

**Meeting: COMMUNITY SELECT
COMMITTEE**

Agenda Item: 4

Date: 1 JULY 2014

2014/2015 SCRUTINY WORK PLAN UPDATE

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To update Members of the Scrutiny work plan for the Community Select Committee for the 2014-15 Municipal Year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Members note the updated Scrutiny work plan for the Community Select Committee for the 2014-15 Municipal Year and the schedule of meetings that are outlined at item 4 in the report.
- 2.2 That Members agree what substantive item the Committee wishes to scrutinise during 2014/15 based on the options outlined at item 3 in the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Members agreed a Scrutiny work plan for the Community Select Committee when it met on 18 March 2014. This included the following item:
- 3.1.1 “That having considered ideas put forward by individual Members from their Scrutiny Evaluation Survey and topics raised from Community Groups following canvassing of the groups through January and February 2014 it be agreed that the Scrutiny Study for 2014/2015 be focused upon investigating options for the provision of a local communications hub/on-line directory of services provided by the voluntary sector, community groups and other agencies.”
- 3.2 Since the Committee met and agreed its review item for 2014/15 the Chair met with the Scrutiny Officer and the Head of Business Strategy, Community and Customer Services to consider the scope for the review.
- 3.3 Following these discussions it became clear that over the past few months the Hertfordshire County Council’s Herts Direct web portal has been significantly updated and now provides a County wide information service for the voluntary sector that can be searched using area or service specific references. It was therefore considered non-productive to spend committee time pursuing a local solution to one that already exists in the County.

- 3.4 The Head of Business Strategy, Community and Customer Services will give a detailed overview of the Herts Direct web pages that provide information on the Voluntary Sector for the whole of Hertfordshire and give an oral update on how the Councils Customer Service Centre will signpost people to this service.
- 3.4 Members are therefore asked to give further consideration to continuing with the work started in 2013/14 regarding Community Transport. Officers are discussing with Partners whether there is any interest to offer a single integrated Community Transport Service via joint commissioning of a service. Officers will provide an oral update at the meeting on any developments in this area.

4. WORK PLAN SCHEDULE FOR 2014/15

- 4.1 1 July – Work Plan Update & Discussion
21 July – Consider draft scoping doc of Housing Private Rented Sector review
10 September – Substantive Review Item & Scoping Document
23 September - Substantive Review Item & (Scrutiny of HRA Business Plan)
14 October - Substantive Review Item
4 November – (Sitting as a Crime & Disorder Committee) Progress against the current Community Safety Action Plan
10 November – (Housing) Private Rented Sector
19 November – (Housing) Private Rented Sector and Housing Development Company
9 December – Revisit recommendations for 2012/13 Museum review
12 January – (Housing) Revisit recommendations for Homelessness review
11 February – (Sitting as a Crime & Disorder Committee) Consider Draft Community Safety Action Plan
2 March – Update on Public Health
24 March – Work Programme for 2015-16

4.2 Work To be scheduled –

- 4.2.1 Community Select Committee Policy Development meetings for
- (i) Older People’s Services (prior to 22 July Executive, date to be advised)
 - (ii) Housing Allocation (prior to the 22 July Executive, date to be advised)
 - (iii) Damp Mould Policy (date to be advised)
 - (iv) Voids Policy (date to be advised)
 - (v) Child Poverty (date to be advised)

- 4.2.2 There could be some slippage with various dates for the Policy Development work, given that the reporting to the Executive may slip.

5. PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED POTENTIAL SCRUTINY TOPICS FOR 2014/2015

- 5.1 Following the canvassing of Members and Community Groups through January and February 2014 the following topics were suggested:

- What's the impact on Stevenage's voluntary sector not having a dedicated Council for Voluntary Services Organisation? (from Kadoma Link & Members)
- Partnerships (CAB)
- Sports in Schools, and community sports links. Addressing the recent loss of JHN as a community facility (from Sports Stevenage)
- "promote sport for all" how can Sports Stevenage, SBC's and So Stevenage's concerns for physical and emotional wellbeing be developed. What's the take-up of schemes for fitness and also to reduce obesity? (from Sports Stevenage)
- Communications – Use of an area of the Council's Web site or creation of a Community Web Site to share information (from Stevenage Furniture Recycling Scheme)
- Grant Aid - 'In kind' at least - to be considered for those organisations essential to the current economic climate and which enable residents to move on from their curtailed circumstances (from Stevenage Furniture Recycling Scheme)
- Use of LCBs: 'whether individual members are really getting value for money from their LCBs' and 'Grant funding/LCB in respect of guidelines on what is considered appropriate/acceptable funding and what checks are in place in to verify the integrity of the bid prior to it being submitted to Councillors (suggestions from 3 Members – this could be a joint review with the Overview & Scrutiny Committee)

6 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

6.2 Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications to this report. The role of Scrutiny and Overview Committees is set out in the Local Government Act 2000.

6.3 Equalities and Diversity Implications

There are no direct Equalities and Diversity implications arising from the recommendations in this report. Specific Equalities and Diversity Implications are considered during each scrutiny review.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Evaluation Questionnaires – February 2014

APPENDICES None