

SCRUTINY ACTIVITY REPORT

Report By: Director of Corporate and Customer Services

Wards Affected

County-wide

Purpose

1. To consider the work being undertaken by the Scrutiny Committees.

Financial Implications

2. None

Background

3. This report summarises the matters considered by the Scrutiny Committees since the last report by this Committee to Council. It is intended to help keep Council aware of the work being undertaken.
4. The work of the Committees is analysed below as far as practicable under the following five roles for overview and scrutiny: holding the executive to account, best value reviews, policy development and review, external scrutiny, and improvement (performance management and review).

Summary

5. The Adult Social Care and Strategic Housing Scrutiny Committee met on 2nd December, 2005 and considered the following issues:

Theme	Reports
Holding the Executive to Account	
Best Value Reviews	
Policy Development and Review	Learning Disability Service. Homelessness Consultation Event – Outcome. Joint Team with Pension Service and Voluntary Sector.
External Scrutiny	
Improvement (Performance Management and Review)	Performance/Budget Monitoring 2005/6.
Other	

6. Attention is particularly drawn to the Homelessness Consultation Event held in October, 2005. This involved representatives from relevant agencies across the County and the Committee has made several recommendations as a result of this scrutiny event.

Further information on the subject of this report is available from Tim Brown Committee Manager (Scrutiny) on 01432 260239

7. The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee met on 16th December, 2005 and considered the following issues:

Theme	Reports
Holding the Executive to Account	Cabinet Member Briefing
Best Value Reviews	
Policy Development and Review	Integrating Services for Children and Young People in Herefordshire.
External Scrutiny	
Improvement (Performance Management and Review)	
Other	Review of Statutory and Co-opted Members on Children's Services Scrutiny Committee – Update. Committee Work Programme.

8. The Community Services Scrutiny Committee met on 14th December 2005, at 6.00 p.m. in the Town Hall, Hereford, and 11th January 2006, at 6.00 p.m. at the Green Dragon Hotel, Hereford (reconvened on Friday 13th January at 2.00 p.m. at Brockington), and considered the following issues:

Theme	Reports
Holding the Executive to Account	
Best Value Reviews	
Policy Development and Review	Overview of Heritage and Museum Services. Hereford City Centre Refurbishment. Tourism Development in Herefordshire. Adult & Community Services Directorate. St. Katherines Site – Update. Review of the Experiment to Pedestrianise Widemarsh Street, Hereford.
External Scrutiny	
Improvement (Performance Management and Review)	Performance Monitoring
Other	Work Programme

9. The meeting on 11th January considered the experiment to pedestrianise Widemarsh Street. The Committee heard evidence from a range of key groups. About 40 Members of the public also attended. The Committee reconvened on 13th January to debate the evidence heard and made recommendations to the Cabinet Member (Highways and Transportation).
10. The Scrutiny Review of The Courtyard Centre for the Arts is progressing. The scrutiny review of how to retain 18-35 year olds in the County is nearing completion.
11. The Environment Scrutiny Committee met on 24th October at the Shire Hall, Hereford and 5th December, 2005 and considered the following issues:

Theme	Reports
Holding the Executive to Account	
Best Value Reviews	
Policy Development and Review	

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External Scrutiny	
Improvement (Performance Management and Review)	Revenue Budget Monitoring. GEM Performance 2005/6 Half-Year Report. Development Control Performance
Other	Work Programme

12. The Health Scrutiny Committee met on 8th December, 2005 and considered the following issues:

Theme	Reports
Holding the Executive to Account	
Best Value Reviews	
Policy Development and Review	
External Scrutiny	Presentation by Hereford and Worcester NHS Ambulance Trust. Primary Care Trust Briefing. Review of Communications Review of GP Out of Hours Services.
Improvement (Performance Management and Review)	
Other	Scope for a Health Park in Herefordshire.

13. The meeting with the Ambulance Trust which was called to advise the Committee on options being considered to manage the Trust's financial situation is highlighted. The invitation had been prompted in part by reports in the press that the Trust was proposing to close/relocate the four existing ambulance stations at Bromyard, Kington, Ledbury and Ross-on-Wye. However, it also provided the Committee with the opportunity to receive its first formal report from the Ambulance Trust. It is considered that the meeting was of benefit both to the Committee and the Trust. A number of issues were identified which the Trust has been requested to address.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

- None