

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 7 JUNE 2011

CHAIRMAN OF ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12

WARD(S) AFFECTED: None

Purpose/Summary of Report

- This report is intended to support the Environment Scrutiny Committee in reviewing and planning its work programme for 2011/12.

RECOMMENDATION FOR : Environment Scrutiny Committee

(A)	that the work programme shown in this report be reviewed and agreed,
(B)	that the scrutiny officer be asked 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**. This includes the Planning Enforcement task and finish group reporting back to the committee (at the September meeting) following a short review on the outcome of their recommendations after they have been in place for one year.

1.2 The full 2012/13 Integrated Service Plan and Budget (ISP) timetable has now been agreed.

2.0 Report

2.1 At the final meeting of Environment Scrutiny last year, members indicated their approval for the outline work programme, subject to confirmation of the ISP timetable. Some minor changes/additions have now been made to the work programme to meet certain ISP deadlines or actions.

- 2.2 As part of the ISP process, members are asked to consider the following documents attached to this report:
- **Essential Reference Paper C** is an extract from the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) with forward items under Environment Scrutiny remit tagged in green.
 - **Essential Reference Paper D** is an extract from the 2012/13 Capital Programme proposals with forward items under Environment Scrutiny remit tagged in green.
- 2.3 Members are asked to choose some specific issues (which fall under their Environment remit) from the MTFP and Capital Programme to review in more detail at the meeting of this committee on 13 September 2011. Members are asked to focus on 2012/13 financial year at this time.
- 2.4 At the final committee meeting of last year, members indicated an interest in reviewing the council's Environmental Crimes policies following changes to legislation. If the new committee confirms this review, the topic will be programmed into the work programme in line with the section's Service Plan.
- 2.5 Elsewhere on the agenda for this meeting, a report has been presented to members requesting a task and finish group be convened to contribute to the development of an East Herts Transport and Parking strategy.
- 2.6 In making any decision on choice of topics, members should bear in mind the selection criteria agreed at the recent evaluation/ planning workshops (as set out on the back page of Essential Reference Paper B) and be able to identify the impact, outcome and results expected to come from the scrutiny activity.
- 2.7 Both topics from para 2.4 and 2.5 above fully meet the selection criteria and are judged to be of high priority. Scrutiny resources can be earmarked to support both pieces of work if the members wish to proceed.
- 2.8 Members may wish to note that an article explaining scrutiny and asking for suggestions for review topics from residents did appear in the recent edition of LINK magazine. The only response to date related to 'potholes'. This was referred to the resident's county councillor and has now been resolved. Any further

responses arising from this consultation will be brought to the attention of the scrutiny chairmen and committees.

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'.

Background Papers

Four principles of good public scrutiny published by CfPS (Centre for Public Scrutiny) summarized in Essential Reference Paper B or [click here for link to CfPS external site](#)

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

A summary of this information is printed at the back of Essential Reference Paper B.

Contact Member: Councillor Diane Hollebon, Chairman: Environment Scrutiny Committee

Contact Officer: Ceri Pettit, Head of Strategic Direction (shared) and Performance Manager, Extn: 2240.

Report Author: Marian Langley, Scrutiny Officer, Extn: 1612.

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>