



REPORT OF:	CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR OF THE POLICY AND CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
TO:	ANNUAL COUNCIL
ON:	THURSDAY 17TH MAY 2012

Annual Review of Scrutiny 2011/12

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- To inform Annual Council of the findings of the 2011-12 Annual Review of Scrutiny; and
- To agree arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny activity in 2012-13.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Elected Members are recommended to endorse: -

- The appended feedback from Elected Members regarding the scrutiny process in 2011-12 (Appendix 1) and the summary of key themes emerging from the Annual Review of Scrutiny (section 4).
- Retaining the three committee scrutiny structure for 2012-13; with Policy and Corporate Resources; Children and Health; and Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Committees in operation.
- Maintaining the emphasis on ‘task and finish’ panels as a vital resource to deliver the three over-arching three committees’ work programmes.
- The respective roles regarding Health scrutiny (Appendix 2), with;
 - The Health and Wellbeing Board to have prime responsibility for scrutiny of the wider health system;
 - The Children and Health Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the efficiency and effectiveness of the Health and Wellbeing Board (receiving a minimum of two reports from the Health and Wellbeing Board per year.)
 - The Children and Health Scrutiny Committee to additionally focus on adults and childrens portfolios, whilst having oversight for health scrutiny activity within the Council.
 - The Corporate Parenting Committee to address Ofsted recommendations by acting as a specialist advisory panel on all aspects within its remit to the Children and Health Scrutiny Committee, whilst retaining its individuality as a Committee in its own right.
- A distribution of 2012-13 meetings to reflect the breadth of portfolios, with the proposal that the Children and Health Committee meets eight times during the 12 / 13 Municipal year to reflect workload pressures.

- Aligning the Leisure portfolio to the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Committee for scrutiny purposes.
- Financial and performance reporting (particularly regarding the transformation programme) to continue to be integrated and concisely presented for scrutiny purposes, with on-going officer review of this issue for committees in 2012-13.
- The Director of Policy and Communications, as lead Chief Officer for Scrutiny, to convene support officers prior to the next scrutiny cycle to confirm roles, responsibilities and lessons learnt from 2011-12. A wider remit for Heads of Service on Task and Finish Panels should be considered.
- Scheduling the Annual Review of Scrutiny after the Election in future years.

3. BACKGROUND

In 2011, Blackburn with Darwen Executive Board agreed new arrangements for overview and scrutiny. The Executive agreed a three committee structure, with Policy and Corporate Resources; Children and Health; and Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Committees in operation. The significant change to the previous model was the merging of the Health Scrutiny Committee with the Children's Scrutiny Committee. The change was underpinned by a commitment to make use of 'task and finish groups' to drill down into detailed preparatory work, and allow the time of committees to be directed towards investigation of priority areas and contributors.

The Council Forum meeting on the 26th April 2012 received a report highlighting the topics investigated by each committee during 2011-12. In total over 100 recommendations were made by the three Committees. These have been agreed by the Policy and Corporate Resources Committee and they will be sent separately for comment to their respective Executive Member for a formal response. Recommendations have been made in the following thematic areas: -

Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

Policy and Corporate Resources OSC has successfully completed its agreed work programme around the overall CAPITA Savings and Management cuts to the Authority.

In addition, Members have continued to look at and review the Council's RIPA policy, assisted Children's & Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in reviewing dementia proposals for East Lancashire, as well as monitoring the work programme of each Scrutiny Committee.

Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

The Regeneration and Neighbourhoods OSC had a very productive 2011/2012. The Committee created 4 Task Groups to look in depth at key risks and challenges that covered all portfolios within its remit.

The four topics looked at by the Committee's Task Groups were: -

- Reduction in Core Fee,
- Reduction in Street Cleaning,
- Promoting Growth, and
- Selective Landlord Licensing.

The Children's & Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee;

The Children's & Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee had a very busy but successful year. During this time the Committee and its Task Groups have reviewed a total of 5 topics, in addition to issues that have arisen throughout the year (e.g. Dementia).

The five topics looked at by the Committee's Task Groups:

- Re:Fresh,
- Personal Budgets,
- Development of the Centre for independent Living,
- Youth Offending Team, and
- Not in Education and Employment.

