

Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE

Held: MONDAY, 1 AUGUST 2011 at 5.00pm

P R E S E N T:

Councillor Willmott (Chair)
Councillor Clayton (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Connelly	Councillor Osman
Councillor Cooke	Councillor R. Patel
Councillor Glover	Councillor Waddington
Councillor Grant	Councillor Westley

Also present:

Councillor Cassidy	Councillor Palmer
Councillor Chaplin	Councillor Potter
Councillor Clair	Councillor Sood
Councillor Dawood	Councillor Unsworth

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1. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Concerns had been received that the Council did not appear to be making progress towards using Prevent programme funding that was being made available by the Home Office.

Sir Peter Soulsby, City Mayor, explained the background to this funding and confirmed that he would be meeting Home Office officials in the next few days to discuss the best way that this funding could be used. He gave an assurance that the deadline for applying to this funding would not be missed.

In response to questions, Sir Peter Soulsby confirmed that his office was in very regular contact with the Police at both senior and operational levels. The

discussions to be held in the next few days were needed to ensure that the City Council was the most appropriate body to lead on this work, as it was not core council business.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Kitterick and Porter.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No interests were declared.

4. CONSULTATION - ELDERLY PERSON'S HOMES

Councillor Westley, Chair of the Adult Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Commission, explained that it was proposed that this review would be a full review of adult social care in the City. For example, consideration would be given to whether service users wanted to have their own budgets and remain in their own homes.

An examination then would be needed of the implications of this decision, (for example, to ensure that staying in their own homes did not lead to isolation for service users). This would include a review of how charges were made for these services and an examination of how care for elderly people could be improved, to ensure they all received the decent standard of care they deserved. Those in the private sector with relevant expertise would be invited to participate.

It was stressed that this work needed to start very quickly, so that the Scrutiny Commission's findings could be used to help the Cabinet reach a decision on whether elderly persons' homes should remain open. Councillor Dawood, Assistant City Mayor with responsibility for Adult Social Care and Housing, advised that the consultation on this would close on 28 September 2011 and that input from the Scrutiny Commission would be welcomed. Following this, a report would be prepared for submission to the City Mayor and Cabinet, possibly at the end of October 2011.

In view of this timescale, it was agreed that the Scrutiny Commission's work needed to be completed by the second week of October 2011.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the scoping document for the review of Elderly Person's Homes be amended as indicated above;
- 2) that, once amended, the scoping document for the review of Elderly Person's Homes be referred to the Adult Social Care and Housing Scrutiny Commission for review; and

- 3) that the review referred to under 2) above be completed by the second week of October 2011.

5. CONSULTATION - 21ST CENTURY SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND THEIR FAMILIES

In response to concerns from the Committee that the significant budget reductions required needed to be examined, the Director – Planning and Commissioning explained that the proposed review would consider three key areas:-

- The scope and financial situation of services for children, young people and their families;
- Outcomes of the consultation process and lessons to be learned from these; and
- Consultation on delivery options for future services for children, young people and their families.

The starting point for this would be that considerably less money would be available for these services in the future. For example, although £500,000 initially had to be saved, additional savings would be needed in future years, as the government had advised that grants for these services would reduce. This meant that in the next few years savings of approximately £6- 7 million in would need to be made in services for children, young people and their families.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the scoping document for the review of 21st century services for children, young people and their families be amended to include an examination of how the budgeted financial reductions will be achieved and the impact of making these savings;
- 2) that, once amended, the scoping document for the review of 21st century services for children, young people and their families be referred to the Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission for review as soon as possible.

6. ENGLISH FOR SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES (ESOL)

Councillor Waddington, Chair of the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Scrutiny Commission, explained that government funding for courses in English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) was changing, so that they would only be free for people in receipt of job seekers' allowance. This meant that approximately 3,000 people would no longer qualify for free access to these courses. Changes to the scoping document to account for this therefore

had been suggested.

Councillor Waddington advised the Committee that it was hoped that the proposed review of ESOL courses could be completed before the start of the Autumn term, in September 2011.

It was recognised that the people who would no longer be eligible for free courses were not spread evenly across the City, but tended to be concentrated in certain areas. In addition, general literacy levels in some parts of the City already were low, so the changes to government funding also could affect some of these people. However, it was very important for people to be able to learn English to enable them to fully participate in daily life in the City. It therefore was suggested that the review could continue in the Autumn term, to assess who the funding changes had affected and how.

