



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE COMMISSION 12 JUNE 2007

Report of the Corporate Director of Corporate and Adult Social Services

Overview and Scrutiny Training

RECOMMENDATION

1. To note the report.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

2.1 In response to the views of members, the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Team have developed a modular training package covering the following aspects of Overview and Scrutiny.

- a) Getting Started
- b) Conducting Reviews
- c) Conducting Scrutiny
- d) Engaging the Public
- e) Selecting Topics
- f) Interviewing

2.2 The content of these modules is described in Appendix 2 of this report. The six modules are available on CD and can be used successfully on a teach-your-self basis. The Chair, Councillor Poulter, has arranged for Commission members to be asked:

- which modules they would wish to be supplied with and
- to indicate any other training opportunities they would like to be provided with.

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Background papers:	Appendix 1 – Implications
List of appendices:	Appendix 2 – Content of the training modules

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. None arising directly from this report.

Legal

2. None arising directly from this report.

Personnel

3. None arising directly from this report.

Equalities impact

4. Effective scrutiny will be to the benefit of all Derby people.

Corporate Objectives, Values and Priorities

5. This report has the potential to link with all the Council's Priorities for 2007-10.

Scrutiny Training.doc

Content of the Overview and Scrutiny Member Training Modules

What the Modules Offer

All of the following six modules can be done in a group setting or on a one-to-one basis. They are all “free standing” – you don’t have to have done one for another to make sense. However, for members wanting to do several, or all six, there is a logical running order, as shown.

Getting Started - How decisions get made – the Commission structures – sources of agenda items – the Forward Plan – types of activity now and in future – deciding what to do – overview and scrutiny outcomes – preparing reports – good recommendations – how call-in works (60 minutes)

Conducting Topic Reviews – key points of a review – a review timetable – evidence-gathering – selecting witnesses – arranging meetings – preparing for interviews and visits – room layouts – effective interviewing – assessing the evidence – key points – elements in a major report – assembling the draft – good recommendations – outcomes of ‘SMART’ scrutiny activity (90 minutes)

Scrutiny Reviews – how they differ from topic reviews – possible formats - when to do them – what to review – the objectives of a Scrutiny review – outcomes to aim for (30 minutes)

Choosing Subjects to Review - types of activity now and in future – key points of a review – choosing what to review – what SMART means – sources of subjects – deciding what to review – using a rating matrix (45 minutes)

Interviewing Politicians, Senior Officers, Stakeholders and Citizens – why interviewing is key to conducting reviews – room layouts – working with witnesses – the 6 six basic questions – preparing for interviews and visits – effective interviewing – open and closed questions – interview structure and lines of enquiry – asking difficult questions (60 minutes)

Engaging the Public – the experience in Derby 2002-06 – balancing the importance of issues with public interest – new opportunities offered by medium sized scrutiny – sources of local issues – assessing public engagement potential – factors when arranging meetings – mixing people and places – choosing witnesses with differing opinions – room layouts – working with witnesses – effective interviewing of representatives (60 minutes)