



NORTHAMPTON
B O R O U G H C O U N C I L

ITEM 13
CABINET
30 July 2007

Key Decision	Yes
Listed on Forward Plan	Yes/No
Within Policy	Yes
Policy Document	No
Agenda Status	Public

REPORT NAME THE APPOINTMENT OF AN ADDITIONAL SCRUTINY OFFICER

Accountable Cabinet Member: Councillor Brian Hoare

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 To seek approval to the appointment of an additional Scrutiny Officer post by the addition of one full time equivalent (FTE) post to the establishment.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Cabinet approves the addition of one Full Time Equivalent (FTE) Scrutiny Officer post to the establishment
- 2.2 That Cabinet approve funding of £27,600 be allocated from LABGI reserves in 2007/ 08 and mainstreamed into the base budget for 2008/ 09 and future years.

3. Issues and Options

- 3.1 In May 2007 the Council agreed an increase in the number of Overview and Scrutiny Committees from one to three, supported by a Scrutiny Management Committee.
- 3.2 The current officer support for Scrutiny is one FTE Scrutiny Officer post. The post had previously provides dedicated research and support to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to co-ordinate its work programme and facilitate up to six task and finish groups to carry out scrutiny review activity.

- 3.3 The increase in the number of committees will impact on the support required for Overview and Scrutiny activity. It is proposed that an additional FTE Scrutiny Officer post will enable each of the three committees to conduct up to four task and finish reviews during each municipal year.
- 3.4 Capacity to support to effective Overview and Scrutiny would be significantly reduced and limit the number and quality of reviews which could be undertaken by each of the new Committees without additional dedicated resources to facilitate scrutiny review work.

4. Implications

4.1 Policy

- 4.1.1 Overview and Scrutiny work will assist in the development and improvement of Council policy but does not have a direct impact on the existing policy framework.

4.2 Resources and Risk

- 4.2.1 The current post is graded as POB (SCP 44) and ranges from £41,000 to £46,000 including on costs
- 4.2.2 It is anticipated that an appointment would be made by 1st September at the earliest and that the maximum part year cost would be approximately £27,600
- 4.2.3 In view of the political priority to increase support to the Scrutiny function it is proposed that an additional post be funded from LABGI monies in 2007/ 08 and included as part of the budget process for future years.
- 4.2.4 Overview and Scrutiny work at the Council has been assessed as working well by external monitors and reduced capacity to support it in future years could impact on reputation and future performance assessments.

4.3 Legal

- 4.3.1 There are no specific legal implications for the above proposals.

4.4 Consultation (Internal & External)

- 4.4.1 Informal consultation has been carried out with the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and the need for additional resources to support scrutiny activity has been supported by that Committee

4.5 How Proposals Deliver Priority Outcomes

- 4.5.1 Overview and Scrutiny have a key role to play in holding the cabinet to account against improvement priorities and performance management information. Review activities will also be focussed on areas poor performance and will assist in developing recommendations for improved service delivery.
- 4.5.2 Overview and Scrutiny has been identified as one of the areas of strength within the Council and it is critical that this is not adversely affected by

reduced capacity of the current Scrutiny officer to support the increased number of Committees.

4.6 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights Issues

4.6.1 There are no specific implications which are outside the Council's employment policies.

4.7 Other Implications

None

5. Background Papers

“Political Structures” (Report of the Solicitor to the Council)

Report 13 to Council 24th May 2007

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