

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 1 DECEMBER 2009

REPORT BY CHAIRMAN OF ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

9. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2009/10

WARD(S) AFFECTED: ALL

Purpose/Summary of Report

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

<u>'D' RECOMMENDATION that</u>	
(A)	the work programme detailed in this report be reviewed and agreed, and
(B)	the scrutiny officer be requested to make any changes, additions or arrangements as might be discussed in the meeting.

1.0 Background

1.1 Items previously required, identified or suggested for the work programme are set out in **Essential Reference Paper B** on pages 9.4 - 9.6.

2.0 Report

2.1 Following notification through a recent Members' Information Bulletin (MIB) article, Environment Scrutiny Committee is reminded that the start of the Corporate Business Scrutiny meetings on 19 January 2010 and 16 February 2010 will be run as formal Joint Scrutiny meetings. This is to allow Members of the other scrutiny committees have a full debate on the budget setting (January) and service plans (February) reports. There will be a separate agenda and a Chairman will be elected at the start of each Joint session.

2.2 Members are asked to note the dates for the ‘scrutiny evaluation’ and ‘topic planning’ workshops scheduled for early in the new year. These workshops are planned to take place prior to the start of Joint Scrutiny/CBS on 19 January and 16 February 2010 respectively. These sessions offer members an opportunity to shape the face of scrutiny in East Herts during the 2010/11 civic year. All scrutiny members are encouraged to come and contribute to the debate, although written evaluation forms will be available for those who are unable to attend on the evening.

3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper ‘A’** on page 9.3.

Background Papers

Four principles of good public scrutiny published by CfPS (Centre for Public Scrutiny) [click here for link to CfPS external site](#)

East Herts Council own current guidelines for selecting issues for review. A summary of this information is printed at the back of **Essential Reference Paper B** on pages 9.4 - 9.6.

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ESSENTIAL REFERENCE PAPER 'A'

<p>Contribution to the Council's Corporate Priorities/ Objectives</p>	<p>Effective use of the scrutiny process contributes to the Council's ability to meet two core objectives:</p> <p>Fit for purpose, services fit for you <i>Deliver customer focused services by maintaining and developing a well managed and publicly accountable organisation.</i></p> <p>Leading the way, working together <i>Deliver responsible community leadership that engages with our partners and the public.</i></p> <p>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.</p> <p>Any additional issues identified for scrutiny will relate to at least one of the Council's corporate objectives.</p>
<p>Consultation:</p>	<p>Potential topics for scrutiny are always invited from members of the public, the Executive and all Members.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>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.</p>
<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>none</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>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.</p>