

**Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee**  
**Wednesday, 26 April 2017**

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| <b>REPORT TITLE:</b> | <b>Proposed Scrutiny Committee Structure 2017/18</b>                 |
| <b>REPORT OF:</b>    | <b>Assistant Director: Law &amp; Governance (Monitoring Officer)</b> |

**REPORT SUMMARY**

Following consideration of the matter by the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Working Group on 19 April 2017 it is proposed to divide the remit of the People Overview & Scrutiny Committee to create two committees, one with a remit for adult social care and health and another with a remit for children and families. These committees would incorporate the functions, the pledges, supporting strategies and associated delivery areas of the People theme of the Wirral Plan (see **Appendix 1**).

The proposed names of these committees are:

- **Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee.**
- **Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee.** The current education co-optees on the People O&S Committee will become members of the Children & Families O&S Committee.

**RECOMMENDATIONS – That the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Committee agrees that:**

- 1) the remit of the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee be divided to create two new Committees - Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee;
- 2) the impact on political proportionality arising from the revised Overview and Scrutiny Structure be reviewed (Note: existing education co-opted members be appointed to the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee);
- 3) relevant Financial and Performance Reporting relating to each Committee be provided;
- 4) the Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) payable to People Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chair be paid for each Chair of Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny and Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committees; and

- 5) All Chairs / Vice-Chairs / Spokespersons continue to meet on a regular basis to allocate scrutiny work that may cut across the responsibility of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## SUPPORTING INFORMATION

### 1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 The current arrangements were implemented in July 2016 following a review of the overview and scrutiny function. This review was driven by the Council's new operating model and a shift towards a focus on the delivery of outcomes via the Wirral Plan. Three Overview and Scrutiny Committees, People, Business and Environment were established to align overview and scrutiny to the Wirral Plan themes and to enable scrutiny to best support and add value to the delivery of the Wirral Plan.
- 1.2 The creation of a specific Committee with responsibility for scrutinising children's services will support the Council's response to the outcomes of the recent Ofsted inspection. An enhanced profile for health scrutiny would also be achieved by conducting health scrutiny in public. The existing Health and Care Performance Panel meets in private and reports to People Committee.
- 1.3 There are no proposals in this report to change the current Business and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committees.
- 1.4 The revised scope and Terms of Reference for the four proposed committees (Article 6 from the Council Constitution) is attached at **Appendix 1**.

### **Discussion Points / Issues considered by the Working Group**

- 1.5 The members of the working group considered the following issues:
  - Consideration of the optimal number of committee Members considering the additional attendees at both committees (health partners at Adult Care and Health and education co-optees at Children & Families). Changes to the size of committees would need to reflect the political make-up of the Council's membership.
  - As current reporting arrangements for financial monitoring and performance reporting are aligned to the Wirral Plan themes, further work would be required to split the People theme reporting between the two new committees.
  - Assuming the Children Sub Committee and Health & Care Performance Panel are discontinued, there will be limited impact on officer resources for the additional committee.
  - The scrutiny of some People pledges, such as 'People with disabilities live independently', cuts across the remit of the proposed committees. Continued coordination of work programme activities between the Chairs of the proposed four committees will ensure duplication does not occur.
- 1.6 A copy of the current scope and Terms of Reference for the People Overview and Scrutiny Committee is attached at **Appendix 2**.

- 1.7 A summary of proposed amendments to related sections of the Council Constitution is attached at **Appendix 3**.
- 1.8 A summary of the political proportionality arising from the proposed changes to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees is attached at **Appendix 4**. Following further investigation into the overall impact on the matter of proportionality arising from the Recommendation 2 of the Working Group, the Committee will be provided a series of options for consideration (**to follow**).
- 1.9 A copy of the Council's Calendar of Meetings incorporating the proposed changes to Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings is attached at **Appendix 5**. Changes are highlighted in **bold**.

## **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 2.1 To retaining existing structure – this option has been discounted for the reasons detailed in this report.

## **3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 The current Members Allowance Scheme allows for a Special Responsibility Allowance to be paid to all Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs (£4,585). The Scheme further states that no councillor shall be entitled to receive more than one payment by way of special responsibility allowance. This matter was noted by the Working Group, but fell outside of the remit of their review.
- 3.2 Whether an additional payment of SRA is payable will depend on who becomes Chair of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee – If the appointed Chair already receives an SRA there will be no additional SRA payable.

## **4.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 The Council must ensure it has effective Overview and Scrutiny arrangements in place to discharge its Overview and Scrutiny statutory functions.

## **5.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

- 5.1 There are none arising from this report.
- 5.2 It is assumed that the proposed approach will enable the cessation of the Health & Care Performance Panel and the Children Sub-Committee as it is envisaged that the work of these two bodies will be incorporated into the Adult Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Children and Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee respectively.

## **6.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

6.1 The proposed changes are considered to better manage and assess risks to the Council and ensure they are effectively managed.

## **7.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

7.1 The matter was considered by the Standards and Constitutional Oversight Working Group on 19 April 2017.

## **8.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no changes of relevance to equality arising from this proposal.

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## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Council Constitution proposed Article 6.

Appendix 2 - Council Constitution current Article 6, (People Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

Appendix 3 - Additional Constitution revisions arising from proposed overview and scrutiny restructure.

Appendix 4 - Summary of political proportionality incorporating the changes to Overview and Scrutiny Committee arrangements.

Appendix 5 - Council Calendar of Meetings Summary of incorporating the changes to Overview and Scrutiny Committee arrangements.

## **REFERENCE MATERIAL**

### **SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

| <b>Council Meeting</b> | <b>Date</b> |
|------------------------|-------------|
|                        |             |