The Annual Review of Scrutiny took place on the 17th April 2012, where Members from all political parties came together to discuss the outcomes from 2011/2012, challenges and the future direction of Scrutiny. The Annual Review of Scrutiny held more significance this year in light of the changes to Scrutiny in the previous twelve months and allowed Members the opportunity to discuss and review the positives and negative of the work it has completed this financial year. Prior to the Annual Review meeting, a series of preparatory discussions had taken place at the last meeting of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Appendix 1 provides a précis of feedback from Elected Members.

4. RATIONALE

The following over-arching themes, arising from this feedback, were debated by Members on the 17th April 2012: -

- The workload across the three respective committees, with the need for distribution of meetings in the year planner to appropriately reflect pressures.
- It was proposed that in 2012-13 Policy and Corporate Resources Committee would meet six times; Children and Health Committee would meet eight times; and Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Committee would meet six times, and that Council would be invited to endorse this.
- The benefits of advance preparation, effective use of pre-meetings and task and finish groups to identify targeted lines of enquiry and efficient management of meetings to cover the appropriate workload. It was agreed that Task and Finish Panels would be proactively supported by Heads of Service in 2012-13 to ensure rigour and impact of activity.
- The need for political group leaders and party whips to monitor and ensure appropriate attendance at scrutiny committees and at Task and Finish Panels in 2012-13.
- The changes to the health scrutiny function, brought about by the emergence of the Health and Wellbeing Board and its relationship with the Corporate Parenting Committee. Appendix 2 summarises the agreed position regarding health scrutiny roles and responsibilities.
- Additionally, it was proposed that the Leisure portfolio would be aligned to the Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Committee for scrutiny purposes (reflecting the additional pressures within the Children and Health Committee.)
- The Council's transformation programme and the financial challenges posed by the Medium Term Financial Strategy have been a priority area of enquiry for all scrutiny committees in 2011-12. It was proposed that financial and performance reporting (particularly regarding the transformation programme) should continue to be integrated and concisely presented for scrutiny purposes, with on-going officer review of this issue for committees in 2012-13.

- Officer support, from Democratic Services and Lead Chief Officers / Heads of Service, was commended. It was proposed that the Director of Policy and Communications, as lead Chief Officer for Scrutiny, should convene support officers prior to the next scrutiny cycle to confirm roles, responsibilities and lessons learnt from 2011-12.
- In light of limited attendance at the Annual Review of Scrutiny, it was proposed that the Annual Review take place following the Election in future years.

5. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Policy recommendations have been will be made in line with the existing three committee scrutiny structure in 2011-12, and will continue to align with this structure in 2012-13. Executive Members have been asked for a formal response to recommendations.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council's transformation programme and the financial challenges posed by the Medium Term Financial Strategy will continue to be a priority for all scrutiny committees in 2012-13.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Under the Local Government Act 2000, local authorities with executive arrangements must have overview and scrutiny committees, and ensure that they have powers to review and scrutinise decisions made by the Executive and make reports/recommendations to authority/Executive.

There is also a requirement under the Localism Act for the Council to designate one of its officers as a scrutiny officer whose function includes promoting the role of the authority's overview & scrutiny committees, providing relevant support & guidance to those committees, and to other members and officers.

Overview and scrutiny committees are committees of the Council to which proportionality rules applies (Local Government & Housing Act 1989).

8. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The Director of Policy and Communications, as lead Chief Officer for Scrutiny, will convene lead and support officers prior to the next scrutiny cycle to confirm roles, responsibilities and lessons learnt from 2011-12. Staffing support will continue to be provided to the range of scrutiny committees. The proposals within this report do not have any resource implications over and above the existing staffing arrangements.

9. CONSULTATIONS

All members of scrutiny committees were consulted for feedback on the scrutiny process in 2011-12, and their views are captured within Appendix 1. The Annual Review meeting on the 17th April was an open invite meeting to all Elected Members.

Chief Officer / Member

Contact Officer: Tom Stannard, Director of Policy and Communications, 01254 585 470.
 Date: 30.04.12
 Background Papers: N/A

Background documents are any files, guidance or other materials that have been relied upon in producing the paper. Any background documents listed must be available for public inspection upon request.

