

For Publication

ROLE OF THE JOINT SCRUTINY PANEL

MEETING: **JOINT BOARD**

DATE: **5 OCTOBER 2015**

REPORT BY: **COMMITTEE AND SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATOR
(CHESTERFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL)**

FOR PUBLICATION

BACKGROUND PAPERS: **Joint Scrutiny Panel Annual Reports to Joint Board**

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide information to inform a response to the request from the Joint Scrutiny Panel (the Panel) for a Joint Board work programme.
- 1.2 To provide information to inform a discussion on potential future work programme items and the role of the Panel.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To agree the Joint Board work programme to assist the Joint Scrutiny Panel to consider its future work programme.
- 2.2 To request the Joint Panel consider undertaking overview and scrutiny of the Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium and amend its Terms of Reference as necessary.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Following an initial pilot of Joint Scrutiny Arrangements, the Joint Scrutiny Panel was established in 2011, for the overview and scrutiny of shared services between Chesterfield Borough Council, Bolsover District Council and North East Derbyshire District Council.

- 3.2 Each year each Council nominates three elected members to serve on the Joint Scrutiny Panel.
- 3.3 The Terms of Reference, attached at Appendix A, for the Joint Scrutiny Panel were designed when it was anticipated that the number of shared services would grow, however, this has not happened. The shared services are now limited to BCN Consultancy and the Internal Audit Consortium, as the Shared Procurement Unit was dissolved. And these remaining services are also now looking to develop Derbyshire wide services.
- 3.4 The Joint Scrutiny Panel has undertaken work during each year including scrutiny of the annual reports for the shared services and quarterly monitoring of financial and performance information, where this has been supplied. The Panel has submitted Annual Reports to the Joint Board which detail the work that they have undertaken. The Joint Scrutiny Panel Annual Reports are available online or on request from Democratic Services at Chesterfield Borough Council.
- 3.5 In light of the impact of various joint arrangements taking place across the area, the future work programme and role of the Joint Scrutiny Panel was discussed at the Panel's meeting in March 2015. An extract of the Minutes of that meeting related to this discussion is set out below:

Members discussed the future and the usefulness of the Joint Scrutiny Panel. It was noted that Procurement was no longer a shared service between the three authorities, and that their two remaining shared services of BCN and Internal Audit were both considering extending the shared arrangement with other Councils across Derbyshire. Implications of new partnership arrangements such as the Combined Authorities were also raised.

Members agreed that for the panel to be useful their work programme needed to reflect what the Joint Board was doing. Members also agreed that they were keen for the panel to be more active and to have project groups looking at specific topics as happened in the past.

RESOLVED -

That the Joint Board be asked to consider and inform the Joint Scrutiny Panel of its future plans and work programme as this would directly influence the work and the future of the Joint Scrutiny Panel.

- 3.6 It was agreed at the Joint Board meeting in March 2015 that the role of the Joint Scrutiny Panel be added to the agenda for the next meeting of the Joint Board.

4.0 **ISSUES TO CONSIDER**

Timetable or programme of business for Joint Board

- 4.1 The Joint Scrutiny Panel requested that the Joint Board inform the Panel of its future plans and work programme. Currently notice is given for key decisions or private reports to be considered by Joint Board 28 days in advance.
- 4.2 The meetings of Joint Board have occasionally been cancelled or rearranged over the last couple of years, which has made it difficult for the Joint Scrutiny Panel to fix their own meetings and timetable a work programme. An annual timetable of reports from the services and their finance and budget reports may assist the Panel to prepare their meetings in advance, if the Joint Board will be retaining decision-making responsibility for these services following the review of their expansion.

BCN Consultancy

- 4.3 At the last meeting the Joint Board agreed that the Joint Scrutiny Panel be involved and be kept updated on the progress of exploring the option for a Derbyshire wide service for BCN Consultancy. The Joint Scrutiny Panel hope to continue to add value to the discussions over the proposed expansion of the BCN Consultancy service across Derbyshire, being consulted at an early stage before decisions are made by the Joint Board and other councils involved.

Overview and Scrutiny of Joint Crematorium Committee

- 4.4 The Board may wish to request the Panel give attention to Joint Crematorium Committee. The Terms of Reference for the Joint Scrutiny Panel do refer to other areas of joint working, such as the Crematorium. The Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium is a service shared between Chesterfield Borough Council, Bolsover District Council and North East Derbyshire District Council. The service is managed by a joint executive committee, made up of executive members from the three authorities. There are currently no joint scrutiny arrangements in regards to this committee.

- 4.5 The Joint Scrutiny Panel could extend its current work to include the Joint Crematorium although it may be more appropriate for it to make recommendations and submit reports on this matter directly to the Joint Crematorium Committee.
- 4.6 For the Joint Scrutiny Panel to make recommendations directly to the Joint Crematorium Committee, the Panel's Terms of Reference may need to be amended. Such amendment would need to be agreed by the each authority's Scrutiny Committee and by the Joint Scrutiny Panel.

5.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 To agree the Joint Board work programme to assist the Joint Scrutiny Panel to consider its future work programme.
- 5.2 To request the Joint Panel consider undertaking overview and scrutiny of the Chesterfield and District Joint Crematorium and amend its Terms of Reference as necessary.

6.0 **REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 To ensure effective partnership arrangements, including overview and scrutiny, in the delivery of Shared Services between Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire and Bolsover Councils.

Donna Cairns
Committee and Scrutiny Co-ordinator

For further information on this report, please contact Donna Cairns 01246 345277

Joint Board Decision

Officer Recommendation supported/not supported/modified as below:

Signed	Leader (or reserve) Bolsover District Council
Signed	Leader (or reserve) Chesterfield Borough Council
Signed Council	Leader (or reserve) North East Derbyshire District
Date	