

## **SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 4<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2002**

### **REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

#### **WORK PROGRAMME**

##### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to:-
  - i) inform the Commission of the deliberations of Scrutiny Committees regarding their work programmes:
  - ii) seek approval to requests to establish two five member scrutiny review panels.

##### **Background**

2. The Commission at its meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> June was advised that the Scrutiny Committees were being asked to consider their respective work programmes having regard to the Constitution, the report agreed by the Council in January, 2001, on the future shape of Scrutiny and subsequent advice from the Scrutiny Reference Group. As a result the various Scrutiny Committees have identified issues that they would wish to look at in the next four to six months. Each Committee has also noted the need to continually review and roll forward its work programme. Details of the work programme for each Committee is set out in the Appendix to this report.

##### **Five Member Panels**

3. In considering their work programmes Committees were asked to consider whether any of the issues identified would warrant detailed scrutiny by a five member panel. The Commission on 26<sup>th</sup> June approved a request from the Highways, Transportation and Waste Management Scrutiny Committee to establish such a panel to consider and comment on the Joint Household Waste Management Strategy. That Panel has commenced work and hopes to be in a position to report by October. The Commission itself agreed to the establishment of a Panel to consider and comment on the emerging Leicestershire Community Strategy and District Community Strategies. That Panel too has commenced work but the nature of its remit will mean that it is not possible, at this stage, to set a timescale within which the work will be completed. An additional five member panels is now being proposed:-

Request from the Education Committee for a Panel to consider the issue of School Attendance

4. The Government's social inclusion agenda has led to a whole raft of measures over the past four years specifically designed to raise school attendance levels, reduce truancy and unauthorised absence and tackle the problem of youth crime. The LEA has a key role to play in supporting these measures by ensuring that schools and colleges are given the necessary advice and support to reach and maintain high attendance levels.

5. National Targets were set by the Government to reduce unauthorised absence over a three year period from 1999-2000. All LEAs were given targets equating to a reduction of one-third. Leicestershire's targets were as follows:

Primary: 0.1%

Secondary: 0.8%

5. Leicestershire's unauthorised absence percentages over the last few years are:

	<u>2000/1</u>	<u>1999/00</u>	<u>1998/9</u>	<u>1997/8</u>
Primary	0.17%	0.16%	0.13%	0.15%
<i>National</i>	<i>0.5%</i>	<i>0.5%</i>		
Secondary	1.25%	1.18%	1.04%	1.1%
<i>National</i>	<i>1.1%</i>	<i>1.0%</i>		

6. In the light of this the Committee is proposing a five member panel with the following terms of reference:-

- To undertake a review of the current national and local issues relating to school attendance and the action being taken by the LEA to address these issues in Leicestershire.
- To undertake an analysis of school attendance figures for 2001/2002 to identify key issues, trends, evidence of successful practice and/or areas where further work or different approaches may be needed to tackle poor attendance in Leicestershire schools.
- To ascertain whether any useful lessons can be learnt from work arising from good practice in Leicestershire and by other LEAs to improve levels of school attendance

7. The Group Whips have nominated the following members to serve on this Panel:-

Mrs Camamile

Mr Knaggs

Mr Galton

Mrs Sherwin

Mr Royce

The Constitution sets out the nomination process for Chairmanship of Review Panels. On this occasion the Chairmanship of the Panel is a matter for the Labour Group.

## **Recommendations**

8. The Commission is asked to:-
  - a) note the proposed work programmes of scrutiny committees set out in the Appendices to this report;
  - b) approve the request from the Education Scrutiny Committee Scrutiny Committee to establish five member panels to consider the issue of school attendance and effectiveness of road safety schemes.

