



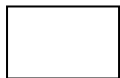
Report of the Chief Democratic Services Officer

Corporate Governance and Audit Committee

Date: 10th February 2010

Subject: KPMG - Scrutiny review

Electoral Wards Affected:



Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Purpose Of This Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the progress made in progressing the recommendations arising from the May 2009 KPMG Audit of Scrutiny.

2.0 Background Information

2.1 As part of their 2008/09 Audit and Inspection Plan, it was agreed that KPMG would carry out a review of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function. The audit objective was to provide the Council with assurance around the progress made in the improvement areas identified by the Corporate Assessment, specifically:

- The extent to which the Council has a clear vision for the contribution of scrutiny and the resources to deliver that vision;
- The extent to which the skills of the Members on the Scrutiny Boards are matched to and are appropriate for the fulfillment of their role;
- How scrutiny enquiries and public challenge feed into the work programme of Scrutiny Boards;
- The extent to which the information available to Members enables them to reach appropriate conclusions;
- The design of the Call-In arrangements in response to the Council's recent 'Corporate Assessment' report;
- The extent to which the recommendations of the Scrutiny Boards have resulted in changes in service delivery and service improvements;
- The extent to which the seven Scrutiny Boards challenge policy development and the consistency of actions taken by these Boards;
- The extent to which the Scrutiny function fits within the wider performance management arrangements of the Council; and
- The extent to which Scrutiny provides effective challenge and adds value to the Council.

3.0 Main Issues

- 3.1 A total of 18 recommendations were made by KPMG following their audit. These were accepted by officers. Since publication of the report officers within Democratic Services, in conjunction with the Scrutiny Chairs Advisory Group, have been working towards the implementation of these recommendations.
- 3.2 To date 14 recommendations have been implemented. Two recommendations cannot be deemed as being implemented until the publication of the Scrutiny Annual report to full Council in May 2010. This is because the recommendation is that information be published in the annual report. It can be reported however that this will be achieved. The implementation of two other recommendations is on going.
- 3.3 Appendix 1 presents a table detailing all 18 recommendations and the actions taken to implement them.

4.0 Implications For Council Policy And Governance

- 4.1 KPMG's report provides independent assurance on the Council's Overview and Scrutiny arrangements. The implementation of their recommendations demonstrate an improving function and also good governance, openness and transparency.

5.0 Legal And Resource Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific legal or resource issues associated with this report

6.0 Conclusions

- 6.1 Following receipt of KPMG's audit report in May 2009 14 of the 18 recommendations made have been implemented. Two recommendations cannot be implemented until the publication of the Scrutiny Annual report to full council in May 2010. The implementation of two other recommendations is on going.

7.0 Recommendations

- 7.1 That the Corporate Governance and Audit Committee note the progress made in implementing the recommendations made following KPMG's review of Scrutiny.

Background Documents Used

KPMG review of Scrutiny – Final report, May 2009

Vision for Scrutiny

Scrutiny Board Agendas June, July, September, October and November 2009

Scrutiny Chairs Advisory Group Agendas May, July, September and October 2009

Scrutiny Chairs/Administration Leaders Agenda August 2009