

Template Scoping Document

Updated following 24 June 2015 meeting – 10 July 2015

<u>Environment & Economy Select Committee</u>	
<u>Scrutiny Review Title:</u>	Business Technology Centre
<u>Background issues</u> to review – rationale for scrutinising this issue:	<p>Members raised the issue of reviewing the Business Technology Centre, which was agreed by the Select Committee at its meeting on 24 March 2015 as the focus of its scrutiny review.</p> <p>Members wish to investigate this matter as they were of the view that the BTC is an important initiative supporting small to medium sized enterprises in Stevenage and is therefore worth investigating to consider how successful it is in supporting new businesses. BTC also provides a valuable income stream to the authority in rental income so scrutinising this would be worthwhile given its commercial value to the Council.</p>
<p>Is the issue highlighted as one of the Council's corporate aims and objectives of the Council's <u>Corporate Strategy</u>, – 'Sharing the Dividends'? If so which one:</p> <p>Is the issue addressed by the Council's <u>Community Strategy</u>?</p>	<p>Regarding the Council's Community Strategy there is a commitment under the ambition to "Regenerate Stevenage" to "Have a Growing Town and Economy". Having a Business Technology Centre with its 'my Incubator' new business start-up support at the BTC is a positive and tangible initiative towards this Corporate Strategy ambition.</p> <p><u>Healthy Economy</u></p> <p>In compiling the Community Strategy residents told the Council that there are not enough jobs in the area and they don't have the right skills for local jobs.</p> <p>The Council's Community Strategy has a commitment to "improve the local economy" and "increase skills and employability".</p>

<p>Is this issue one that raises interest with the public via complaints or Members' surgeries?:</p>	<p>There have been no recorded complaints regarding the BTC.</p>
<p>Focus of the review: (State what the review focus will be)</p>	<p><i>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting.</i></p> <p><i>Members/Officers have suggested the following possible Options: The review should act as a timely health check for the organisation.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>BTC Future Operations - Is the BTC an incubator space or a managed work space?</i> • <i>BTC Funds - Should the receipts generated by the BTC be reinvested into test trading grants for start-ups or recycled and used to develop a new enterprise facility</i> • <i>BTC Future Talent - How can we improve our relationship with Hertfordshire University and North Herts College to grow a pipeline of start-up talent with roots in Stevenage? Is there scope for more vocational/apprenticeships to be supported?</i> • <i>BTC Future Focus - Does the BTC need to have similar brand values/identity to that of Stevenage BioScience Catalyst or does it need to do something different?</i>
<p>Timing issues: Are there any timing constraints to when the review can be carried out?</p>	<p>None apparent prior to scoping, but the review will have to fit in with the timing of the other Select Committee review work programme items. Officers will advise at the meeting if there are any timing issues to consider.</p>
<p>The Committee will meet on (provide dates if known):</p>	<p>Dates: Day/Month/Time/Venue Monday 8 June 2015 – Presentation of Service/Consider Draft Scoping Document Wednesday 24 June 2015 – Formally Agree Scope and identify lead Member roles – receive further background information requested by Members. Thursday 25 June 2015 – (Networking event/site visit and performance review – not part of the formal review process but a useful information gathering event) Tuesday 7 July 2015 – BTC Site Visit (site visit late afternoon and then 6pm evening meeting at BTC) Monday 7 September 2015 - Interview review witnesses</p>