Councillor Cassidy, Assistant City Mayor with responsibility for Economic Development, Culture and Tourism, welcomed the review and explained that work already was underway with local colleges and other providers, to try to reduce the impact of the changes to funding. Details of the key actions being taken were tabled and are attached at the end of these minutes for information.

From these actions, it was noted that:-

- All ESOL courses planned for September would continue, but uptake would be monitored;
- No feedback had been received about the possibility of introducing a student loan / credit system to help more learners find ways of funding ESOL courses. Members suggested that this should be added to the scope of the review, as there was concern that not having such a facility could penalise those who could not afford to access ESOL courses. Consideration also needed to be given to where the funding for such a scheme would come from;
- A learning partnership that covered informal adult learning would be established. It was suggested that it would be beneficial to consider this as part of the review, so it should be added to the scoping document.

The proposed wider scope of the review was welcomed, as this would enable evidence to be taken from a range of stakeholders and a full examination to be made of the financial impact of the funding changes. However, although this was an emergency situation, sustainable arrangements needed to be made for the future.

The collaborative working with local colleges and other providers also was welcomed, as all providers had limited resources with which to operate ESOL courses. This collaboration also could help achieve the most efficient use of these resources, (for example, by ensuring that the best use of premises was made).

The Head of Adult Skills and Learning Services advised that some funding had been identified for ESOL courses from other budgets. The Committee welcomed this, but expressed concern that other Council service users could be affected by a reduction in those budgets. It therefore was suggested that the amounts, the budgets affected, and the impact on users of Council services funded from these other budgets should be examined during the Scrutiny Commission's review.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that suggested amendments to the scoping document for a review of the provision of courses for English for Speakers of Other Languages set out above be incorporated in to the scoping document;
- 2) that the following changes also be made to the scoping document for a review of the provision of courses for English for Speakers of Other Language:-

Section Number	Heading	Suggested Amendment
1.	Title of Proposed Scrutiny Review	Amend the title to "English for speakers of other languages(ESOL) provision in Leicester and the impact upon adult learning opportunities in Leicester as a result of Government funding changes"
2.	Rationale	Add the following:- "In addition, these national funding changes are likely to impact on other adult learning opportunities and an analysis of the impact is required."
3.	Purpose and Objectives of Review	Add to Access to ESOL programme "and other learning programmes"
4.	Outcome	Add "and other learning programmes" to the end of the first point Change the second point to "Shall propose options for continued future ESOL and other adult learning provision within the City" Change the third point to "To

		produce an interim and final report”
5.	Methodology / Approach	Add the following:- “Take evidence from relevant stakeholders”
6.	Time Management	Add the following after the existing paragraph:- “However a follow up analysis of the impact of the changes that take place in September will be undertaken in the autumn of 2011”
7. – 10.	No changes	

- 3) that, once amended, the scoping document for the review of the provision of courses for English for Speakers of Other Languages be referred to the Economic Development, Culture and Tourism Scrutiny Commission for review;
- 4) that a report on the review agreed at 3) above be made to this Committee at its meeting on 1 September 2011; and
- 5) that a further review of the provision of courses for English for Speakers of Other Languages be carried out in Autumn 2011, to see who the funding changes have affected and how they have affected them, and to assess the sustainability of any new working arrangements identified.

7. THE CITY MAYOR'S 100 DAYS PROGRAMME

Councillor Palmer, Deputy City Mayor, advised that 58 of the 100 pledges contained in the 100 Days Programme had been completed. A further 38 should be completed within the 100 days, but some delay had been experienced with three pledges. Only one was at risk of not being achieved within the time scale, this being a decision about future use of the Council’s offices at New Walk Centre, (pledge 51).

The three pledges experiencing delay were numbers 8, 56 and 99. Number 8 would be discussed at the meeting of the Forum for Older People being held on 9 August and meetings had taken place with interested parties to discuss number 56. Work was ongoing to set up a meeting with all parties to discuss pledge 99 and, although problems had been encountered in finding a date that was acceptable to all concerned, it was felt that this pledge would be completed on time.

