

Brighton & Hove City Council

For general release

Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Organisation Committee
Date: 23rd May 2005
Report of: The Director, Strategy and Governance
Subject: Update on Current Scrutiny Reviews, Development of Scrutiny, and Education and Health Scrutiny

Ward(s) affected: All

1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To report the progress made on current scrutiny reviews, and update Members on developments in the scrutiny function including the Education and Health Overview and Scrutiny Panels.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

3. Scrutiny Reviews currently in Progress

eb4U Scrutiny Panel

- 3.1 The 5-Member eb4U scrutiny panel comprising Councillors Jan Young (chair) Kevin Allen, Brian Pidgeon, Roy Pennington, David Watkins has met four times in public. Information has been given by eb4U, residents and members of the community, a representative of Government of the South East and council officers.
- 3.2 Further meetings are to be held at 10am on Monday 6th June (Hove Town Hall), Monday 20th June (Brighton Town Hall) and Monday 4th July (Hove Town Hall) and additional meetings are likely to be needed before the Panel agrees its report.

Comart and Schools pfi

- 3.3 The Comart pfi scrutiny panel chaired by Councillor Georgia Wrighton is presently finalising its findings and recommendations.

Councillors Les Hamilton and David Smith, plus co-optees Mrs A Antonio and Reverend S Terry have also served on the Panel.

- 3.4 The Panel's report will be presented to a special meeting of the Education Overview and Scrutiny Panel on 25th May for endorsement before being considered by the Children Families and Schools Committee.

4. Requests for Scrutiny and Call-in

Removal of housing stock options item from council agenda, 20th January

- 4.1 An officer report and further information from Councillor Jack Hazelgrove on the request for scrutiny received by 11th April OSOC, appears elsewhere on the agenda.

5. Development of Scrutiny

- 5.1 The recommendations of the report 'Moving Scrutiny Forwards' as agreed on 11th April are being progressed by Strategy and Governance officers.
- 5.2 These include better co-ordination of the decision-making and scrutiny functions, a focussed, member-led overview function, public access to meetings and documents, publicity, identifying issues for scrutiny and monitoring outcomes.
- 5.3 The officer Scrutiny Group has scheduled regular meetings for 2005 – 2006 and tasks for developing new ways of working have been allocated to individuals.
- 5.4 Scrutiny link officers (at Assistant Director level or above) have now been appointed as follows;
- | | | |
|-----|-------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 5.5 | David Hawker: | Children Families and Schools |
| | Pat Foster: | Environment |
| | Pam Montgomery: | Housing and City Support |
| | Head of Communications: | Cultural Services |
| | Ian Withers: | Finance & Property |
| | Maggie Squire: | Strategy & Governance |
| | Katie Ogden: | Human Resources |
- 5.6 They are to be invited to meet the officer Scrutiny Group in due course.

6. Education Overview and Scrutiny Panel (EOSP)

- 6.1 Following the special meeting convened on 25th May to consider the Comart pfi scrutiny report, the next scheduled meeting of the EOSP will be on 21st June. There are no other education-related scrutiny reviews in progress.

7. Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel (HOSP)

- 7.1 The next meeting of the Health Overview & Scrutiny Panel will be on 28th June. There will be a presentation from the Chief Executive of the Sussex Ambulance Trust and also a representative of the Strategic Health Authority looking at future funding and how to address overspending.