

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET		
SUBJECT:	WELFARE REFORMS SCRUTINY INQUIRY		
DATE OF DECISION:	16 APRIL 2013		
REPORT OF:	CHAIR OF SCRUTINY PANEL A		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY
None

BRIEF SUMMARY

From October 2012 to March 2013 Scrutiny Panel A undertook an inquiry on Welfare Reforms. The Scrutiny Inquiry report contains a number of recommendations which have been highlighted in Appendix 1. Subject to the draft final report, attached as Appendix 2, being agreed at the meeting of the OSMC on 11th April 2013, the Cabinet needs to formally respond to these recommendations within two months to meet the requirements in the Council's constitution.

RECOMMENDATION:

- (i) Subject to the report attached as Appendix 2 being agreed at the meeting of the OSMC on 11th April 2013, Cabinet is recommended to receive the attached report on the Welfare Reforms Inquiry to enable the Executive to formulate its response to the recommendations contained within it, in order to comply with the requirements set out in the Council's Constitution.

REASON FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The overview and scrutiny procedure rules in part 4 of the Council's Constitution requires the Executive to consider all inquiry reports that have been endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, and to submit a formal response to the recommendations contained within them within two months of their receipt.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2. None.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

3. On 16th August 2012 the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee agreed the indicative terms of reference for an inquiry into the Welfare Reforms. The focus of the Inquiry has been to understand the changes and impacts of the reforms, to clarify the need for communication and consider any policy and decision making responses needed.
4. The Inquiry was undertaken by Scrutiny Panel A with information presented to 6 meetings from October 2012 to March 2013.

5. The Panel submitted two interim reports for the Council to consider recommendations in relation to the 2013/14 budget process. The first report was considered by Council on 16 January 2013 and included 2 recommendations which were approved relating to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. The second report presented to Council on 13 February 2013 incorporated 3 recommendations regarding the change of Social Fund to Local Welfare Provision within the Council's budget setting meeting. These recommendations were also approved.
6. The draft final report contains 11 recommendations in total, summarised in Appendix 1. The draft report will not be considered by the OSMC until 11th April, after the deadline for publication of Cabinet papers, therefore any amendments made by the OSMC will be reported to the Executive verbally at the Cabinet meeting.
7. The Executive needs to consider the Inquiry recommendations and to formally respond within two months of the date of receiving this report in order to meet the requirements set out in the Council's constitution.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

8. A number of the recommendations within the appended report could be progressed by re-focussing council officer and partner's time and existing work programmes. Some recommendations may require additional funding in order to progress.
9. Resources were included in the 2013/14 budget to deliver recommendations 1-5 in the report.

Property/Other

10. None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

11. The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.

Other Legal Implications:

12. None

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

13. The proposals contained within the appended report are in accordance with the Council's Policy Framework.

KEY DECISION? No

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	None directly as a result of this report
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Draft Recommendations – Welfare Reforms Inquiry
2.	Draft Final Report – Welfare Reforms Inquiry

Documents In Members' Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	Dependent upon forward plan item
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	None	
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