The following points were made in discussion:-

- Although pledges covering particular themes were not always grouped together in the programme, there were integrated policies behind them;
- Pledges relating to housing were being reviewed following recent government announcements about house building;
- A small amount of investment in some areas could greatly increase the confidence of businesses in those areas and be a starting point for further regeneration;
- The establishment of the Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) had been progressed following the ending of the East Midlands Development Agency (emda). Prospect Leicestershire, (for which emda had been one of the main partners and funders), also had been discontinued. A few members of staff remained from Prospect Leicestershire on generous salaries, so had been brought in to the City Council to ensure that value for money was received from these members of staff;
- A number of meetings had been held in relation to the pledges relating to older people and these pledges were included on the agenda for the meeting of the Forum for Older People to be held on 9 August 2011. It would be useful for this work to be available before the scrutiny review on elderly person's care, (agreed above), was undertaken, (see minute 4);
- It was recognised that many of the pledges were to start processes. Assessment of the success of these would be subjective, but a lot had already had an impact on the way that services were delivered; and
- Issues incorporated in the Pledges covered the majority of the issues included in the City Mayor's election manifesto.

During discussion on individual pledges, the following updates were given:-

Pledge No.	Information
4	This Council had led the establishment of the Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LLEP). A paper would be presented to the Cabinet in the near future explaining the current position.
26	A letter had been sent to high level government officials about the need to have stronger powers similar to those held by the Mayor of London and regular debates were held with relevant parties on this matter.
40	Meetings were being held regarding the establishment of a new Health and Wellbeing Board and more were planned. Details regarding the Board's structure would be agreed following these meetings.

44	An announcement on progress on this pledge was likely to be made this week following last week's discussion with the Youth Council. The Youth Council was very engaged with this work.
50	This pledge had been included in view of concerns being expressed about the development of student accommodation. Meetings had been held with representatives from both Leicester University and De Montfort University and summit meeting would be held shortly with representatives of both universities and other stakeholders. Other Councils with similar student populations would be contacted to see if their experiences could be useful to this Council.
53	An announcement was due to be made later this week about the establishment of a Commission on Child Poverty. This Commission would publish its report in two years' time.
65	Discussions had started with a number of stakeholders, although the Deputy City Mayor acknowledged that forthcoming cuts in youth services could make it difficult to achieve the "gold standard" aspired to in the pledges. Input by the Scrutiny Commission would be welcome in establishing what a "gold standard" should mean in practice
70	Substantial savings had been made in the use of external consultants, which continued the work started earlier in the year. Figures on this would be published when more detail was known.
72	Various things had been done on this. For example, the government's consultation on future investment in a new high speed train line had ended last week. This Council had responded, urging the government not to overlook the electrification of the Midland Mainline. Stakeholder interviews also had been held, as had a meeting with the Shadow Transport Secretary of State. It was hoped that a meeting could be held with government officials later this year
78	Discussions had taken place with various tenants groups and a report was being prepared for submission to the City Mayor and Cabinet on tenant engagement.
90	<p>It was recognised that the amount to be spent on City gateways was not great, but the Council hoped to be able to use the process to start working with local traders to regenerate the areas concerned. This would be done in consultation with the Planning and Development Committee as necessary.</p> <p>Decisions had not been taken yet on how the money would be allocated, but it was recognised that expenditure could need to be targeted differently in different areas to ensure that maximum impact could be obtained. For example, some businesses were less established than others, so could have problems finding match-funding. Work would continue next year, to build on progress made</p>

	this year.
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RESOLVED:

- 1) that delivery of the pledges contained in the City Mayor's 100 Days Programme continue to be scrutinised as set out in the report; and
- 2) that the actions identified above be taken as appropriate.

8. SCRUTINY OF THE BUDGET 2011/12

The Chair reminded the Committee that quarterly budget monitoring reports would be received by the Committee, but the monitoring under consideration would identify whether the ambitious savings targets included in the last budget would be realised.

Members noted the savings that had been identified in the budget and progress made in achieving them:-

- a) Actions and Reports with Savings from the General Fund Revenue Budget Report approved by Council

Action	Comment
Review of the scheme of Members' allowances	The budget assumed a £100,000 saving.
Divisional Directors to review the support provided to the voluntary sector	No savings had been identified in the budget, but a target had been set of a 5% reduction. Work on this had started on certain areas.
Chief Executive to review budgets for new furniture acquisition, conference attendance, IT and policy support	The budget assumed a £300,000 saving on conferences and seminars. New control procedures were in place, which had seen a reduction in activity in these areas. The tight procedural controls currently in place were not seen as a long-term situation, but were considered necessary in the interim to encourage savings to be made and ensure equity in approach, ahead of delegation of the savings to Directors.
Commission a further report from the Director of Children's Services on Early Intervention services, following	This had been included due to uncertainties over some government funding streams when the budget

a more detailed review, identifying how the Council can respond to reduced specific grant on a recurrent basis	was set. It was fully expected that the £1 million target would be delivered, but this was not included in the budget.
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The Acting Director of Finance was requested to include evidence of plans, targets, timescales and alternatives where needed in the savings monitoring reports and the quarterly budget monitoring reports to this Committee as appropriate.

