

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 16 JUNE 2009

CHAIRMAN OF ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10

WARD(S) AFFECTED: all

'D' RECOMMENDATION - that this report be used as a basis for reviewing the current work programme and planning future scrutiny work of this committee

1.0 Purpose/Summary of Report

1.1 This report is intended to support the Environment Scrutiny Committee in planning its work programme for 2009/10.

2.0 Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/Objectives

2.1 In monitoring the performance of the council's services and action plans, the Committee is monitoring the Council's achievement of all of its corporate objectives.

2.2 Any additional issues identified for scrutiny will relate to at least one of the Council's corporate objectives.

2.3 Effective use of the scrutiny process contributes to the Council's ability to meet two core objectives:

Fit for purpose, services fit for you

Deliver customer focused services by maintaining and developing a well managed and publicly accountable organisation.

Leading the way, working together

Deliver responsible community leadership that engages with our partners and the public.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Items previously required or requested for the work programme during the last civic year are set out in Appendix A (Pages *).
- 3.2 Items from the scrutiny evaluation and planning sessions held in January and February 2009 have also been included.
- 3.3 Task and finish groups set up under the remit of Environment Scrutiny which are running over into the 2009/10 civic year are also given in Appendix A (Pages *), in the second table.

4.0 Report

- 4.1 The Integrated Budget and Service Planning timetable has now been agreed. This timetable has identified that the **Proposed Service Options** report (relevant to items/services falling under the remit of Environment Scrutiny) needs to come to the committee at the meeting on 1 December 2009.
- 4.2 As part of the Integrated Budget and Service Planning timetable, it was noted that an item on 'Review of Fees and Charges' needed to come to forward for scrutiny. At Council on 1 October 2008, Members agreed a new Fees and Charges Strategy and that all fees and charges needed to be reviewed in line with this policy by the end of September 2009. The report presented to Members at the Executive meeting on 6 January 2009 re-affirmed this position and set out the services that needed to undertake the reviews. The report can be found on the following link: [Fees and Charges 2009/10](#).
- 4.3 Community Scrutiny will be asked to take a similar report (covering fees and charges pertinent to their remit) on 21 July 2009 and Corporate Business Scrutiny will receive their review report on 25 August 2009. In line with the overall timetable, a '**Review of Fees and Charges**' report has been added to the Environment Scrutiny work programme for 15 September 2009 and it will cover fees and charges which fall under the remit of this committee. This is the last available meeting of Environment Scrutiny in order for the reviews to be presented to Executive on 13 October 2009.
- 4.4 Members of all scrutiny committees are invited to attend Corporate Business Scrutiny for two key Joint Scrutiny meetings at the start of 2010. These are also listed in Appendix A (Pages 9.5 - 9.6) to give members advance notice of these dates.

5.0 Consultation

5.1 Potential topics for scrutiny are always invited from members of the public, LSP partners, the Executive and all Members.

6.0 Legal Implications

6.1 According to the Council's constitution, the scrutiny committees are responsible for the setting of their own work programme in consultation with the Executive and in doing so they shall take into account wishes of members on that committee who are not members of the largest political group on the Council.

7.0 Financial Implications

7.1 Any additional meetings and every task and finish group has resource needs linked to officer support activity and time for officers from the services to make the required input.

8.0 Human Resource Implications

8.1 None

9.0 Risk Management Implications

9.1 Matters which may benefit from scrutiny may be overlooked. The selection of inappropriate topics for review would risk inefficient use of resources. Where this involved partners, it could risk damaging the reputation of the council and relations with partners.

Background Papers:

Four principles of good public scrutiny published by CfPS (Centre for Public Scrutiny)

East Herts Council own current guidelines for selecting issues for review.

Summary of the above attached as Appendix B (Pages 9.7)

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