

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - New Ways of Working

Report by the Director for Digital and Resources

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report requests that the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) confirms the new ways of working practices, to help and enhance the Overview and Scrutiny role, which were discussed and agreed in principle at the Committee on 29 October 2015.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The suggested new working practices for JOSC were discussed at the meeting on 29 October 2015 and were agreed in principle subject to them being discussed at a 'Creative' session. As part of this meeting it is planned that the Committee will adjourn to hold the 'Creative' session and discuss in more detail those new working practices. A brief explanation of how these new practices will work is set out in the attached appendix to this report.
- 2.2 If agreed, it is the intention that the changes will be implemented in a graduated trial with effect from the January 2016 JOSC meeting on the basis that new procedures would then be fully implemented with effect from the start of the 2016/17 Municipal Year (May 2016).

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 That JOSC consider the proposed new ways of working set out in the report and discuss them as part of the 'Creative' session.

4.0 Legal

- 4.1 Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 provides Local Authorities with the power to do anything ancillary or incidental to the discharge of their function.
- 4.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides the Councils with a general power of competence and empowers Local Authorities to do anything which individuals generally do.

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report, although individual projects contained within the JOSOC Work Programme may have financial implications.

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 The Committee is requested to confirm its new ways of working as set out in the appendix to this report and as discussed as part of the separate 'Creative' session.

Local Government Act 1972

Background Papers:

None

Contact Officer:

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Schedule of Other Matters

1.0 Council Priority

1.1 Matter considered and issues related to Council Priorities identified.

2.0 Specific Action Plans

2.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

3.0 Sustainability Issues

3.1 Matter considered. Some of the issues to be considered by the Committee may have sustainability implications.

4.0 Equality Issues

4.1 Matter considered. Some of the issues to be considered by the Committee may have equality implications.

5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

5.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

6.0 Human Rights Issues

6.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

7.0 Reputation

7.1 Matter considered and no issues identified. Outcomes from the discussion of the issues can help to improve the reputation of the Councils.

8.0 Consultations

8.1 Matter considered. Some issues identified in the Work Programme may involve some form of consultation.

9.0 Risk Assessment

9.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

10.0 Health & Safety Issues

10.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

11.0 Procurement Strategy

11.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

12.0 Partnership Working

12.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

APPENDIX

JOSC New ways of working

'Following through' with recommendations

Reporting and monitoring the work and recommendations from the Working Groups
Updates of the Trello Board to provide a 'live' progress on the Work Programme

Meeting Content

Proposal to have themed/issue based meetings based upon value and outcomes which could be achieved from discussing the item (This could provide JOSC with the opportunity to become more involved in policy development) - In order to achieve this the Committee would need to identify why an item is being considered and how it could be reviewed when considering adding items to the Work Programme.

Reports to be 'Noted' will be removed from the agendas and can be added to the Members bulletin if relevant.

How themed meetings develop

Item can be raised at a JOSC meeting.

JOSC agrees whether or not to consider the issue as a possible item.

The Member who requests the item would then be responsible for building up a template (scoping report to support their proposal for the item)

The scoping report would then be submitted to the Joint Chairmen who would provide a recommendation on the proposal

The full proposal and recommendation of the Joint Chairmen would then be submitted to the next available JOSC meeting and JOSC would consider the full proposal and agree whether or not it should go forward onto the Work Programme. This process would probably extend over a two meeting cycle.

If any items are urgent and need to be considered at the next meeting, then JOSC/Chairmen would need to make a judgement on the item and whether it needs to be considered earlier.

Holding the Executive to Account

The Annual Leader interviews at JOSC should continue but it is suggested that the other Executive Member Interviews, in their current format (once a year interviews), should be discontinued.

To improve transparency and accountability of the work of the Executive Members it is suggested also that the Leaders and relevant Executive Members should be expected to attend JOSC meetings when items relating to their portfolios are being considered.

It is proposed that there should be more focus on scrutinising outcomes from the decisions of the JSC. This should be both forthcoming items from JSC and also historical policy which has been

implemented to scrutinise the effectiveness of those policies. A 'Surf's Up' themed meeting could also be a good example of a themed meeting.

What a JOSC meeting might look like:-

Draft Agenda looks like:

Standard items

Themed Issue of the meeting (Executive Member/Leader to attend as key interviewees for these items where they relate to their portfolio)

To consider any recommendations from JOSC Chairmen regarding scoping reports

To review the JOSC work programme - Displayed on Trello Board at meeting with link to Trello Board included in the JOSC report.

The meetings will be structured on the basis of interviewees, questions, debate, recommendations / resolutions.

Public Involvement

It is considered that there is a need to try and increase the public involvement in the JOSC process.

There does need to be a better follow up on public questions and answers to these questions should be published. It is suggested that there could be a scrutiny blog produced.

The public do need to be involved in the scrutiny process and there needs to be more engagement with social media and the communications team need to assist in delivering the message about scrutiny. We need to ask the public what they want to be scrutinised.

Implementation of the new ways of working

That the new ways of working should initially be implemented in trial with effect from the January JOSC meeting on the basis that new procedures should be fully implemented with effect from the start of the 2016/17 Municipal Year (May 2016).

November 2015

Councillors James Butcher, Stephen Chipp (Adur District Council) and Roy Barraclough and Keith Bickers (Worthing Borough Council)