b) Key Transformational Projects & Programmes and Other Corporate Efficiency Activities & Controls

Project	Comment
The ODI programme (Support Services Transformation and Procurement)	<p>£5.9 million budget saving.</p> <p>Work was continuing on reviews of property services, finance, ICT and procurement.</p> <p>A key risk was the loss of work being experienced by property services due to the reduction in capital funding. It was possible that this would mean that the saving could not be achieved in full. £1.4 million had been identified as a saving for this service for the current year and £2.2 million for next year.</p> <p>The review of finance services was almost complete and it was expected that the expected savings would be delivered.</p> <p>The administration and business support review was ongoing.</p> <p>The review of ICT would start soon and was expected to deliver savings.</p> <p>Capita had been appointed in April 2011 to work with the Council to identify savings in procurement. Work was underway on this.</p>
Human Resources Policy / Terms and Conditions changes	A reduction of £3.3 million had been assumed. A large part of this was the proposed reduction in the working week. Discussions were ongoing about how this could be delivered, but the saving was unlikely

	to be achieved in the current year and possibly would not be achieved in future years.
Adult Social Care Transformation	£3.8 million assumed saving. Some of this had been delayed, but it was expected to be offset during the year, (for example, from other funding sources), so there was confidence that an overspend would not occur in 2011/12.
Agency Staff and Consultancy usage and spending	No set level of saving was included in the budget. The usage and spending continued to decline. This continued to be monitored.
Regulatory Shared Services	A saving of £600,000 had been assumed in the budget. However, the District Councils had decided to withdraw support, so this would not proceed as intended and would no longer be monitored.

The Acting Director of Finance would include these points in the next “significant savings” report and future general monitoring reports to this Committee.

Sir Peter Soulsby, City Mayor, acknowledged that he had concerns that some of the savings previously identified would not be achieved. He welcomed the suggestion that this additional monitoring be done, as it was important that the targets set were achieved.

The following points were then made in discussion:-

- Some concern was expressed that the proposal to review Members’ allowances would conflict with the work done by the independent review panel, but it was noted that the City Council was not obliged to accept recommendations made by that panel;
- The savings for Early Intervention services would be identified and would be unlikely to require continued progress trading by the Committee. The proposed report on these would be submitted to this Committee;
- The major risks of making the proposed savings needed to be identified and taken in to account when decisions were taken on where savings would be made;
- All concerned were aware of the importance of providing proper support

and resources to services, particularly to financial services as the next budget was prepared;

- The future of the post of Chief Executive needed to be agreed before the review of senior management could be progressed, so that an appropriate structure could be determined; and
- An exact figure for savings made to date could not be given at this time, as some of these savings remained to be quantified.

RESOLVED:

that the actions set out in the report and above be taken as identified.

9. HANDBOOK FOR SCRUTINY

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the adoption of a Scrutiny Handbook to support the work of Scrutiny be agreed in principle;
- 2) that the Democratic and Civic Support Manager be requested to circulate a draft Scrutiny Handbook for comment; and
- 3) that the draft Scrutiny Handbook be brought back to the Overview Select Committee for consideration and in principle approval and recommendation to Council for inclusion in the Council's Constitution.

10. PROCESS FOR MONITORING PETITIONS

The Democratic and Civic Support Manager advised the Committee that the proposed procedure for monitoring petitions was similar to that used by the former Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. The role of the Overview Select Committee within this process would be to ensure that the process was followed properly.

The following points were made during discussion on this item:-

- Resources currently were not available to make more than a basic verification check of the people who had signed the petition. This was being reviewed, to see how the situation could be improved;
- The City Mayor's office asked that it be ensured that early notification was given to Assistant City Mayors when a petition was received affecting their area(s) of responsibility; and
- The proposed process could be kept under regular review, to ensure that it remained appropriate.

RESOLVED:

- 1) that the process for monitoring petitions be agreed, subject to it being ensured that Assistant City Mayors know earlier in the process when a petition is received affecting their area(s) of responsibility;
- 2) that the Democratic and Civic Support Manager be asked to send a flowchart showing the overall process for petitions to all Members; and
- 3) that the process agreed above be used for 6 months and then reviewed.

