

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO EXECUTIVE SCRUTINY**

**5<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2008**

**REPORT OF TEAM LEADER-SCRUTINY**

**SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME-POSITION STATEMENT**

**SUMMARY**

Further to the last meeting, to consider the anticipated timescale of the scrutiny review of Taxis and to note the current position regarding the workload of all of the Select Committees with a view to determining, if necessary, the allocation of further review work in advance of the scheduled half yearly review of the overall Work Programme in September 2008.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. That the report be noted.
2. The views of the Committee be invited regarding those issues identified at paragraphs 6, 7 and 8 of the report regarding the allocation of the scrutiny workload.

**WORK PROGRAMME-PROGRESS**

1. Members will be aware from the Chairs Update reports included elsewhere on this agenda that good progress is being made by each of the seven Select Committees with regard to their current review work.
2. Should this progress be maintained, it is anticipated that the Select Committees will each complete their reviews as follows:-

<b>Committee</b>	Arts, Leis & Culture	Children & Young People	Corporate Policy & Adult Services	Environment	Housing & Community Safety	Health	Regeneration & Transport
<b>Completion Date</b>	Dec 08	Oct 08	Nov 08	Oct 08	Nov 08 (followed by review to commence re Neigh. Policing etc	Jan 09	Jan 09

3. It should be noted that the Environment Select Committee had now considered all evidence as part of its review of Customer First and had approved draft recommendations. All that remained therefore was for the final report to be considered by them at their next meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2008.

## EMERGING ISSUES

### Taxis

4. At the last meeting of this Committee, Members considered the benefits of a scrutiny review of taxis being undertaken in the near future of taxis; the topic having been prioritised within the Scrutiny Work Programme attached at **Appendix 1** with the topic pro forma outlined at **Appendix 2**. Members were advised that a review of taxi licensing policy and procedures was already underway by the Licensing Department in relation to practices, procedures and conditions relating to taxi drivers, vehicles and operators. Members felt that this review should be completed prior to a Scrutiny Review taking place, however, they would wish to be consulted on this process with a report back once the policy review was complete. It was felt that once the review was complete Members could then consider the allocation of a time limited Scrutiny Review to be undertaken by a Select Committee/Task Finish Group.
5. Officers have advised that the above policy and procedures review process can be completed in time for a report to be submitted to this Committee on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 2008; at which time the allocation of a specific scrutiny piece of work can be considered. Members requested at the last meeting that as part of the future Scrutiny Review Officers consider further training for taxi drivers to include history of town to promote tourism and further training on disability awareness.

### Area Partnerships & Support Arrangements

6. Members will note from **Appendix 1** that a scrutiny review of Area Partnerships and Support Arrangements is the next scrutiny topic in order of priority scheduled to be undertaken. The Assistant Chief Executive has advised that it would be advantageous to the Council to ensure that we know any financial implications arising from such a review prior to budget setting and any other implications ahead of service planning. This realistically requires scrutiny work being undertaken by November 2008. A copy of the review pro forma is included at **Appendix 3**. Given the existing Select Committee workload, the Assistant Chief Executive has suggested that this Committee may wish to consider asking relevant officers responsible for supporting Area Partnerships to compile appropriate evidence that may then be referred for consultation with a Select Committee in September, with a view to that Committee determining what further evidence it would require in order to be able to complete a short, perhaps one or two meeting based review.

### Animal Welfare/Dog Fouling

7. As observed at paragraph 3, the Environment Select Committee have effectively completed their review of Customer First and are keen to undertake further scrutiny work. The Work Programme at **Appendix 1** includes topics suggested by members of this Committee in February 2008 regarding a combined review of both the implications of the new legislation regarding the Animal Welfare Service and the Borough-wide issue of Dog Fouling. Pro forma details of each of these reviews is attached at **Appendix 4**.
8. At their last meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> July 2008, the Environment Select Committee expressed their desire to undertake such a review.

### Scrutiny Liaison Forum/Executive Scrutiny Committee-Half Yearly Review of Work Programme

9. A meeting of the Scrutiny Liaison Forum is scheduled for the 17<sup>th</sup> September 2008 to review the current Work Programme (Appendix 1) and establish whether the content of the programme is still reflective of the Council's priorities; and whether or not any other emerging issues have arisen. It is expected that new topics such as Motor Bike Nuisance and Homelessness will be added to the submission of topics for consideration by the Forum. In addition, the Council has recently been made aware of a White Paper produced by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) entitled 'Managing Radioactive

Waste Safely-A Framework for Implementing Geological Disposal', which effectively sets out the Government's framework for long term disposal of radioactive waste and invites expressions of interest from communities wishing to open up discussion (without commitment) on the possibility of hosting a geological facility at some point in the future. Members views are invited on whether a scrutiny review would add any value should they wish to respond to the Consultation Paper. A briefing note, with reference to the availability of the White Paper, is attached at **Appendix 5**.

10. Following the meeting of the Scrutiny Liaison Forum, this Committee will be invited to review and approve the Work Programme and consider the allocation of work topics to the Select Committees as and when their capacity allows.

## **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

11. There are no direct financial or legal implications arising from the report.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

12. The proposal is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

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Background Papers:

N/A

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Not Ward Specific