Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Date: 29 January 2015

Wards: All

Subject: Scrutiny review of public sector delivery models – scope and terms of reference

Lead officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

Lead member: Councillor Peter Southgate, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

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Recommendations:

A.   That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission agree to set up a task group review to increase its knowledge of different models of service provision and the associated implications for scrutiny;

B.   That the Commission discuss and approve the terms of reference and scope of the public sector delivery models task group, set out in paragraph 2.3-2.6 below;

C.   That the Commission appoint members to the task group.

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1.   PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1   To present the draft terms of reference and scope of the public sector delivery models task group to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission for approval.

2.   DETAILS

2.1   The Commission and the Scrutiny Panels will increasingly be scrutinising services that have been provided or commissioned through a wide range of different mechanisms, as well as proposals to move to alternative delivery arrangements. In order to carry out effective scrutiny, it is recommended that the Commission undertake a task group review that will help scrutiny members to understand the different models of service provision and to identify the best approach to scrutinising each model.

2.2   There are a number of different models, including but not exclusively:

- shared service provision
- commissioning from private or voluntary/community sector
- joint commissioning with other public bodies
- joint venture companies
- transfer to social enterprises or trusts
- arms-length trading companies

2.3   Draft terms of reference have been set out below for the consideration by the Commission:

- to outline the different models of public sector service provision;

- to understand the potential advantages and disadvantages of each for the council and local residents;

- to identify the best approach to scrutinising each of the identified models and make recommendations on what performance management information would be appropriate.

2.4   It is anticipated that the task group would examine examples of each model both in Merton, in other local authorities and elsewhere in the public and private sector as appropriate. The task group would question officers and cabinet members as well as external experts. Much of the work would therefore be done through site visits plus a small number of task group meetings to scope the work, plan visits, reflect on findings and agree recommendations.

2.5   The task group would produce a report for the Commission's meeting in July 2015 so that its findings could inform the Commission's work programme for 20151/16.

2.6   Support would be provided by the Head of Democracy Services.

3.   ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

3.1   The Overview and Scrutiny Commission can select topics for scrutiny review and for other scrutiny work as it sees fit, taking into account views and suggestions from officers, partner organisations and the public.

4.   CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

None for the purposes of this report.

5.   FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

5.1   None for the purposes of this covering report. Any resource implications will need to be taken into account when drawing up & approving specific review recommendations

6.   LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

6.1   There are none specific to this report.

7.   HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

7.1   There are none specific to this report.

8.   CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

8.1   There are none specific to this report.

9.   RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

9.1   There are none specific to this report.

10.   APPENDICES

10.1   None

11.   BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1   None