11. SELECT COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chair stated that he expected all Scrutiny Commissions to be working on reviews by September.

RESOLVED:

that the following outline work programme be agreed and reviewed as necessary:-

Adults Social Care & Housing

- Review of Elderly Person's Homes (see minute 4 above)
- Fairer Charging Policy
- Travellers' Sites (to be an in-depth review)

Children, Young People & Schools

- 21st Century Services (see item 5 above)
- Schools Admission Process
- Summer Play Schemes (Youth Services)
- Capital investment to support and improve Adventure Playgrounds (Pledge 33)

Economic Development, Culture & Tourism

- Review of Access to English for Speakers of Other Languages (see item 6 above)
- Economic growth and employment - the role of the City Council in, for example, employment creation, and what can be done in times of high rates of unemployment, (especially for the younger and older working populations)

plus: other issues to be identified following consultation with the members of the Scrutiny Commission, when appointed

Health & Community Involvement

- The broad issues around the forthcoming changes to the NHS
- Public Health Work by the City Council
- Revisit the Review of Adult Mental Health Services done last

year

- Value of continuing the current joint health scrutiny arrangements with Leicestershire and Rutland

plus: a public meeting to be held in the autumn, at which people will be invited to put forward their own concerns / ideas for reviews and last year's rolling work programme to be revisited and possibly "repopulated"

Heritage, Leisure & Sport

To be advised

Neighbourhood Services

- How information on services provided by the Council is / can be accessed. Including, when there are changes to services, who is this agreed by, why and how is information on the changes disseminated
- Community Policing: the likely impact of cuts in Police budgets on this aspect of Police work

Transport

To be advised

12. DATES OF MEETINGS - 2011/12

RESOLVED:

that meetings of the Overview Select Committee to be held at 5.30 pm on:-

Thursday, 1 September 2011
Thursday, 22 September 2011
Thursday, 27 October 2011
Monday, 28 November 2011
Thursday, 15 December 2011
Thursday, 19 January 2012
Thursday, 23 February 2012
Monday, 2 April 2012
Thursday, 26 April 2012

13. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm

Minute Item 6

ACTION PLAN FOR ESOL PROVISION IN LEICESTER

6 key actions to be achieved by 30th September 2011

1. The City Council will continue to support an individual support fund for ESOL learners on criteria already agreed with Leicester College. This has been removed by central government but we propose to continue it. This will bring us into line with Leicester College who are continuing their version of the same fund. During the academic year 2010/11 Adult Skills & Learning received an allocation of £39,227 from the Skills Funding Agency additional Discretionary Support Fund, to be used to support ESOL learners with the cost of course fees and exam fees only. The actual expenditure currently sits at £47,847. We have supported 84 learners with course and exam fees, and a further 853 learners with exam fees only.
2. The City Council will host a public event in September to continue the pressure on central government and to campaign for the importance of ESOL to residents of the city, to community cohesion and to equalities as Ethnic minorities and women will be significantly affected by these fee remission changes. Cllr Cassidy, Assistant Mayor, has already written to local MPs to involve them in continuing the campaign and this event will include other local stakeholders including UCU and Leicester Civil Rights Movement who organised the earlier public meeting.
3. To take advantage of the recent BIS press release we will work with Leicester College to produce a proposal for Leicester for the DCLG/ AOC for informal community based learning of English linked to wider benefits of learning English including access to health provision and community cohesion. Assistant Mayor, Cllr Cassidy, has already written to Maggie Galliers, the Principal of Leicester College to take this forward.
4. Leicester Adult Skills and Learning Service will continue with a full programme of planned ESOL courses in the autumn term and will not take hasty action to reduce the ESOL workforce but will monitor the impact of the fee remission changes and produce a report with clear recommendations.
5. We will continue to explore the options for an innovative approach to a student loan/ credit system to help more learners to find ways of funding their ESOL learning producing a feasibility study.
6. In addition to the setting up of a new skills partnership that will focus on workforce development (Mayoral Pledge 95) we will establish a learning partnership that covers informal adult learning, especially where it contributes to wider agendas such as public health, culture or community cohesion. The aim of the partnership will be to promote adult learning as a core part of life in the city.

