

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
17 MARCH 2015**

**\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**AGENDA ITEM No.**

**14**

**TITLE OF REPORT: ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER**

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 A draft annual report of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2014/15 is attached at **Appendix A** for the Committee's consideration.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to:
- comment on the draft Annual Report for 2014/15;
  - consider its priorities for next year;
  - note that some sections will have to be completed between now and Annual Council; and
  - agree that the Chairman should sign off any further necessary changes to the report so it can be presented to Annual Council.

**3. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 To enable the Committee to comment on the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2014/15.

**4. FORWARD PLAN**

- 4.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

**5. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES**

- 5.1 The annual report has a similar structure to last year's report, looking back at the work of the Committee and its task and finish groups, and looking forward to the Committee's intended approach to 2015/16. The sections recording the output from the Committee's meetings in terms of resolutions made and Cabinet's response will be completed after Cabinet's meeting on 24 March.

- 5.2 There will not be another regular meeting of the Committee before this report is presented to Annual Council on 21 May. It will therefore be necessary for the Committee to give the Chairman the authority to sign off the final version before Annual Council.
- 5.3 Public participation has been higher (17 members of the public so far) this year than last due to public interest in items on community centres and Hitchin Town Hall.
- 5.4 Task and finish groups have remained short and focussed, but many members have found daytime attendance difficult. Task and finish groups have therefore been arranged over a maximum of two evenings close together to make attendance easier and allow more members to take part. Scheduling difficulties have been acute this year delaying the task and finish group programme. It has not always been possible to arrange task and finish groups on set dates, or to stick to set dates when they have been arranged.
- 5.5 One task and finish group (parking) has been completed, another has met once and is due to conclude shortly (commercialisation of Council services) and a third is still to be arranged (Council reports).
- 5.6 The Scrutiny Officer will discuss the Committee's priorities for 2015/16 at the meeting on 17 March and complete section 4 of the Annual Report accordingly.

## **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising from the contents of this report.

## **7. FINANCE AND RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 There are no financial or risk implications arising from the contents of this report.

## **8. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 8.1 There are no new HR implications arising from the contents of this report.

## **9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 The Equality Act 2010 came into force on 1 October 2010, a major piece of legislation. The Act also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on 5 April 2011. There is a General duty, described in 12.2, that public bodies must meet, underpinned by more specific duties which are designed to help meet them.
- 9.2 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, a public body must, in the exercise of its functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

9.3 The report's recommendations have no equalities impact.

## **10. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 As the recommendations made in this report do not constitute a public service contract, the measurement of 'social value' as required by the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 need not be applied.

## **11. APPENDICES**

11.1 Appendix A: Draft Annual Report to Council of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

## **12. CONTACT OFFICERS**

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## **13. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

13.1 None.