



SCRUTINY COMMISSION – 5TH SEPTEMBER, 2001

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

SCRUTINY COMMITTEES – WORK PROGRAMME

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Commission of the outcome of discussions at Scrutiny Committees in relation to their work programme.

Background

2. Following a meeting of the Scrutiny Reference Group, Scrutiny Committees were advised of the views of the Group and provided with relevant extracts from the Constitution relating to work programme and the report agreed by the Council on 10th January on the future shape of Scrutiny. A copy of the information provided is attached at Appendix 1.
3. The individual scrutiny committees were also advised of potential issues that would appear on their agenda. This was based on:
 - i) identification of those Plans in the Policy Framework which are the subject of review/roll forward;
 - ii) the Best Value Review Programme;
 - iii) an analysis of items included in the Forward Plan;
 - iv) issues identified by each Committee's predecessor.

The details provided to each Committee are set out in the Appendices to the report.

Planning and Environment	-	Appendix 2
Health and Social Care	-	Appendix 3
Education and Heritage	-	Appendix 4

Proceedings at Committees

Planning and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

4. The Committee met on 12th July and:

- (a) noted that reports on the following major issues would be submitted to it within the timescale set out below:-

Waste Local Plan	August 2001
Review of Public Transport Support	October 2001
Household Waste Management Strategy	November 2001

- (b) decided that in the light of the above and the need for the Committee to set aside time to receive and respond to petitions, it would limit the number of items for scrutiny to one, namely the scope, operation and effectiveness of the Shire Grants scheme.

Health and Social Care

5. The Committee met on 13th August. The Committee noted that the Department had recently been reviewed by the SSI/District Audit and that the resultant Action Plan identified a number of areas for improvement. The Committee has indicated that it wishes to receive regular monitoring reports as this would be the most appropriate means of monitoring performance.
6. The Committee also noted that various Plans forming the Policy Framework which were to be presented in the course of the year. It also noted that major reviews of in house residential care for older people, children's residential services and learning disability services had commenced and that the outcomes of those reviews would be reported to the Committee.
7. In the light of the above, the Committee has identified the following as potential items for scrutiny:-
 - a) Corporate Parenting

The progress on the Corporate Parenting Initiative, for which the County Council had allocated additional resources, would be monitored by way of quarterly reports to the Committee.
 - b) Adaptations to the Homes of Disabled People

The Committee has identified this as a potential topic which it considers warrants scrutiny by a five member Panel. The Panel would be asked to look at current policy and practice and this would involve considering the policies of both the County and District Councils.
8. The Committee has also indicated that it would wish to review its work programme at the end of the year.

Education and Heritage

9. The Committee met on 22nd August, to consider its work programme .
The Committee:-

- a. noted that it would be receiving reports on the following Plans and Best Value Reviews within the timescale set out below:

Annual Library Plan	August
School Organisation Plan	August
SEN Development Plan	October
Education Asset Management Plan	October
Library Services for Education – Best Value Review	October
Education Development Plan	December
Early Years and Child Care Development Plan	Jan/Feb
Behaviour Support Plan	Jan/Feb
Adult Learning Plan	Jan/Feb
Special Education Needs Transport	Jan/Feb

With regard to Plans, the Committee was of the view that the scrutiny committees should be involved at an early stage of the process of their development. To that end the Committee has asked for a presentation at its October meeting on the key issues to be taken into consideration with the EDP roll-forward. It has also indicated its wish to receive a report in February 2002 on a number of issues it has identified in relation to the Annual Library Plan together with a note of progress in implementing the current Plan, so as to enable it to consider the need for, and if appropriate, make a contribution in the next review/roll forward.-

- b. noted that a report on the Arts in Education Service would be submitted once the current review of staffing is completed.
- c. identified Recruitment and Retention of Teaching Staff as a main work programme issue, to be undertaken by a five member Panel.

