

## Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - New ways of Working

### Report by the Director for Digital and Resources

#### 1.0 Summary

1.1 This report outlines the proposed new ways of working for the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) which, if approved, are to be implemented in full from the start of the 2016/17 Municipal Year.

#### 2.0 Background

2.1 As part of an adjournment at the meeting of the Committee on 26 November 2015, the Committee undertook a 'Creative session', splitting into four groups to discuss and agree some 'New Ways of Working' to help improve the overview and scrutiny role. The 'Creative session', attended by Councillors Roy Barraclough, Keith Bickers, Ann Bridges, James Butcher, Paul Graysmark, Emily Hilditch, Charles James, Mary Lermite, Nigel Morgan and Vino Vinojan, followed on from some previous preliminary discussions which the Committee had held at its meeting on 29 October 2015.

2.2 The four Groups all discussed the following themes:-

- How to get issues on JOSC agendas
- Meeting content - Themed meetings
- Holding the Executive to account
- Public involvement/engagement

2.3 An analysis of the Group discussions has now been undertaken to provide some achievable new ways of working and the detailed suggested proposals are attached in the appendix to this report. These proposals also include a detailed procedure and process diagram to explain how themed and issue based items can be suggested and added to the Work Programme. As the process evolves it will be possible to fine tune how these and the other new procedures will work in practice and any proposals will be brought to JOSC for consideration but at this stage these proposal do provide a strong platform to be able to enhance and develop the working/role of the Committee.

### **3.0 Proposals**

- 3.1 The Committee is requested to confirm the new ways of working for the Committee as set out in the report which will be phased in during the next few months with the aim that the detailed arrangements can be implemented in full by the start of the next Municipal Year (May/June 2016).
- 3.2 The Leaders of Adur and Worthing Councils have been consulted on the proposals and are broadly supportive.

### **4.0 Legal**

- 4.1 Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything to facilitate or which is conducive or incidental to the discharge of any of their functions.
- 4.2 Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 provides a Local Authority to do anything that individuals generally may do (subject to any current restrictions or limitations prescribed in existing legislation).
- 4.3 Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 1999 (LGA 1999) contains a general duty on a best value authority to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness.
- 4.4 Section 1 Local Government (Contracts) Act 1997 empowers the Council to enter into a contract in relation to any of its functions.

### **5.0 Financial implications**

- 5.1 There are no known financial implications arising from this report but some of the items discussed as part of the new ways of working may have financial/resource implications.

### **6.0 Recommendation**

- 6.1 That the Committee approve the proposed new ways of working as set out in the appendix to this report to be implemented in full with effect from the start of the next Municipal Year 2016/17.**

### **Local Government Act 1972 Background Papers:**

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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 and no issues identified.

### **4.0 Equality Issues**

4.1 Matter considered. Some of the issues to be considered by the Committee may impact on equality issues.

### **5.0 Community Safety issues (Section 17)**

5.1 Matter considered. Some of the issues considered by the Committee may relate to crime and disorder.

### **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 of the 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. Some of the issues identified will involve working together and also in partnership with other Councils.

