governance arrangements for Members' training and development taking account of best practice in neighbouring Councils and consider whether the MTSG is the most appropriate vehicle to ensure that Members are equipped with the skills to fulfil their new and changing roles as community leaders;**
 - b. review the management of the budget and funding arrangements currently in place to support Member training and development.**
 - c. consider whether more "in-house" training by the Council's own officers should be provided instead of using external providers.**