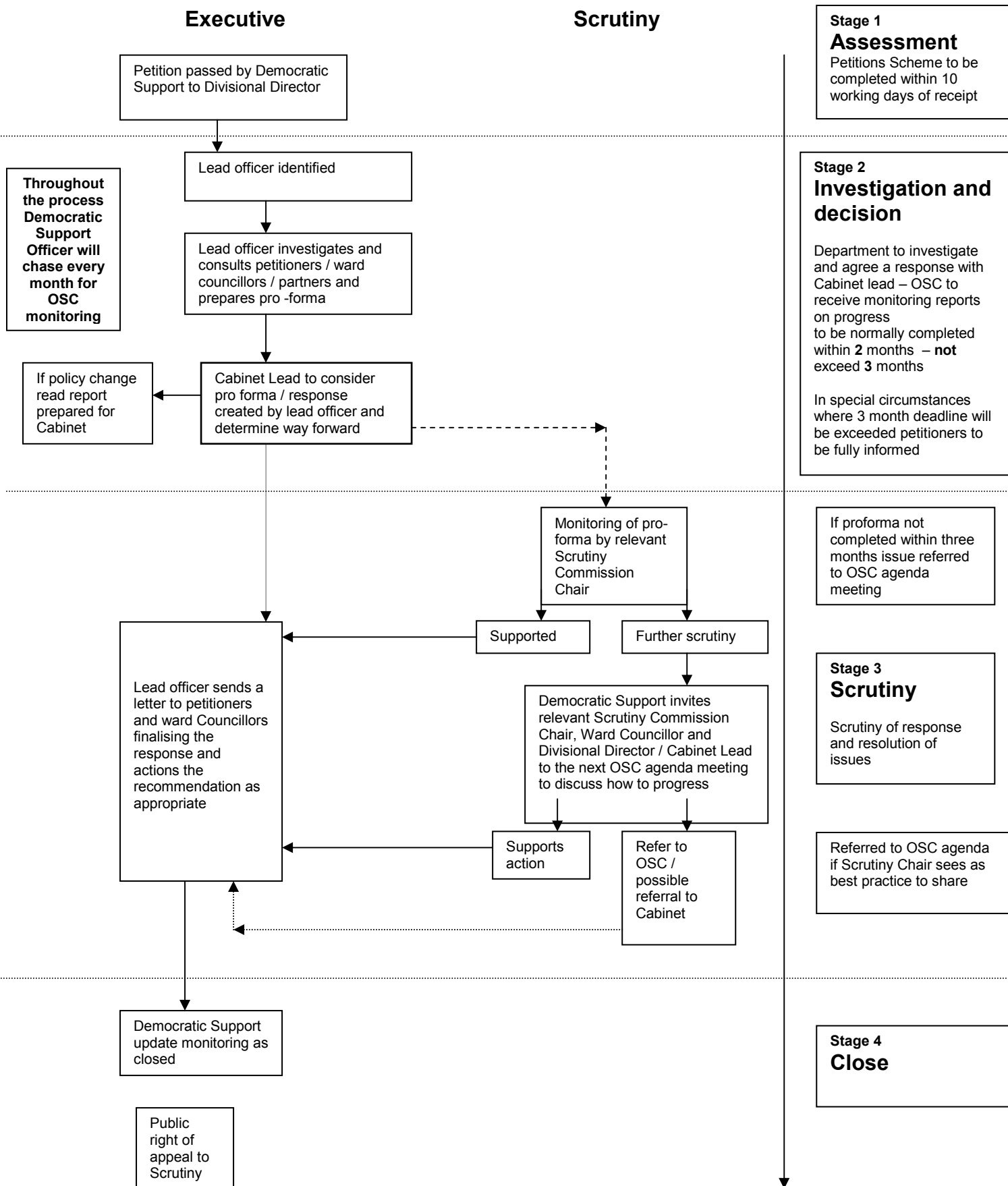
We will work with both partnerships to ensure that long-term planning and radical thinking can take place on the future of ESOL provision and the community-based learning of English in Leicester. Draft membership and terms of reference for this partnership will be complete by mid August.

Chris Minter
Head of Adult Skills and Learning
27th July 2011

Overall Internal Petitions Process Minute Item 10

Executive

Scrutiny



If a Ward Councillor has concerns regarding the speed of progress or action at any stage they can request that the matter be considered at an Overview Select Committee agenda meeting with the Ward Councillor(s), the relevant Scrutiny Commission Chair and the Divisional Director invited.

The lead officer to copy Democratic Support into all correspondence to allow update of the monitoring report.

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