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APPENDIX 1 – SCRUTINY MEMBERS' COMMENT AND FEEDBACK

Below is a compiled list of Members comments and views based on their feedback provided at the last meeting of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

What differences do you think the Committee has made in its scrutinising of the Portfolio(s)?

- None
- Made a lot of difference
- Committee has remained focused
- Kept the Ex Members focused on outcomes
- Identified high importance Agenda items

What has helped the Committees progress throughout the year?

- Officer Support
- Task and Finish Groups + interlinking
- Transformation update
- Input from officers
- Some good recommendations
- Commitment of Chairs and Officer support
- Support of Directors in providing detailed and unbiased information
- A good Chair
- When politics have been put to one side
- Task Groups keep topics active

What has hindered the Committees progress throughout the year?

- Members missing meeting which may well be attributed to 1/ Not having a council diary 2/ Not committed 3/ P + R clashing with other meetings e.g. Darwen town council
- Not enough information
- Lack of communication and not knowing who to contact
- Not enough time to get through business of Committee
- Committee attendance
- Reliance on a few Members to do the work
- To many portfolios to be covered

What improvements would you suggest for the Annual Review?

- Split committees back up
- More working together with all groups
- More involvement at group level not just with officers around a table.
- Meetings not so close to the election
- More pre-decision scrutiny
- More use of Task Groups
- Revert to old number of Committees
- Committees need more power
- More Members be encouraged to take part in Task Groups
- Smaller Committees
- Find ways of ensuring Members attend
- Split Health in Two.
- Timetable Task Groups meetings early in the year

Policy and Resources

Do you feel that by choosing the topic of **the overall Capita savings** the Committee has:-

STATEMENT	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Ensured this scrutiny topic will demonstrate an efficient use of public money			1	6	
Better meet the needs of citizens			1	5	
Been led and owned by Members not officers			1	2	1
Influenced, developed or reviewed policy			1	3	1
Contributed to the "improvement agenda" e.g. Performance Agreement.			1	4	
Ensured corporate policies are met.			1	4	
Engaged –					
– Public	1		2	2	
– Partners		1		3	
– Press	1		1	2	

Do you feel that by choosing the topic of **Management cuts to the authority** the Committee has:-

STATEMENT	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Ensured this scrutiny topic will demonstrate an efficient use of public money			1	4	3
Better meet the needs of citizens			1	3	2
Been led and owned by Members not officers			1	5	
Influenced, developed or reviewed policy			1	5	
Contributed to the "improvement agenda" e.g. Performance Agreement.			3	4	1
Ensured corporate policies are met.			1	4	2
Engaged –					
– Public		1	1	2	
– Partners		1		3	
– Press	1	1		2	

Regeneration and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Do you feel that by choosing the topic of **£250,000 Reduction in Core Fee** the Committee has:-

STATEMENT	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Ensured this scrutiny topic will demonstrate an efficient use of public money			1	3	
Better met the needs of citizens			1	2	1
Been led and owned by Members not officers				4	
Influenced, developed or reviewed policy			2		2
Contributed to the "improvement agenda" e.g. Performance Agreement.				4	
Ensured corporate priorities are met.			1	3	
Engaged -					
- Public	1	2		1	
- Partners				3	
- Press	1	2			

Do you feel that by choosing the topic of **Reduction in Street Cleaning** the Committee has:-

STATEMENT	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Ensured this scrutiny topic will demonstrate an efficient use of public money			1	4	
Better met the needs of citizens			1	4	
Been led and owned by Members not officers		1		3	
Influenced, developed or reviewed policy			4		
Contributed to the "improvement agenda" e.g. Performance Agreement.			1	3	
Ensured corporate priorities are met.			1	2	
Engaged -					
- Public		2		1	
- Partners		1		2	
- Press		3			

Do you feel that by choosing the topic of **Selective Landlord licensing** the Committee has:-

STATEMENT	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Ensured this scrutiny topic will demonstrate an efficient use of public money			2	3	2
Better met the needs of citizens			1	5	3
Been led and owned by Members not officers			2	5	1
Influenced, developed or reviewed policy			2	4	2
Contributed to the "improvement agenda" e.g. Performance Agreement.			3	2	3
Ensured corporate priorities are met.			1	4	3
Engaged -					
- Public		1	1	1	1
- Partners		1	2	2	1
- Press	1	2	1	1	