Finance Scrutiny Committee

10. The role of the Finance Committee relates to the functions of the County Council in respect of the revenue budget and capital programme. The Committee has met twice and considered reports on the following:

- The Single Capital Pot and Assessment Management Planning.
 - Best Value Review of Payments, Income and Financial Information Schemes.
 - Treasury Management Performance 2000/01.
 - Provisional Revenue Outturn 2000/01.
 - Capital Payments and Receipts 2000/01.
 - Update on the 2001/02 Revenue Budget.
 - First Review of the Capital Programme 2001/02.
11. The Finance Scrutiny Committee will play a major role in the scrutiny of the Executive's proposals on the revenue budget and capital programme for 2002/03 and subsequent years. It will also monitor actual expenditure against estimates within these budgets and thereby identify potential areas for scrutiny either by itself or by other scrutiny committees.
12. The Committee is of the view that in view of the current national debate it may be appropriate for it to receive a report on the issues the County Council would need to consider in relation to the Private Finance Initiative.

Conclusion

13. The Commission is reminded that the Constitution provides that:
- Overview and Scrutiny Committees (or the Commission in a single report on their behalf) will report annually to full Council on their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate (Articles of the Constitution Article 6.03(d)).
 - The Scrutiny Reference Group shall
 - a) manage the overall operation of overview and scrutiny;
 - b) participate in joint planning meetings with the Executive to compile the review programme for Best Value and other reviews undertaken by Review Panels. (Articles of the Constitution- Article 6.05(c)).
14. The Commission is asked to consider the views of the scrutiny committees concerning their work programme alongside its own work programme, and indicate:
- a) how it proposes to consult with the Executive to avoid any duplication of effort and ensure efficient use of resources;
 - b) how and when it wishes to submit a report to the County Council on the overall Scrutiny work programme.

Equal Opportunities Implications

None.

Circulation under the sensitive Issues Procedure

Nil

Background Papers

Constitution of the County Council.

Report to Council on 10th January – Future Shape of Scrutiny.

Decisions taken at the following Scrutiny Committee meetings:

- Planning and Environment - 12th July
- Health and Social Care - 13th August
- Education and Heritage - 22nd August
- Finance - 2nd July

Officers to contact

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APPENDIX 1**EXTRACT FROM THE REPORTS TO SCRUTINY COMMITTEES
ON ISSUES TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT IN DEVELOPING
THEIR WORK PROGRAMME****Background**

2. In considering their work programme the Committee is asked to have regard to the following elements of the Constitution and the report agreed by the Council in January, 2001, on the future shape of Scrutiny.

The relevant sections of the Constitution are:

- The Scrutiny Commission shall approve an annual overview and scrutiny work programme, including the programme of other overview and scrutiny committees, to ensure that there is efficient use of the Committee's time and that the potential for duplication of effort is minimised. (Overview and Scrutiny Rule 2(1)).
 - Overview and scrutiny committees shall obtain the prior approval of the Scrutiny Commission for their work programme and in formulating their work programme they shall take into account wishes of members on that committee who are not members of the current political administration of the County Council. (Overview and Scrutiny Rule 7).
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committees (or the Commission in a single report on their behalf) will report annually to full Council on their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate (Articles of the Constitution Article 6.03(d)).
 - The Scrutiny Reference Group shall
 - a) manage the overall operation of overview and scrutiny;
 - b) participate in joint planning meetings with the Executive to compile the review programme for Best Value and other reviews undertaken by Review Panels. (Articles of the Constitution – Article 6.05(c)).
4. The report to the County Council on 10th January – The Future Shape of Scrutiny made particular reference to the need to ensure that the finite amount of resources, both officers and elected members, are used effectively. The report argued that there should be a priority approach to the allocation of resources and the County Council in endorsing the report supported a priority approach a summary of which is as follows:-

- (i) pre-eminence should be given to the reviews included in the Best Value Review Programme on the basis that these are a statutory requirement on the authority and there are consequences for the Authority of failing to do them. In addition, the Best Value Review Programme has been compiled jointly between Scrutiny and the Executive and approved by the Council and as such should reflect the key priorities for the Council.
- (ii) the second priority should be the review and roll-forward of the Plans forming the Policy Framework. One of the consequences of the LGA 2000 is that, in future, most of the County Council's activity will need to be considered from a Plan-based perspective. One of the major roles of the Council is to approve plans forming the Policy Framework. Detailed scrutiny of such Plans is important on the basis that the Plans, once approved, will in effect determine the scope of the Executive powers. (The Plans, when agreed, can be implemented by the Executive without reference to the Council).
- (iii) Review activity undertaken by Scrutiny should be carefully planned and focussed to ensure that it is achievable in the light of resources available. It should also seek not to duplicate the work of Best Value Review Panels or 'other reviews' in the Cabinet work programme.