## **Background Papers**

Decisions of the Education Scrutiny Committee held on 19<sup>th</sup> June and 17<sup>th</sup> July

## **Officer to contact**

Mr M. I. Seedat  
Tel 0116 –265 6037

## APPENDIX 1

### EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

#### **SEPTEMBER**

Best Value Review of SEN Transport

Progress with Action Plan from the previous Ofsted Inspection of the LEA

Library Services for Education

Numbers of City Children Attending County Schools

Key Stage 4 Strategy

#### **October/November 2002**

Progress with Action Plan from the previous Ofsted Inspection of the LEA

Best Value Review of the Specialist Teaching Service

Education Capital Programme Schemes 2002/2003

Progress with Developing the Connexions Service

Educational Provision for Children Looked After by the Authority (After closure of the Blaby Community Home)

Speech and Language Policy

Multi – Agency Joint Therapy Strategy

Analysis of PANDA and Examination Results

Yellow School Bus Project – Approval of Pilot Scheme

#### **December 2002**

Half Year progress against the targets in the Best Value Performance Plan

Education Development Plan

Review of the SEN Development Plan

#### **January 2003**

Revenue Budget 2003/04

Capital Programme 2003/06

## APPENDIX 2

### HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>September 2002</b>
Best Value Review of Learning Disability Services Adaptations for Disabled People Direct Payments
<b>November 2002</b>
Children's Services Plan – Update National Minimum Standards and Regulations – Children's Homes – Statement of Purpose
<b>December 2002</b>
Half-Year Progress Against Best Value Performance Plan Targets Supporting People – Shadow Strategy
<b>January 2003</b>
Revenue Budget 2003/04 Capital Programme 2003/06

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

<b>September/October 2002</b>
Cultural Strategy for Leicestershire Snibston Discovery Park – Business Plan Haymarket Theatre – Service Level Agreement for 2002/2003 Museums Service – Current Issues including Regional Strategy for Museums General Register Office Inspectorate – Inspection of Leicestershire Registration Service
<b>December 2002</b>
Half-Year Progress Against Best Value Performance Plan Targets Food Law Enforcement Plan Annual Library Plan 2002/03 - Progress Report Progress on Recommendations of Library Service Review Audit Commission (CPA) Inspection of the Library Service Shire Grants
<b>January 2003</b>
Revenue Budget 2003/04 Capital Programme 2003/06

## APPENDIX 4

### RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>August/September 2002</b>
Provisional Revenue Outturn for 2001/02 Treasury Management Performance 2001/02 Capital Payments and Receipts 2001/02
<b>October 2002</b>
First Review of Capital Payments and Receipts Budget Process
<b>Meeting in November/December</b>
Half Year Performance against targets/commitments in the Best Value Performance Plan Budget Strategy Position Statement on the Better Access to Better Services Initiative [This issue was referred from the Scrutiny Commission and the Committee will need to consider how best to monitor implementation of the Initiative e.g by way of a five member panel or regular reports to the Committee].
<b>January 2003</b>
Revenue Budget 2003/04 Capital Programme 2003/06

## APPENDIX 5

### HIGHWAYS, TRANSPORTATION AND WASTE MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

<b>September 2002</b>
Joint Household Waste Management Strategy [Initial report from the 5 member Panel]
Rural Public Transport
Petition: Reinstatement of concessionary bus travel for pensioners before 9.30am
Petition: Right-turn on Old Ashby Road A512, Loughborough
Petition: Sacred Heart School, Loughborough - parking facilities, and safety measures.
Petition: Speed / volume of traffic on Dunton Road, Broughton Astley
<b>October 2002</b>
Petition: Narrowing of Elgin Drive Junction, Melton Mowbray
Petition: Impact of Epinal Way traffic on Cowdray Close, Loughborough
Petition: Traffic calming in Dunton Bassett
Petition: Speed Reduction, Asfordby Road, Melton Mowbray
Traffic calming and road safety issues – Effectiveness and on-going maintenance of different schemes
<b>November 2002</b>
Petition: Beacon Way and Epinal Way junction at Woodlands Drive, Loughborough
Half-year progress against targets in the Best Value Performance Plan
<b>January 2003</b>
Revenue Budget 2003/04
Capital Programme 2003/06