	<p>Wednesday 14 October 2015 - Draw together findings and draft recommendations Identify a date for the Final Report and Recommendations</p>
<p>SBC Leads (list the Executive Portfolio Holders and SD's Heads of Service who should appear as witnesses):</p>	<p><i>Officers have suggested the following people:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise & Transport – Cllr Ralph Raynor</i> • <i>Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Co-operative Council – Cllr Simon Speller</i> • <i>Strategic Director (Environment) – Peter Bandy</i> • <i>Head of Planning, Regeneration & Transport – Paul Pinkney</i> • <i>Representatives of BTC Management Committee- Representatives of BTC WENTA Management Committee - Peter Cabon & Spenser Tagg covering 'My Incubator' & BTC workspace</i> • <i>Current occupant of BTC - (to be identified but Members have suggested an incubator client and a main workspace client from an established business)</i> • <i>Former occupant of BTC – (to be identified)</i> • <i>Input from University of Hertfordshire/North Herts College/LEP/Chamber of Commerce (to be identified)</i> • <i>The interviewee from the BTC who was a witness to the former review into Inward Investment and Business Support, Paul Maguire, Public Relations Marketing Company based at BTC (2012)</i> <p><i>Others officers or Members?</i></p>
<p>Any other witnesses (external persons/critical friend)?:</p>	<p>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting. <i>Possible options identified by officers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A peer from a neighbouring area to act as a 'critical friend' (from an authority with a similar business support start up hub)</i>
<p>Allocation of lead Members on specific individual issues/questions:</p>	<p>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting.</p> <p>Members will ask questions on the following areas (list the issues to address during the interviews): Cllr Jim Brown will investigate previous years data from 2008-9 to current data looking at turnover Cllr Matthew Hurst will lead questioning on <i>BTC Future Operations - Is the BTC an incubator space or a managed work space?</i></p> <p>Cllr Doug Bainbridge will lead questioning on <i>BTC Funds - Should the receipts generated by the BTC be reinvested into test trading grants for start-ups or recycled and used to develop a new enterprise facility.</i></p>

<p>Any other Questions Members wish to cover:</p>	<p>Cllr Michael Downing will lead questioning on <i>BTC Future Focus - Does the BTC need to have similar brand values/identity to that of Stevenage BioScience Catalyst or does it need to do something different?</i></p> <p>Cllr Michael Downing will lead questioning on Equalities & Diversity Issues – Are there any E&D issues to consider in this review?</p>
<p><u>Site visits and evidence gathering in the Community</u></p>	<p>As agreed by the Committee at the first scoping meeting (08 06 15) but it is recommended that the Committee visit the Centre</p> <p>4pm on Tuesday 7 July 2015 – BTC Site Visit (if this date is not suitable for BTC then an alternative date will be agreed)</p>
<p><u>Equalities and Diversity issues:</u> The review will consider what the relevant equalities and diversity issues are regarding the Scrutiny subject that is being scrutinised</p>	<p><i>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting.</i></p> <p>What gaps are there? Age / Gender/ Disability. What opportunities are there for younger people 16-19 year olds, non-graduate Education?</p>
<p><u>Constraints</u> (Issues that have been highlighted at the scoping stage but are too broad/detailed to be covered by the review):</p>	<p><i>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting 24 June 2015 (These issues can be captured and dealt with via other means – Briefings/email/officer action etc).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial Confidentiality
<p><u>Background Documents/data</u> that can be provided to the review</p>	<p><i>To be identified by the Committee at the scoping meeting 24 June 2015.</i></p> <p><i>Possible options suggested by officers:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Presentation describing the purpose of the BTC and the service</i> • <i>2012 Scrutiny Review into Inward Investment & Business Support</i> • <i>Position Statement provided by officers 24 June 2015</i>
<p><u>Agreed Milestones and review sign off</u> -<i>To be agreed by Members and officers</i></p>	<p><i>Formal response from Executive Portfolio Holder (Executives have a Statutory requirement to respond to Scrutiny review recommendations two months after receiving a final report and recommendations of a review: Date Executive Portfolio responses are expected (dependent on the final report & executive portfolio response template publishing date - November/December 2015):January/February 2016</i></p> <p><i>Date for monitoring implementation of recommendations – final sign off (typically one year from completion of the review): Nov/Dec 2016</i> (Close to this date the Select Committee will receive a report</p>

at a Committee meeting to agree the final sign off of the review recommendations)