Discussion with the Scrutiny Reference Group

5. An initial meeting of the Scrutiny Reference Group has been held to discuss the operation of Scrutiny. Further meetings are planned to take place in July including a meeting with the Leader and Deputy Leader. The Group considered the implications of the report to the County Council on 10th January and in particular:-
 - a) Identification of issues for the work programme is a matter for members of the Committee and, in particular, the Chairman and Spokesmen of the Committees who are in a position to determine how proactive each Committee should be.
 - b) The content and delivery of targets and commitments in the Best Value Performance Plan should influence the identification of issues to be considered. Members should also have regard to other sources of information which may be relevant to judging the performance of the Authority eg:
 - any available analysis of trends in complaints by service users;
 - concerns/views expressed by service users/public obtained through consultation exercises;

- information arising from an external examination of the Authority's performance e.g. National Performance Indicators, District Audit Reports/reviews, or inspections carried out by the SSI or OFSTED.
- c) In setting a work programme Committees should be aware that they may, from time to time, be asked by the Cabinet to comment on key policies or plans, consider outcomes of Best Value reviews, etc. The view was that this in turn suggests that each Committee should seek to identify **no more than two items in their annual work programme.**
6. The Reference Group was of the view that Scrutiny Committees should have particular regard to current or planned review activity when considering their work programme. In addition Committees should maintain a focused approach, at the outset, to their work programme by:
- identifying clearly the scope of the issue to be the subject of scrutiny;
 - setting clear objectives to the exercise;
 - establishing the method of working (reports to the Committee or establishing a Panel);
 - identifying of the type of advice and support it would require.

APPENDIX 2

Planning and Environment Work Programme

2. Set out in Appendix A to this report is a table which:
 - (i) includes an analysis of items considered by this Committee's predecessor, the progress made in respect of each item and suggestions as to how those issues are progressed;
 - ii) identifies potential issues that may appear on the agenda of the Committee. This is based on a brief analysis of the items included in the Executive's first Forward Plan;
 - (iii) a list of petitions previously presented on which a report back is expected. As can be seen the receipt of petitions and responses thereto will form a substantial part of the Committee's work programme.

3. Members will note that it is likely that at the meeting scheduled for September the Committee is likely to be receiving the findings of the Review of Public Transport and that at the meeting scheduled for October it is hoped to have available the Consultant's report on the Leicestershire Household Waste Management Strategy. Given the importance of these two matters the Committee may wish to consider whether it would be appropriate to identify any major work programme issues of its own to be undertaken in the short term.

Conclusion

4. The Committee is asked to consider the issues raised in this report covering the role of Scrutiny and the factors to be taken into consideration in developing their work programme. Any issues raised during the debate or subsequently through the Chairman or Spokesmen, for possible inclusion in a work programme will be reported to the next meeting. That report will also seek to set out a brief position on each item, i.e. current policy framework description of services, objectives, targets and performance, relevance of any Best Value Review work undertaken or planned etc, so as to enable the Committee to select one or two key priority issues it wishes to scrutinise.

Equal Opportunities Implications

None.

Background Papers

Constitution of the County Council.

Report to Council on 10th January – Future Shape of Scrutiny.

APPENDIX 2A

**ISSUES OUTSTANDING FROM THE PROTECTING AND ENHANCING
THE ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Issue	Comments	Date for further report
Review of the Permit to Tip Scheme	The Cabinet reviewed the scheme in Jan 2001. A Review will be undertaken in 12 months	February/March 2002
Rural Bus Services – general and also specific issues relating to the Value of Belvoir	A Members Information Item was sent out on 27 th February setting out interim findings of a survey of bus demand in the Vale of Belvoir. The results to be fed into the Best Value Review – Public Transport. It may be more appropriate to deal with this matter when the Review Panel report is available later this year.	November/December 2001
Flood Prevention Schemes	(awaiting information from Melton and Charnwood – Report on schemes to be submitted to Cabinet in the first instance) – post hoc scrutiny if appropriate	
Shire Grants Scheme	The Cabinet in Feb 2001 agreed to amend and enlarge the scheme – A review will be undertaken after 12 months	February/March 2002
Rural Recreation Land	Availability across the County of such land not owned by the Council and prospects of co-operation between agencies.	Circulation via the Members Information Service may suffice
Dynamic Route Guidance	Issue raised by Col. Roffey This was a consultation paper to which an officer response has been sent. A report will be made once the DETR have prepared guidelines for DRG licensing.	

