

ITEM 11



SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMISSION 13 September 2005

Report of the Director of Corporate Services

Overview and Scrutiny Training

RECOMMENDATION

1. That Commission members contact the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Team to arrange delivery of any training that they wish to undertake.

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

The content of these modules is described in Appendix 2 of this report

- 2.2 The Co-ordination Team can also provide members with training in the use of Performance Eye.
- 2.3 The modular package enables the Co-ordination Team to deliver training on a one-to-one or small group basis. The training can also be tailored to the needs of individual members and can, within reason, be delivered at times which are most convenient to members.
- 2.4 Members wishing to avail themselves of the training should contact the Co-ordination Team by telephone or e-mail.
- 2.5 Members are reminded that as well as working with the Commissions and the Chairs and Vice Chairs, the Co-ordination Team is also able to provide support and advice to individual Commission members on all aspects of Overview and Scrutiny.

For more information contact:	David Romaine 01332 255598 e-mail david.romaine@derby.gov.uk
Background papers:	Appendix 1 – Implications
List of appendices:	Appendix 2 – Content of the training modules

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. None arising from this report.

Legal

2. None arising from this report.

Personnel

3. None arising from this report.

Equalities impact

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

Corporate Objectives, Values and Priorities

5. Effective scrutiny will link to all of the Council's Corporate Objectives, Values and Priorities.

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 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 2002-05 – balancing importance of issues with public interest – new opportunities offered by medium sized scrutiny – sources of local issues – assessing public engagement potential – factors when arranging meeting – mixing people and places – choosing witnesses with differing opinions – room layouts – working with witnesses – effective interviewing of representatives (60 minutes)