## **APPENDIX**

### **Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Proposed New Ways of Working**

<p><b>A</b> <b><u>How to get issues on the agenda</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Themed/issue based meetings to be introduced. Issues to be chosen based on value and outcomes. JOSC to consider the viability of items and if agreed the Member proposing the issue will draw up the scope for submission to JOSC Chairmen/Vice-Chairmen for approval. The process for agreeing items for the agenda will need to be concise to speed up consideration of items. Any Ward related issues will be discussed with the relevant Ward Members. If the item is urgent then the proposal will be submitted direct to JOSC to decide if the matter should be considered further or referred to a Working Group.</li><li>• A prioritising/scoring system for agreeing items will be produced eg PAPER (Public interest, Ability to change, Performance, Extent and Replication)</li><li>• An on line form to be provided to increase the opportunity for the public to suggest items. (This will be considered as part of the improved public engagement proposals referred to below)</li><li>• If the Work Programme is too full then repeat suggestions will receive priority.</li><li>• Notice of the 'New ways of working' to be advertised to the public/other Councillors via official launch.</li></ul> <p><b><u>(See also detailed procedure for considering Work Programme items attached to this appendix)</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Other Agenda issues</u></b></p>	<p><b>B</b> <b><u>Meeting content/How themed meetings will work</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When a themed meeting is suggested the relevant Executive Members and Officers should be involved in the process in providing evidence.</li><li>• Contractors and suppliers should also be involved where possible in the meeting process.</li><li>• Involve community and voluntary sector representatives where appropriate</li><li>• Involve front line officers.</li><li>• Have less formal seating to relax people and encourage discussion/more informality.</li><li>• Have an Annual review meeting to discuss how the new arrangements are working.</li><li>• Themed meetings will be planned in advance with appropriate questioning in advance/specific questions for specific attendees.</li><li>• Expected outcome for the themed meeting to be identified in advance and this to be made clear to JOSC.</li><li>• Use of Working Groups to undertake reviews to be agreed as appropriate.</li><li>• Officers to provide subject overviews.</li></ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All noting reports will be removed from the agenda.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>C</b> <b><u>Improving Holding the Executive to account</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leader interviews to be held twice a year (6 monthly) - Questioning to cover high level strategic Council issues and and issues relating to their portfolios but not day to day Council matters. Interviews to coincide with the report from the Chief Executive on progress with Surf's Up.</li> <li>All Executive Members to attend JOSC at least once per year if possible as part of the themed meetings.</li> <li>Executive Members to attend JOSC meetings when Officers present reports that relate to their portfolio to provide more accountability of Executive Members.</li> <li>List of all Cabinet/JSC/Executive Member decisions to be provided to JOSC to assist JOSC in deciding if there needs to be further scrutiny on those items. Scrutiny of individual policy issues could be the subject of a particular themed meeting.</li> <li>As part of the 'holding to account' role, JOSC Members to provide questions in advance for Executive Members.</li> <li>Executive Members to be allowed to suggest topics for JOSC scrutiny.</li> <li>Consideration to be given to further Partnership Scrutiny including participating in the work of the West Sussex Joint Scrutiny Steering Group.</li> <li>Six monthly review of the Executive Member issues considered</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Other issues</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The existing format for other Executive Member interviews to be discontinued.</li> </ul>	<p><b>D</b> <b><u>Improving Public involvement/engagement/Public question Time</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is a need to explain and publicise more on the overview and scrutiny process and the work of JOSC. This will involve the Communications team helping to deliver the scrutiny message and will include:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providing more succinct meeting information and promotion</li> <li>Providing a website homepage banner for meeting information with drop down information for further detail</li> <li>Providing in-depth coverage of the work of JOSC</li> <li>Involving the public in the JOSC work with opportunities for them to get involved</li> <li>Providing the media with more information on the work of JOSC to advertise meeting dates and agendas etc</li> <li>Better use of social media to publicise the work of JOSC and have more public involvement. Show and share information. Also better use of social media to help with 'non-issues' and stem unneeded contact. Needs to be moderated/controlled</li> <li>Better use of other social media streams such as 'Facebook' to advertise the work of JOSC and encourage more public involvement.</li> <li>Looking at the possibility of introducing a mini scrutiny roadshow to explain what JOSC is looking at and how the scrutiny process works</li> <li>Having a section on the website for 'submit your ideas - ask your Committee'. Track your question/idea.</li> <li>Introducing a 'Big Scrutiny survey'</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Introducing a JOSOC blog - Post meeting analysis from the Chairman</li><li>- Introducing Live tweeting/live blogging Q&amp;A tweeting #scrutiny hour</li><li>● Work with the Political parties to include JOSOC meeting dates and information in party newsletters (If this is legally possible).</li><li>● Work with resident groups/Panels - Invite them to meetings</li><li>● Have more feedback/workshops in meetings eg Council Tax/Shoreham Fort issues</li><li>● Have a roving microphone for public participants</li><li>● Better community intelligence (eg working with Police etc to find issues.</li><li>● Strategically involve partners - 2 way plus businesses.</li></ul>
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## **How themed/issue based items will be chosen - A Work Programme procedure for the Adur and Worthing Joint overview and Scrutiny Committee**

### **1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 Any Councillor or Member of the public can submit a request for the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JOSC) to consider an item as part of its Work Programme.
- 1.2 The Committee wants to make sure that the limited time it has is spent productively and as such has a procedure in place to assess items submitted for discussion and to manage the workload of the Committee.
- 1.3 Items for noting will not be considered by the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meetings.

### **2.0 Assessment**

- 2.1 Assessment of 'item bids' will be made against the 'PAPER' criteria which is defined as follows

- Public interest - *Is the issue in the Public Interest? The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny*
- Ability to change - *Does the Authority have powers in relation to the issue and can the Committee realistically influence the issue?*
- Performance - *Does the issue concern the level of performance of a Council service?*
- Extent - *How big is the issue problem? Does it concern issues relevant to a large part of the District/Borough? Minor issues should be given lower priority*
- Replication - *Is this being considered elsewhere? Work programmes must take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort*

- 2.2 Bids do not have to meet all of the criteria as set out in 'PAPER'
- 2.3 An Initial assessment of the bids will be considered at a meeting of the Joint Chairmen and Vice-Chairmen who will make a recommendation to the next available meeting of JOSC for a final decision. All bids received will be set out on the Work Programme Trello Board for reference, together with the outcomes.
- 2.4 The Policy Officer will devise a pro forma that must be completed by anyone making an 'item bid' to JOSC. This pro forma will give the detail of the proposed bid to enable a complete assessment to be undertaken. An Electronic form for this will also be developed for use on the Councils' Website and any associated blogs.

2.5 When submitting a bid the 'bidder' can seek help from officers at the Council in completing the pro forma but should approach the Policy Officer in the first instance. Members of the Public wishing to submit a bid can do so with the help of their local Ward Member or other Member if necessary.

### 3.0 Urgent issues

3.1 There will be issues that are urgent in these instances and they will be submitted directly to JOSC for consideration, any urgent items will be considered in conjunction with urgency provisions as set out in the Councils' constitution.

### 4.0 Flow Chart - How the process will work

