

## KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

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### **POLICY OVERVIEW CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

MINUTES of a meeting of the Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee held in the Wantsum Room, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone on Thursday, 1 October 2009.

PRESENT: Mr E E C Hotson (Chairman), Mr M C Dance, Mr C Hibberd, Mr G A Horne MBE, Mr P W A Lake and Mrs E M Tweed

ALSO PRESENT: Mr L Christie and Mr A J King, MBE

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr P Sass (Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership), Mr P D Wickenden (Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager) and Ms D Fitch (Assistant Democratic Service Manager (Policy Overview))

### **UNRESTRICTED ITEMS**

#### **7. Membership**

*(Item 1)*

(1) It was noted that as Mr Kit Smith had been elected Chairman of the Learning and Development Policy Overview Committee he was now a Member of this Committee.

#### **8. Minutes - 9 September 2009**

*(Item 4)*

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2009 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

#### **9. The Potential to Refocus and Restructure the Overview and Scrutiny Function**

*(Item 5)*

(1) Mr King presented an interim paper which took account of the comments made at the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee and the Policy Overview Committees (POC's). Members' comments were invited prior to a final report being produced for the County Council meeting on 15 October 2009. The comments made included the following:-

- The need for a mechanism to share information across POC's whilst avoiding duplication was mentioned.
- There was support for using Rapporteurs to gather information and report back to the Committee, but it was important that there were clear guidelines around this role. The possibility of Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee piloting this scheme, as they had a willing volunteer was raised. It was envisaged that Rapporteurs would carry out the majority of their work themselves, with little or no support from officers.

- The Information Point was commended as a good source of research support for Members.
- Strengthening the role of the Co-ordinating Committee was discussed including its role in formulating and sharing work programmes for POC's.
- The importance of the Forward Plan to the POC's ability to have an input at an early stage into policies that were being formulated was mentioned. In order to do this effectively the period of the Forward Plan needed to be longer than the current 4 months, it was suggested that the Forward Plan need to at least cover a 6 month period. It was acknowledged that the items put on more than 4 months in advance would only be provisional. The Forward plan also needed to be comprehensive and easy to use.

RESOLVED that the comments made by the Committee on the interim paper be noted.

#### **10. Items for Meeting on 16 October 2009**

The Chairman informed the Committee that the next meeting of the Committee on 16 October 2009 would start at 9.30am. In addition to the item on the Select Committee work programme, there would be three other reports which were on the Policy Framework, Councillor Call for Action and which POC should take the lead for Climate Change issues.