

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Minutes of a meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board held on Tuesday, 12 November 2019 at 6.00 pm in Meeting Rooms G3/G4, Addenbrooke House, Ironmasters Way, Telford, TF3 4NT

Present: Councillors T L B Janke, A D McClements, G C W Reynolds, J M Seymour, C R Turley and D R W White (Chair).

In Attendance: D Moseley (Democratic & Scrutiny Services Team Leader)

SMB1 Declarations of Interest

None.

SMB2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED – that the minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board held on 12 March 2019 be confirmed and signed by the Chair.

SMB3 Scrutiny Annual Report 2018/19, Scrutiny Structure and Work Programme 2019/20 and 2020/21

The Board received this report which included the draft Annual Report for 2018/19, a proposed new Scrutiny Structure and terms of reference for each of the proposed Scrutiny Committees, details of existing standing co-optees with expiring terms of office, and a list of suggestions for a two year work programme for the 2019/20 to 2020/21 municipal years.

Annual Report 2018/19

No changes were suggested to the draft.

Scrutiny Structure and Terms of Reference

On 24 October 2019, Scrutiny Assembly had been consulted on proposed amendments to the structure of Scrutiny. The proposals, detailed in full in the report, sought to provide clarity and simplification to the remit of each Committee in order to provide a clear focus and limit the potential for overlap. Scrutiny Assembly had supported a structure which comprised Scrutiny Management Board and five Scrutiny Committees: Children & Young People, Communities, Environment, Business & Finance and Health & Adult Care (from which the Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee drew its Membership). Proposed terms of reference for the Committees were set out at Appendix 2 to the report. Members welcomed the clarity offered by the proposals. It was considered that responsibility for the Local Plan should be

shared by the proposed Business & Finance and Environment Scrutiny Committees.

The Chair noted that due to the pre-election period for the snap election on 12 December, the proposed structure and terms of reference would not be considered by Council until 23 January 2020. In order that Scrutiny could fulfil its responsibilities with regard to scrutiny of the budget it was therefore necessary to appoint one of the existing Committees to undertake this responsibility; scrutiny of the budget was, therefore, allocated to the Council Finance & Commercial Services Scrutiny Committee.

Scrutiny Co-Optees

Members agreed that co-opted scrutiny members were a very valuable asset to the scrutiny process and welcomed the retention of standing co-optees as set out at Section 4 of the report due to the wealth of knowledge and experience that had been built to date through regular attendance and engagement in the scrutiny process. However, Members were disappointed that some of the statutory co-optee seats remained vacant despite previous requests for nominees and urged appointing organisations to fill these seats. Existing statutory co-optees were encouraged to maintain regular attendance and it was agreed that the Democratic & Scrutiny Services Team Leader should contact these individuals to seek a commitment to attend future scrutiny meetings.

Work Programme 2020/21 – 2021/22

After a robust discussion which covered a number of issues and topics, the Board agreed that the over-arching priorities for Scrutiny across the proposed two year work programme should be the environment, mental health and housing.

The Board agreed that the list of suggestions at Appendix 3 to the report should be referred to the relevant Scrutiny Committee to timetable their own work programmes, having regard to the over-arching priorities, and also subject to:

- The suggestion “Licensing of Takeaways” was not considered to fit the criteria for scrutiny and it was agreed that the comments would be better addressed by the Licensing Committee;
- Blocked Beds be added as a suggestion for Health & Adult Care Scrutiny;
- The suggestion “Waste Receptacles” be broadened to include the provision of on-street recycling bins/facilities and amalgamated with the “Climate Change Emergency and Plastic Free Telford & Wrekin” suggestion; and
- The “Climate Change Emergency and Plastic Free Telford & Wrekin” suggestion be further expanded to include the barriers to plastic free for business and residents. This review would be led by the Environment

Committee with the Communities and Business & Finance Scrutiny Committees invited to take part in relevant elements of the work.

It was agreed that in most circumstances, Members should receive brief written reports in advance of meetings rather than long presentations or lots of paperwork at the committee meeting.

The Board considered the importance of Holding to Account Sessions with the Cabinet Members, and agreed that Holding to Account Sessions should take place at Board meetings whenever possible.

RESOLVED that

- (a) the draft 2018/19 Scrutiny Annual Report be approved;**
- (b) the Terms of Reference of the Scrutiny Management Board and the Scrutiny Assembly be agreed and that the revised structure and Terms of Reference for Scrutiny Committees as set out at Appendix 2 to the report be RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL for approval subject to the proposed Environment and Business & Finance Committees having joint responsibility for the Local Plan;**
- (c) standing Scrutiny Co-optees as set out at section 4 of the report be re-appointed with a term of office of 2 years;**
- (d) a commitment to attend future scrutiny meetings be sought from existing statutory co-optees;**
- (e) appointments be sought for vacant statutory co-optee seats;**
- (f) a two year work programme be set with the over-arching priorities of the environment, mental health and housing;**
- (g) subject to the discussion set out above, the suggestions set out in Appendix 3 of the report be referred to each of the relevant Scrutiny Committees to prioritise their own work programmes having regard to the over-arching priorities; and**
- (h) the “Council Finance & Commercial Services Scrutiny Committee” be appointed as the relevant Committee for scrutiny of the budget until such time that Council considers the Board’s recommendations for the revised structure and terms of reference of the Scrutiny Committees**

The meeting ended at 6.51 pm

Chairman:

Date: Wednesday, 23 June 2021