In addition to the above, the Protecting and Enhancing the Environment Scrutiny Committee indicated that it would wish to receive reports on the following issues it had previously considered:-

- Alternative Fuel Vehicles
- Reducing Paper use

The Committee may wish to consider whether it is worthwhile embarking on a detailed examination of these issues prior to consideration to reports on the issues identified in paragraph 8 of the main report.

***POTENTIAL REFERRALS FROM CABINET or ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY**

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>CABINET</u>	<u>SCRUTINY</u>
Waste Local Plan – Response to Inspectors report and schedule of modifications	August/September	September
Review of Public Transport Support	August/September	October
Annual Progress Report on the Local Transport Plan	August/September	October
Household Waste Management Strategy – First Stage Consultation on a revised Strategy	August/September	October

* Plans / Key Decisions/ or Best Value Review Reports

BEST VALUE REVIEWS – ONGOING

Highways Network Management

September 2002

PETITIONS

Traffic Speed A444 Acresford Traffic Calming, Station Road, Desford Residents' Parking Scheme, Kirby Muxloe Traffic Calming at Blunt Road and Colby Drive, Thurmaston Traffic on Wanlip Road, Syston	July “ “ “
Traffic Speed A607, Croxton Kerrial Traffic Control Measures, Linkfield Road, Mountsorrel Right Turn ban – Old Ashby Road onto A512 Pedestrian Crossing, Melton Road, Queniborough	Sept/Oct “ “ “
Traffic Calming – Elmesthorpe Traffic Calming – Dunton Bassett	Oct/Nov “

APPENDIX 3

Education and Heritage Work Programme

7. Set out in Appendix A is an analysis of outstanding items identified by this Committee's predecessor, together with suggestion as to how each of these might be progressed.
8. Appendix B to the report identifies the potential issues that may appear on the agenda of this Committee based on an analysis of Best Value Review programme and items included in the Executive's second Forward Plan. In addition to these items it is hoped that information relating to the performance of the Authority against the targets and commitments in the Best Value Performance Plan will be available in November/December.

Conclusion

9. The Committee is asked to consider the issues raised in this report covering the role of Scrutiny and the factors to be taken into consideration in developing their work programme. Any issues raised during the debate or subsequently through the Chairman or Spokesmen, for possible inclusion in a work programme will be reported to the next meeting. That report will also seek to set out a brief position on each item, i.e. current policy framework description of services, objectives, targets and performance, relevance of any Best Value Review work undertaken or planned etc, so as to enable the Committee to select one or two key priority issues it wishes to scrutinise.

Equal Opportunities Implications

None.

Background Papers

Constitution of the County Council.

Report to Council on 10th January – Future Shape of Scrutiny.

APPENDIX 3A

<u>Item</u>	<u>Comment</u>
Education Premises Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools on split sites • Surplus Places • Temporary Accommodation • Security and Personal Safety 	It may be more appropriate to address these issues during the scrutiny of the Education Asset Management Plan (see Appendix B)
Teaching Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment of Teachers; • Strategies to support teachers (stress) 	Issues for possible consideration in a future work programme
The Arts in Education	Issue raised at ALLSC by Mr. E.F. White – Service is the subject of an internal staffing review – report to Committee when complete
Observance of Religious Worship	Not clear if this still remains an issue of concern. Information on this could be circulated via the Members' Information Service.