Do you feel that by choosing the topic of **Promoting Growth** the Committee has:-

STATEMENT	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Ensured this scrutiny topic will demonstrate an efficient use of public money			3	1	2
Better met the needs of citizens		2		2	3
Been led and owned by Members not officers		1	2	2	1
Influenced, developed or reviewed policy		1	3	1	1
Contributed to the "improvement agenda" e.g. Performance Agreement.			3	1	2
Ensured corporate priorities are met.			3	2	2
Engaged -					
- Public	1	1	1	1	1
- Partners		1	2	2	1
- Press	1	2	1	1	

Children and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Do you feel that by choosing the topic of **Youth Offending Team (YOT) service – increase in YOT numbers** the Committee has:-

STATEMENT	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Ensured this scrutiny topic will demonstrate an efficient use of public money		1		3	1
Better met the needs of citizens			3		1
Been led and owned by Members not officers	1				2
Influenced, developed or reviewed policy				1	1
Contributed to the "improvement agenda" e.g. Performance Agreement.				1	1
Ensured corporate priorities are met.			1	2	
Engaged -					
- Public		1	1	2	
- Partners		1	1	2	
- Press	1		1	2	

Do you feel that by choosing the topic of **increase in Not in Education and Employment (NEET) and impact of changes to the Connexions Service** the Committee has:-

STATEMENT	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Ensured this scrutiny topic will demonstrate an efficient use of public money	2			1	2
Better met the needs of citizens		1	1	2	1
Been led and owned by Members not officers	1		1	1	2
Influenced, developed or reviewed policy					
Contributed to the "improvement agenda" e.g. Performance Agreement.		1		1	2
Ensured corporate priorities are met.		1	1	2	1
Engaged -					
- Public	1	1	2	1	
- Partners	1	1	2	1	
- Press	1	1	2	1	

Do you feel that by choosing the topic of **Development of the Centre for Independent Living (CIL)** the Committee has:-

STATEMENT	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Ensured this scrutiny topic will demonstrate an efficient use of public money	2			1	1
Better met the needs of citizens	2			1	1
Been led and owned by Members not officers	2			1	1
Influenced, developed or reviewed policy	2			1	1
Contributed to the "improvement agenda" e.g. Performance Agreement.	2				1
Ensured corporate priorities are met.	2			2	
Engaged -					
- Public	2	1		1	
- Partners	2			2	
- Press	2		1	1	

