

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
17 SEPTEMBER 2019**

**PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF REPORT: RESOLUTIONS OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE, MEMBER AND SCRUTINY MANAGER

EXECUTIVE MEMBER: NOT APPLICABLE

COUNCIL PRIORITY: RESPONSIVE AND EFFICIENT

**1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 For the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the future format of the Resolutions report.
- 1.2 For the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to agree any future actions required in respect of resolutions previously agreed.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1. That the Committee comment on the proposed format of the Resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee report;
- 2.2. That the format for future Resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee report be agreed;
- 2.3. That the Committee comment on actions and feedback received regarding resolutions previously made;
- 2.4. That the Committee agrees any future actions required in respect of resolutions previously agreed.

**3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1. To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to agree a format for the Resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee report and to review and comment on actions and feedback received regarding resolutions previously made;

#### **4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1. An alternative format of the Resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee report is presented for consideration.

#### **5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS**

- 5.1. The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was consulted as to the preferred format for the report and agreed that an alternative format should be considered by the Committee.

#### **6. FORWARD PLAN**

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

#### **7. BACKGROUND**

- 7.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee have reviewed actions, feedback and outcomes of resolutions previously made for many years.
- 7.2. The report has remained in the same format since it was first considered.
- 7.3. This report has become overly long, with resolutions either being duplicated or similar resolutions being made over a number of meetings making it difficult to assess.

#### **8. RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS**

- 8.1. The current Resolutions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee report contains duplicated or similar resolutions on the same subject, spread throughout the report making it difficult to assess actions and outcomes.
- 8.2. To make assessment of the history and current position of each resolution more efficient, it is proposed that resolutions on the same subject be grouped together.
- 8.3. It is proposed that, subsequently the report will be reduced to only include the latest and/or most relevant resolution(s) on each subject.
- 8.4. Following discussions with the Chairman of the Committee it was agreed that the Committee be presented with an alternative format of the report for the Committee to consider which they would prefer going forward.
- 8.5. The Committee are also asked to consider, comment on and agree any actions arising from previously agree resolutions.

## **9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.1 Under Section 6.2.5 of the Constitution, the Committee is responsible for setting its own work programme. However, it must ensure it retains sufficient capacity within the programme to meet its statutory obligations.
- 9.2 Section 6.2.7 (u) of the Constitution allows the Committee “to appoint time limited task and finish Topic Groups to undertake detailed scrutiny work and report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to make recommendations to the Cabinet.”.
- 9.3 The Resolutions report supports the Committee to set its work programme, including the appointment of any time limited Task and Finish Groups.

## **10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Dependent on how they are applied in practice, the scope of decisions made regarding previously made resolutions have the potential to be wide reaching. As detailed Section 14, Human Resource Implications, the wider the reach, the more significant the impact on officer time in terms of report writing, data analysis and committee meeting attendance. Given recent funding pressures and the consequent reduction in officer numbers, significant requests to support scrutiny work will limit officer time available to spend on activities such as identifying and delivering cost reductions, income generation and project management.
- 10.2 Although not significant, a committee attendance allowance of £25.17 per officer per evening meeting is payable to officers in attendance. This is in addition to providing time off in lieu, or overtime as an alternative.

## **11. RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1. Effective overview and scrutiny of policy, administrative, service delivery and expenditure decisions helps reduce the risk of an inappropriate decision being made. The scope and time frame for scrutiny interventions should be considered in the light of the potential impact of inappropriate scrutiny leading to decisions not being made, inappropriately made or not made at the right time.

## **12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 There are no direct equality implications arising from the report. Effective scrutiny is an essential part of ensuring that local government remains transparent, accountable and open which ensures that the delivery of public services benefits all aspects of the community, where practical.

### **13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS**

- 13.1 The Social Value Act and “go local” policy do not apply to this report.

### **14. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 14.1 The widening of the reach of scrutiny reviews has the potential to significantly impact on officer time in terms of the reprioritisation of already agreed projects, their scope or timetabling and resources. There is also the potential for additional resource requirements in relation to report writing, information collection and analysis and committee attendance. Delivery of service plans to achieve the Council's agreed Corporate Plan objectives might, therefore, be potentially negatively impacted.

### **15. APPENDICES**

- 15.1. Appendix A - Resolution Report – Original Format  
15.2. Appendix B – Resolutions Report – Proposed Format

### **16. CONTACT OFFICERS**

- 16.1 Hilary Dineen  
Committee, Member and Scrutiny Manager  
01462 474353  
[ScrutinyOfficer@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:ScrutinyOfficer@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 16.2 James Ellis  
Legal Regulatory Team Manager  
01462 474319  
[james.ellis@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:james.ellis@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 16.3 Reuben Ayavoo  
Policy and Community Engagement Manager  
01462 474212  
[reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:reuben.ayavoo@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 16.4 Human Resources  
[HRhelp@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:HRhelp@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 16.5 Ian Couper  
Service Director- Resources  
01462 474243  
[ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:ian.couper@north-herts.gov.uk)
- 16.6 Tim Everitt  
Performance Improvement Officer  
01462 474646  
[Tim.everitt@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:Tim.everitt@north-herts.gov.uk)

## **17. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

17.1. Previous reports and Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.