

Central
Bedfordshire
Council
Priory House
Monks Walk
Chicksands,
Shefford SG17 5TQ



CONSTITUTION ADVISORY GROUP
DATE: 21 JULY 2009

TITLE	Overview & Scrutiny Constitutional Changes	ITEM NO.
REPORT OF	Bernard Carter, Overview & Scrutiny Manager	5

PURPOSE	To amend Parts D1 and D2 of the Council's Constitution to accommodate the Councillor Call for Action Guidance, the Crime & Disorder Regulations and a Change of Name of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Panel
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RECOMMENDATIONS:
<p>(1) That the Constitutional changes outlined in Appendices A and B, to accommodate Government Guidance pertaining to the Councillor Call for Action and the Crime & Disorder Regulations, be approved.</p> <p>(2) That all references to the "Overview & Scrutiny Management Panel" contained within the Council's Constitution be amended to read the "Overview & Scrutiny Co-ordination Panel"</p>

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Councillor Call for Action

1. As Members will be aware, the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 introduced a mechanism whereby local ward Members could raise issues of significant community concern with a relevant overview & scrutiny committee. This mechanism was named the Councillor Call for Action.

2. The regulations enacting this mechanism came into force on 1st April 2009 and the Constitutional changes outlined in Appendices A & B reflect best practice guidelines issued to address these regulations.
3. Also attached for information at Appendices C & D are the draft application form and guidance notes for Members wishing to submit a Councillor Call for Action.

Crime & Disorder Regulations

4. As Members will be aware, the Police & Justice Act 2006 provides similar overview & scrutiny powers to those contained within the Local Government & Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 with respect to crime & disorder matters.
5. Regulations enacting these powers came into force on 30th April 2009 and to a large extent the Council's Constitution already take account of them. However one specific change is required relating to the need for crime & disorder partners to respond within 28 days to a report or recommendation made by the relevant overview & scrutiny committee. This change is reflected in Appendix B (Part D2, paragraph 6.7).

Overview & Scrutiny Management Panel (OSMP)

6. At a recent Member training event entitled "Gaining the Most from Scrutiny", there was considerable debate about the role of the OSMP. During the course of this debate, it was suggested that the Panel be renamed the Overview & Scrutiny Co-ordination Panel (OSCP) and this found general favour at the event.
7. The suggestion was also discussed at the first meeting of the OSMP on 3rd July and there was unanimous agreement to the change of name.

Conclusion

8. The Constitution Advisory Group is therefore requested to support the changes to the Council's Constitution in order to address the issues outlined above, and recommend their adoption by full Council.
9. The Overview & Scrutiny Manager will be in attendance at today's meeting should there be a need to expand upon the above issues in greater detail.

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Key Background Papers:
None