

Meeting: Environment & Economy Select
Committee

Agenda Item: 6

Portfolio Area: Environment & Regeneration
Economy, Enterprise and Transport

Date: 11 June 2013

SCRUTINY WORKPLAN FOR 2013-14

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 Following the agreed change to the Member Level Scrutiny arrangements at Annual Council 22 May 2013, Members of the Environment & Economy Select Committee are asked to consider which item it will review from those previously agreed to by the former Development and Scrutiny Committees.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the Environment & Economy Select Committee notes the way that the Scrutiny Select Committee's will operate with regards to its focus being on the spending, policies and administration of the Environment service area and that it note the more formal questioning of internal witnesses as detailed at paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3
- 2.2. That the Environment & Economy Select Committee agrees which of the items it will consider as a Scrutiny review for the 2013/14 Municipal Year from those listed at 4.2 previously chosen by the former Development & Scrutiny Committees for Environment & Regeneration and Economy, Enterprise & Transport.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. As part of the evaluation of the current Member Level Scrutiny arrangements all Scrutiny Members were sent a survey to comment on the current arrangements. Following this survey it was apparent that satisfaction with the 7 Development and Scrutiny arrangements was mixed and Scrutiny Members were further consulted on four potential scrutiny options and asked to select their favoured option. Following this process Members agreed a new Member Level Scrutiny arrangement of 1 Overview and Scrutiny Committee and 3 Select Committees.
- 3.2. The new Select Committees are to operate in a manner more akin to the Parliamentary model of scrutiny. As with the Parliamentary Select Committees the new Committees have the specific responsibility for examining the 'spending,

policies and administration' of a particular service area (in this case those within the purview of the Strategic Director (Environment)) and therefore there is quite a directed focus on SBC services and performance. This needs to be considered when determining those particular studies to be undertaken during the year.

- 3.3. Having adopted the Select Committee model, it follows that proceedings and the questioning techniques, particular when receiving evidence from Executive Members and Council officers can afford to be more formal in the Parliamentary style where lines of questioning might be prepared in advance, possibly at the scoping stage, with individual Members leading on particular threads in both the questioning of witnesses and follow-up. This assists in retaining a focus to the study and addresses the propensity for questioning to become scatter-gun and sometimes anecdotal – an issue raised by Members in the review.
- 3.4. The former Development and Scrutiny Committees had met throughout March 2013 to agree their Scrutiny items and note their work plans for 2013/14 under their old terms of reference. Accordingly, since the change in the Member Level Scrutiny arrangements at Annual Council, Members of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the three Scrutiny Select Committees (Community, Environment & Economy and Housing) are each invited to revisit the areas put forward for review in terms of the new Select Committee arrangements and the more focussed approach outline in 3.3 above.

4. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED COURSE OF ACTION AND OTHER OPTIONS

- 4.1. It will be necessary for the Environment & Economy Select Committee as well as the two other Scrutiny Select Committees and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to identify the Scrutiny studies they wish to include in their work plans in order that the Council's Scrutiny Work Programme can be delivered.
- 4.2. Scrutiny Review Item
 - 4.2.1 The Environment & Regeneration and Economy, Enterprise & Transport Development & Scrutiny Committees agreed at their meetings in March 2013 respectively to scrutinise:
 - (1) The Council's refuse and recycling operation with emphasis being placed on missed bin collections and the provision of new or replacement bins.
 - (2) Community Transport including public transport as a joint scrutiny exercise with Community, Health and Older People Development & Scrutiny Committee (CHOP D & S Cttee), should the CHOP D & S Cttee be unable to agree a joint scope for the review then the Committee will scrutinise Climate Change Strategy.
 - 4.2.2 The Environment & Economy Select Committee are asked to choose a maximum of two reviews from those outlined above at 4.2.1. or choose an alternative theme from the relevant Council Services within the Strategic Director area for Environment & Economy (see appendix A for a full list of the internal Council Services for the Strategic Director Environment).

4.3 Policy Development

4.3.1 The Environment & Economy Select Committee are asked to note the following Policy Development items which they will be invited to undertake during the 2013/14 Municipal year that were advised by Officers at the relevant Development and Scrutiny Committee at its meetings in March 2013:

- Stevenage Borough Local Plan
- Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule

4.4 Monitoring of previous Review Recommendations

4.4.1 The Environment & Economy Select Committee are invited to consider revisiting the recommendations and Executive Member responses to former reviews of the relevant Development & Scrutiny Committees to be scheduled throughout the year. Accordingly Members may wish to revisit the following items to monitor progress of the recommendations of the following former reviews into:

E&R D&S Committee agreed to revisit the reviews into:

- Cleanliness of the Neighbourhood Centre Shops (from 2010/2011)
- Use of Garage Compounds for alternative parking (from 2011/2012)
- Fixed Penalty Notices and Environmental Campaigns – Dog Fouling (from 2012/2013)

EE&T D&S Committee agreed to revisit the reviews into:

- Inward Investment Opportunities (from 2011/2012)
- Business Support and Training & Employment Opportunities for Young People (from 2012/2013)

4.4.2 It may be considered sufficient to simply request update briefings from the relevant Heads of Service to be circulated to Members at appropriate intervals. However, if the Committee requires more detailed consideration or examination of the progress of previous recommendations this should be factored into its workplan.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1. Financial Implications

5.1.1. There are no financial implications to this report.

5.2. Legal Implications

5.2.1. There are no legal implications to this report.

6. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Annual Council Agenda and Item 5 Constitutional Issues report – 22 May 2013

7. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Internal Council Services for the Strategic Director Environment