

ENVIRONMENTAL AND PLANNING REVIEW COMMITTEE

14 July 2008

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY HANDBOOK

REPORT OF THE CITY SOLICITOR

Strategic Priority : ALL

Corporate Improvement Objectives: 1, 2, 3 & 4

1. Why has this report come to the Committee?

- 1.1 This report provides Members of this Committee with the opportunity to consider additional information for inclusion in the Overview and Scrutiny Handbook.
- 1.2 The work of the Review Committees supports the council and the city in achieving the full range of Strategic Priorities and Corporate Improvement Objectives, and so improving quality of life in the city.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Review Committees have maintained an Overview and Scrutiny handbook, containing information for Members, officers and witnesses, and protocols for the guidance of the work of the Committees since 2003. The content of the handbook has been reviewed and updated each year since then. A loose-leaf format was adopted for the year 2007-08 to allow for updating without carrying out a full reprint.

3. Current position

- 3.1 In view of the current review of the operation of the Overview and Scrutiny function, being undertaken by the Policy and Coordination Review Committee, it is not proposed to produce a complete reprint of the handbook at this stage, but to update details of membership of the Committees (at Appendix A) and incorporate revised documentation (at Appendix B). This will ensure that those attending Committee have current information on memberships, and maintain a consistent approach to documenting the outcomes of meetings of the Committees, mapping these against the Council's Strategic Priorities and Corporate Improvement Objectives.
- 3.2 To support Members' focus on progress being made on key Council priorities and duties, a reference sheet, outlining the principles underpinning the most significant of these, and some suggested lines of enquiry, has been prepared for Members' reference. This is attached at Appendix C.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 Members will wish to consider and make recommendations regarding the suggested additions to the handbook.

5 Recommendation

- 5.1 That, subject to any additions or amendments Members ask for, the proposed additions are incorporated in the handbook.

Contact Officer: Rhiannon Hood, Assistant City Solicitor : 0191 5531005
Rhiannon.hood@sunderland.gov.uk