APPENDIX 3B**POTENTIAL ISSUES FOR THE EDUCATION AND
HERITAGE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****Best Value Reviews**

- Library Services for Education October 2001
- Special Education Needs Transport January 2002
- Youth and Community Education March 2002
- Specialist Teaching Service June 2002

Plans in the Policy Framework

- Annual Library Plan August 2001
- SEN Development Plan October 2001
(Annual Review and Update of a 3 year plan)
- Education Development Plan* December 2001
- Early Years Development and Childcare Plan January 2001
- Behaviour Support Plan Jan/Feb 2002
- Education Asset Management Plan October 2001
- Adult Learning Plan February 2002
{The Learning and Skills Council will determine the policy and strategy. The LEA Plan will be an (annual?) bid for resources}

- * **This Plan will include the Literacy and Numeracy Action Plans. The EDP will need to be agreed by the Council in January 2002 as it has to be submitted to the DES by the end of January. As this is a new 3 year Plan the Committee may wish to consider devoting the meeting in December for scrutiny of this Plan.**

Issues to be considered by the Cabinet (based on second Forward Plan)

- School Organisation Plan August 2001
- Education Capital Programme 2002 – 4 October 2001
In relation to Asset Management Planning
- Revenue Budget and Capital Programme January 2001

APPENDIX 4

Health and Social Care Work Programme

5. This Committee's predecessor, had identified the following two major areas for scrutiny by way of quarterly reports:-
- i) Implementation of the 'Quality Protects' Initiative. 'Quality Protects' is a initiative aimed at improving the life chances of children in care.
 - ii) Progress made in responding to the National Service Framework for Mental Health Services.

In addition to these the Committee received reports on a range of other matters. Appendix B to this report lists these together with potential issues that may appear on the agenda of this Committee. This is based on a brief analysis of the items included in the Executive's first Forward Plan, matters previously referred and major Plans that would require scrutiny.

6. Members will note that elsewhere on the agenda is the Action Plan arising from the Joint Inspection of Social Services undertaken by the Audit Commission and the Social Services Inspectorate. That together with the report on the outcome of the annual review of Leicestershire's performance against the Government's national priorities and targets for social care should provide the basis for identifying potential areas for scrutiny.

Conclusion

7. The Committee is asked to consider the issues raised in this report covering the role of Scrutiny and the factors to be taken into consideration in developing their work programme. Any issues raised during the debate or subsequently through the Chairman or Spokesmen, for possible inclusion in a work programme will be reported to the next meeting. That report will also seek to set out a brief position on each item, i.e. current policy framework description of services, objectives, targets and performance, relevance of any Best Value Review work undertaken or planned etc, so as to enable the Committee to select one or two key priority issues it wishes to scrutinise.

Equal Opportunities Implications

None.

Background Papers

Constitution of the County Council.

Report to Council on 10th January – Future Shape of Scrutiny.

APPENDIX 4A**MATTERS CONSIDERED BY THE BUILDING A HEALTHIER
COMMUNITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

- Quality Protects:-
 - Management Action Plans;
 - Corporate Parenting.

- Mental Health
 - Mental Health Services Review
 - Reform of the Mental Health Act
 - NSF Framework – Local Development Plan

- Early Years Development Plan
- Food Law Enforcement
- Tobacco Control Strategy
- Children and Young Persons Protection from Tobacco
- Road Safety Partnership
- Health Promotion Strategies
- Drug Action Plan;
- Performance Assessment Framework
- Health Act 1999 – Implications
- Proposed National Standards in Care Homes

The Committee also considered and made comments on the Administration's proposals in relation to the Revenue Budget and Capital Programme.

APPENDIX 4B**POTENTIAL ISSUES FOR THE HEALTH AND
SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****Best Value Reviews**

- Domiciliary Services August 2001
- Learning Disability Services April 2002
- Residential Services for Older People April 2002

Plans in the Policy Framework

- Sports and Recreation Strategy October/November
- Food Law Enforcement Plan October/November
- Children Services Plan*
- Community Care Plan*
- Quality Protects Management Action Plan* December/January

*** The need for and timescale for producing these Plans is currently being reviewed nationally and the timetable indicated is therefore provisional.**

Issues to be considered by the Cabinet (based on second Forward Plan)

- Children's Residential Services November/December
- Revenue Budget and Capital Programme January

Other Potential Issues

- Inspection Unit Annual Report together with the Chief Executive's assessment of the Unit September
- Annual Performance Assessment Framework December
- Joint Review – Monitoring reports on-going