

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE – 8 MAY 2006

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

FUTURE STRUCTURE OF SCRUTINY

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to enable the Committee to consider proposals to change the existing structure of scrutiny committees and determine what, if any, recommendations it wishes to put forward to the County Council.

Background

2. Members will be aware that the Scrutiny Reference Group and the Chairmen of Scrutiny committees have been discussing the role of scrutiny and how it might be improved. This, together with changes in the departmental structures within the Council (the introduction of a Children and Young People's Service and Adult Social Care Service) suggests that a review of the scrutiny structure may be timely.

Scrutiny Green Paper

3. The Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on 1 March 2006 considered a 'Green Paper' by the Chief Executive entitled "Getting the best out of Scrutiny". A copy of the Green Paper is attached as Appendix A. The Commission noted the contents of the Green Paper and asked for the paper to be referred to the Party Groups for discussions with a view to considering the outcome of such discussions at this meeting.
4. The Scrutiny Commission will be considering possible changes to the scrutiny structure at its meeting on 5 May 2006. The views of the Commission together with any other views that emerge from discussions within the Party Groups will be reported to the Committee.

Process for agreeing changes

5. The scrutiny structure is set out in the County Council's Constitution. Any changes to the Constitution must be approved by the full Council after consideration of the proposal by the Chief Executive and Constitution Committee.
6. It is clearly desirable for any changes to the structure to be effective from the Annual Meeting of the County Council (i.e. 24th May 2006).

Recommendations

7. The Committee is asked to indicate what, if any, recommendations it wishes to put forward to the County Council on changes to the Constitution in relation to the structure of scrutiny bodies.

Equal Opportunities Implications

None.

Circulation under Sensitive Issues Procedure

None.

Background Paper

Scrutiny Green Paper – ‘Getting the Best out of Scrutiny’ – attached as Appendix A.

Officer to contact

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