

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee **DATE:** 3rd July 2008

CONTACT OFFICER: Kevin Barrett, Democratic Services Manager
(For all enquiries) (01753) 875014

WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR DECISION**

REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE OF SCRUTINY PANELS

1 Purpose of Report

This report recommends an adjustment to the terms of reference of two of the Scrutiny Panels to provide a more equitable distribution of work between them.

2 Recommendations

- a) That the Community and Cultural Services and Green and Built Environment Scrutiny Panels be renamed the “Community, Leisure and Environment” and “Neighbourhoods and Renewal” Scrutiny Panels respectively and that their terms of reference be amended as set out in the appendix to this report.
- b) That the three co-optees from the Tenants’ and Residents’ Federation be appointed to serve on the Neighbourhoods and Renewal Panel.
- c) That these proposed changes take effect from the September, 2008 cycle.
- d) That the Council be recommended to make any consequential changes to Part 4.5 of the Constitution (Scrutiny Procedure Rules) as a result of these recommendations.

3 Key Priority Implications

There are no implications for the Council’s key priorities as this report is administrative in nature.

4 Legal, Human Rights and Other Implications

4.1 There are no such implications arising from this report.

5 Supporting Information

5.1 The Committee on 5th June, 2008 established four Scrutiny Panels for the 2008/09 municipal year. However, following the local elections on 1st May,

there have been changes to the portfolios of the Cabinet Commissioners. In addition, several departmental restructurings have taken place recently which has meant that the responsibilities of certain of the Scrutiny Panels no longer reflect either departmental structures or Cabinet portfolios.

- 5.2 One obvious example of this is the fact that housing now comes under the responsibility of the Director of the Green and Built Environment. However, housing issues are not dealt with by the Green and Built Environment Scrutiny Panel but by the Community and Cultural Services Panel. Moreover, housing issues are now within the portfolio of the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods and Renewal, along with planning, transportation and highways issues as well as neighbourhood matters.
- 5.3 Simply moving all housing issues into the terms of reference of the Green and Built Environment Scrutiny Panel was considered but would have led to the Panel having an extremely heavy workload, particularly given that during 2007/08 it had very busy agendas and long meetings. Accordingly, the portfolios of the existing Panels have been reviewed and it is proposed to make adjustments to the terms of reference of both the Community and Cultural Services and Green and Built Environment Panels to more accurately reflect current departmental structures and Cabinet portfolios, as well as ensuring that there is a more even split of work between the Panels.
- 5.4 Details of the proposed new split of responsibilities between the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its four Panels are attached as Appendix A to this report. Members will note that no changes are proposed to the current responsibilities of either the Education and Children's Services or Health Scrutiny Panels.
- 5.5 It is therefore recommended that the Green and Built Environment Panel be renamed "Neighbourhoods and Renewal Scrutiny Panel" and that the three co-optees from the Tenants' and Residents' Federation serve as non-voting members of that Panel. The Community and Cultural Services Panel will be renamed the "Community, Leisure and Environment Scrutiny Panel".
- 5.6 It is recommended that these changes come into effect from the September, 2008 cycle.
- 5.7 It will be necessary to make consequential changes to the scrutiny protocol within the Constitution as a result of these recommendations.

6 Appendices Attached

Appendix A - Proposed responsibilities of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the four Scrutiny Panels.

PROPOSED AMENDED TERMS OF REFERENCE

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- Overall policy and strategic direction issues including budgetary strategy
- Organisational development/Human Resources
- Performance Management
- Equalities issues
- Audit issues
- Corporate Communications
- IT and E-government Strategy
- Property and Assets Management Strategy.

Health Panel

- Adult Social Services
- Children's Social Services (Secondary responsibility where involves health related issues)
- Community Care
- Parenting/Family Services
- Health Links/Partnerships
- Asylum Seekers/Refugees
- Substance Misuse Strategy
- The functions of the Authority to review and report on matters relating to local health services as set out in Local Authority (Overview and Scrutiny Committees Health and Scrutiny Functions) Regulations 2002.

Community, Leisure & Environment Panel (formerly Community & Cultural Services)

- Careline Services
- One Stop Shop/Customer Service Centre
- Benefits/Council Tax
- Resident/Community Participation
- Voluntary Sector issues
- Leisure (including libraries, sports, arts, community facilities, parks and open spaces)
- Community Cohesion/Community Celebration/Community Information
- Inclusion of Excluded Groups
- Agenda 21 Issues
- All Environmental Services
- Environmental Health and Trading Standards
- Licensing Issues

Neighbourhoods & Renewal Panel (formerly Green & Built Environment)

- All Planning, Highways & Transportation Issues (including Regional Planning and Local Development Framework)
- Emergency Planning
- Community Safety Strategy
- All Housing issues including Neighbourhood Housing
- Tenant Services
- Economic Development

Education and Children's Services Panel

- All Education issues (including Adult Learning)
- Children's Social Services (Lead)
- Youth Services/Young People's Centres
- Youth Offending Team