

Report to: Constitution Working Party
Date of meeting: 22 September 2016
Report of: Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer (AG)
Title: Appointment of the Chair of the Community Safety Partnership Task Group

1.0 **Summary**

- 1.1 The Community Safety Partnership Task Group scrutinises the work of the local Community Safety Partnership and reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.2 The Chair of the group is elected annually at its first meeting in the municipal year. This report proposes a change to this procedure to enable the Chair to be in place in advance of this meeting to enhance consultation in the preparation of the group's annual work programme.

2.0 **Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Constitution Working Party recommends to Council that the Chair of the Community Safety Partnership Task Group be appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee when determining the task group's membership.

Contact Officer:

For further information on this report please contact: Alan Garside, Committee and Scrutiny Support Officer.

Telephone extension: 8376 email: alan.garside@watford.gov.uk

Report approved by: Carol Chen, Head of Democracy and Governance

3.0 **Detailed Proposal**

- 3.1 There is a statutory requirement for Councils to scrutinise the work of local Community Safety Partnerships (CSP's) and the Community Safety Partnership Task Group carries out this function within Watford Borough Council.
- 3.2 The Task Group meets two or three times a year (the first meeting in September or October) and examines the activities of the Watford CSP - and where responsible

authorities and participating organisations in the partnership provide information on their role and performance. The structure allows for members to scrutinise what is being done under the various community safety action plans.

- 3.3 Membership of the task group is determined annually by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; with the Chair of the group elected by task group members at the group's inaugural meeting in the municipal year. As agreed at Council 20 May 2015 the Chair of the CSPTG should also be a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.4 Not having the Chair elected until this first meeting presents difficulties in carrying out appropriate consultation in the preparation of the task group's draft annual work programme (which is agreed by members at this first meeting). Practice has shown that engaging with the Chair of scrutiny forums at an early stage provides an effective mechanism to reflect on potential areas for examination.
- 3.5 For example, consultation takes place with the Chair of the Council's Outsourced Services Scrutiny Panel in advance of its first meeting. In this instance the Chair is appointed at Annual Council - and Democratic Services liaise with the new Chair before the initial meeting to deliberate on which outsourced contracts and shared services should be scrutinised during the year. A proposed programme is then drafted and this is presented to the panel for consideration at the meeting.
- 3.6 It is suggested that a similar approach should apply to the Community Safety Partnership Task Group - but in this case the Chair be appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting in June subsequent to Annual Council (after agreeing the group membership and nomination by a member of the committee). This would provide a suitable time frame for the Chair to be consulted (and a draft work programme produced) in advance of the first task group meeting. However, it is stressed that the work of the Chair would be kept to a minimum.
- 3.7 It is considered that by adopting this methodology the task group's work programme would be more comprehensively formulated and properly reflect member requirements; with the scrutiny function enhanced as a result. This would be to the betterment of the CSP, the Council and the people of Watford.

4.0 **Implications**

4.1 **Financial**

4.1.1 None

4.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

4.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications in this report.

4.4 Potential Risks

Potential Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Overall score
Chair unable to be consulted	1	4	4
Insufficient time for consultation	1	3	3
Inadequate information to consider	1	3	3
No areas for scrutiny identified	1	4	4
Task Group does not agree work programme	1	4	4
Statutory duty to scrutinise not complied with	1	4	4

4.5 Staffing

4.5.1 None

4.7 Community Safety

4.7.1 The Task Group has a statutory duty to scrutinise the work of the local community safety partnership.

Appendices

- None.

Background Papers

- No papers were used in the preparation of this report.

File Reference

- None