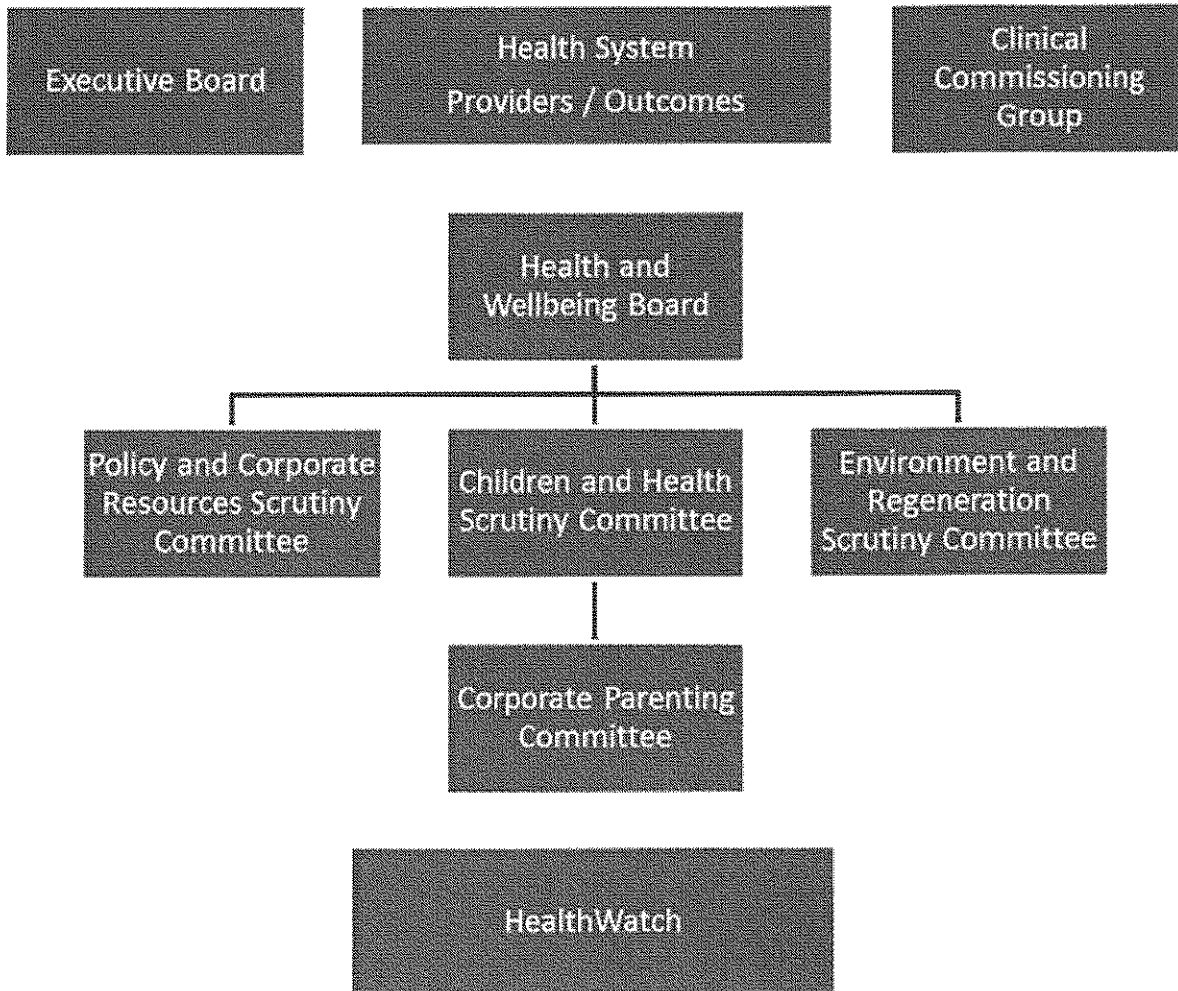
Do you feel that by choosing the topic of **Personal Budgets** the Committee has:-

STATEMENT	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Ensured this scrutiny topic will demonstrate an efficient use of public money	1				2
Better met the needs of citizens	1				2
Been led and owned by Members not officers	1			1	1
Influenced, developed or reviewed policy	1				1
Contributed to the "improvement agenda" e.g. Performance Agreement.	1			1	1
Ensured corporate priorities are met.	1			2	
Engaged -					
- Public	1	1		1	
- Partners	1			2	
- Press	1		1	1	

Do you feel that by choosing the topic of **re:refresh** the Committee has:-

STATEMENT	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Ensured this scrutiny topic will demonstrate an efficient use of public money			1	2	3
Better met the needs of citizens			1	3	2
Been led and owned by Members not officers			1	4	1
Influenced, developed or reviewed policy			2	3	1
Contributed to the "improvement agenda" e.g. Performance Agreement.			1	2	2
Ensured corporate priorities are met.				1	3
Engaged -					
- Public	1	1	2	2	
- Partners	1		2	3	
- Press	1	1	2	2	

APPENDIX 2 – SUMMARY OF REVISED HEALTH SCRUTINY FUNCTIONS



- Health and Wellbeing Board to have prime responsibility for scrutiny of the wider health system.
- Children and Health Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise the efficiency and effectiveness of the Health and Wellbeing Board (receiving two reports from the Health and Wellbeing Board per year.)
- Children and Health Scrutiny Committee to additionally focus on adults and childrens portfolios, whilst having oversight for health scrutiny activity within the Council.
- The Corporate Parenting Committee will address Ofsted recommendations by acting as a specialist advisory panel on all aspects within its remit to the Children and Health Scrutiny Committee, whilst retaining its individuality as a Committee in its own right.