

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
22 MARCH 2016**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

18

TITLE OF REPORT: PROTOCOL FOR TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER

1. SUMMARY

1.1 A revised protocol for task and finish groups.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Committee is asked to consider and agree the new protocol and its accompanying principles for handling task and finish groups.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To enable the Committee to conduct its task and finish groups effectively.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 None.

5. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

5.1 None.

6. FORWARD PLAN

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

7. BACKGROUND AND PROPOSED CHANGES

7.1 This year the Committee has decided to take a more flexible and member led approach to running task and finish groups so the existing protocol needs to be updated to reflect any changes. At its last meeting in January, the Committee discussed a number of changes which include:

- a more flexible approach to chairing task and finish groups;
- the Chair of the task and finish group finalising the scope;
- the process being led by members rather than by a lead officer;
- always hearing outside evidence where possible;
- more comprehensive pre-briefing of task and finish group members beforehand so they are better informed and meetings are more productive; and
- arrangements for task and finish group reports' progression to Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

7.2 The Committee asked the Chairman to lead a small sub-group to draft a new protocol and present this to the next meeting of the Committee. Cllrs Henry, Rice and Segalini met the Chief Executive David Scholes and the Scrutiny Officer on 3 February and the new protocol is attached at **Appendix A** for the Committee's consideration.

7.3 The new Protocol begins with the eight principles for task and finish groups suggested by the Chairman, followed by the revised Protocol itself.

7.4 The existing protocol agreed by the Committee in 2012 which clarified the roles of members and officers at different stages in the task and finish group process is attached at **Appendix B**.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None.

9. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None.

10. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 None.

11. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Equality Act 2010 came into force on the 1 October 2010, a major piece of legislation. The Act also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on the 5 April 2011. There is a general duty, described below, that public bodies must meet, and this is underpinned by more specific duties which are designed to help meet them.

11.2 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of its functions: give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

11.3 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

12. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no social value implications arising from this report.

13. APPENDICES

13.1 Appendix A – New Protocol for Task and Finish Groups

13.2 Appendix B – Existing Protocol for Task and Finish Groups

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15. BACKGROUND PAPERS

15.1 None.