

<b>MEETING:</b>	<b>STRATEGIC MONITORING COMMITTEE</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>19 OCTOBER 2009</b>
<b>TITLE OF REPORT:</b>	<b>WORK PROGRAMMES</b>
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	<b>COMMITTEE MANAGER (SCRUTINY)</b>

**CLASSIFICATION:** Open

### **Wards Affected**

County-wide.

### **Purpose**

To consider the work programmes of the Scrutiny Committees.

### **Recommendation**

- THAT (a) the current Work Programmes serve as a basis for further development, subject to any comment the Committee wishes to make;**
- (b) the Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing Scrutiny Committee be requested to give priority to the scrutiny of housing related issues within its work programme, having regard to issues noted in appendix 1 to this report;**
- (c) the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee be requested to give priority to the scrutiny of safeguarding issues and youth issues (in conjunction with nominated Members of the Community Services Scrutiny Committee), having regard to issues noted in appendix 1 to this report.**
- (d) the Environment Scrutiny Committee be requested to give priority to Transport issues, having regard to issues noted in appendix 1 to this report; and**
- (e) this Committee give priority to Communication issues, having regard to issues noted in appendix 1 to this report; and**
- (f) that all Scrutiny Committees should re-examine their current work programmes to ensure that matters listed for future consideration remain appropriate subjects for scrutiny.**

## Introduction and Background

1. All Members of the Scrutiny Committees and the Executive were invited to attend a facilitated scrutiny event on the 8th September. This work was designed to address the recommendation in the external healthcheck of the scrutiny function, undertaken by the Leadership Centre, that there should be an enhanced external focus to the work programmes to capture the concerns of residents and communities of Herefordshire. After consideration of challenges facing the County and key issues identified from public consultation and surveys there was discussion of two questions: What are the issues that matter to the people of Herefordshire? and What are the issues that we (O&S) should be looking at? A list of topics was produced. A prioritisation exercise was then undertaken which produced the following top five priorities: Housing Related issues, Youth, Communication, Safeguarding and Transport. Further discussion took place at an informal Strategic Monitoring Committee meeting on the 21st September in order to refine the focus of work on these topics.
2. A summary of the current position and how it is proposed to take these matters forward is attached at appendix 1. It is essential that the work undertaken is focused and undertaken within an agreed timescale to ensure that it delivers outcomes in a timely manner that can be demonstrated to have a beneficial effect on affecting people's life-chances and quality of life. The appendix notes relevant findings from public consultation and surveys to which regard needs to be had. In progressing matters.
3. In recommending that these issues be given priority in the work programmes, regard also needs to be had to the recommendation of the external healthcheck that the Strategic Monitoring Committee and thematic Scrutiny Committees continue to review the business they regularly deal with and identify the strategic (internally facing) issues which are key to the Council's delivery of its corporate objectives and also concentrate on these. The work programmes will also need to retain the flexibility to enable the Scrutiny Committees to respond to significant issues that may arise.
4. A report on the work programmes of all Scrutiny Committees' will be made to this Committee quarterly. A copy of this Committee's own work programme will be made to each of its scheduled meetings. Copies of the current work programmes are attached as appendix 2
5. The Committee's programme may be modified by the Chairman following consultation with the Vice-Chairman and the Directors in response to changing circumstances.
6. Should any urgent, prominent or high profile issue arise, the Chairman may consider calling an additional meeting to consider that issue.
7. A number of possible issues for consideration have been logged for addition to the Committee's programme as it is further developed. The issues are listed at the foot of the programme.
8. The list of "other issues" that has appeared on this Committee's programme for some time has been reviewed and a number of items removed, having been overtaken by events or dealt with in another way. The draft work programme of the Health Scrutiny Committee has also been reviewed. It is proposed that all Scrutiny Committees should re-examine their current work programmes to ensure that matters listed for future consideration remain appropriate subjects for scrutiny,

having regard to the recommendations of the external evaluation.

9. Should Members become aware of any issues they consider may be added to the scrutiny programme they should contact the Democratic Services Officer to log the issue so that it may be taken into consideration when planning future agendas or when revising the work programme.

## **Background Papers**

- None identified.