

Project Name:	Overview and Scrutiny Review
Date of report:	1 st September 2014
Author:	Donna Reddish – Policy Manager
Sponsor:	Huw Bowen – Chief Executive

1.0 Background

- 1.1 During 2011 an external review by the Institute of Local Government Studies (INLOGOV) was completed on the Overview and Scrutiny function at Chesterfield Borough Council.
- 1.2 Since the 2011 review there have also been significant changes in the officer resource and direction due to major restructures in the Governance and Policy Services.
- 1.3 Members and Officers would now like to revisit the findings of the review and subsequent recommendations taken forward to assess whether or not these arrangements are still appropriate and working as envisaged. This will include a light touch review of officer resources available.

2.0 Project Objectives

- 2.1 To complete an internal review of the Overview and Scrutiny function and resources by January 2015.
- 2.2 That the review is used to develop proposals to further improve the Overview and Scrutiny function and to take account of any new and emerging responsibilities.
- 2.3 That the Overview and Scrutiny function is able to utilise an adaptable and flexible officer resource in order to meet its mandatory functions and priority areas.

3.0 Desired Outcome

- 3.1 A fit for purpose Overview and Scrutiny function, able to adapt to changing priorities and responsibilities.

4.0 Scope

4.1 In scope –

- Overview and Scrutiny Structure
- Policies, Procedures and documents
- Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme
- Officer resource
- Awareness and engagement

5.0 Constraints and Assumptions

5.1 Overview and Scrutiny had previously been recognised as under-resourced. The 2013/14 Governance restructure increased the level of employee resource significantly by introducing the Scrutiny and Committee Co-ordinator roles. Due to current and future financial challenges additional financial and employee resources are unlikely to be available. Review recommendations must be achievable via existing resource allocations.

6.0 Consequences

- 6.1 The review will potentially make recommendations for changes to the way the function is delivered; this could affect existing post holders as job roles may change.
- 6.2 The review may highlight that the function has an upper capacity limit on its ability to deliver an effective Overview and Scrutiny function this may require a realignment of priorities.

7.0 Tolerance

7.1 The review should be completed in February 2015 to enable any changes to be implemented early in the 2015/16 financial year.

8.0 Stakeholders

8.1 Current *Stakeholders for this project include:-*

- Overview and Scrutiny Chairs
- Overview and Scrutiny Elected Members
- Executive Members
- The Corporate Management Team and key officers
- The Officer Resource including Policy and Scrutiny Officer and Committee and Scrutiny Co-ordinators

9.0 Interfaces

- 9.1 This project is linked to all Council functions, services and governance structures.

10.0 Project Approach

- 10.1 This project will be delivered by means of a light touch internal review focusing on the in-scope areas listed at 4.1. The review will be followed by a report with improvements proposals to Overview and Performance Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet (possibly Joint Cabinet and Employment Committee).
- 10.2 The key stages of the review will be as follows:

Baseline and Vision

1. To engage with appropriate stakeholders to identify Chesterfield Borough Council's vision for a fit for purpose Overview and Scrutiny function.
2. To engage with appropriate stakeholders to identify opinions/views on current Overview and Scrutiny arrangements.
3. To identify any significant changes that have occurred to functions, responsibilities and resources since the 2011 review which now need to be considered in future arrangements.

Challenge

To use the data gathered in the baseline stage to challenge current Overview and Scrutiny arrangements and work programme. This will include gap analysis of the Council's vision for Overview and Scrutiny against the current position.

Develop Options/Recommendations

To develop options and/or recommendations to ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny is fit for purpose and able to adapt and respond to emerging challenges.

This step may include some external challenge from an appropriate critical friend for example the Centre for Public Scrutiny or the Institute of Local Government Studies.

11.0 Next Steps

- 11.1 To hold and project Commissioning meeting with key stakeholders including the Chairs and Vice Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny, The Executive Member for Governance and Organisational Behaviour, the Chief Executive, Policy Manager and Policy and Scrutiny Officer. This meeting will confirm the project brief, the governance arrangements and review timescales.
- 11.2 To develop a work programme and timetable for stage 1(Baseline and Vision) of the review.