

COMMITTEE: REGENERATION AND
CITIZENSHIP SCRUTINY
LIFELONG LEARNING AND
SOCIAL INCLUSION
SCRUTINY
PERFORMANCE,
RESOURCES AND ASSETS
SCRUTINY
ENVIRONMENT AND NON
EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS
SCRUTINY

DATE: 4TH APRIL 2002, 11TH APRIL
2002, 18TH APRIL 2002, 25TH
APRIL 2002

SUBJECT: WORK PROGRAMME 2002/03

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF SCRUTINY

CONTACT OFFICER: GEOFF. BOCUTT 546073

IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL	<input type="checkbox"/>	COMMUNITY SAFETY	<input type="checkbox"/>
EQUALITIES	<input type="checkbox"/>	ENVIRONMENT	<input type="checkbox"/>
FINANCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/>	CONSULTATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/>
STAFFING	<input type="checkbox"/>	OTHER	<input type="checkbox"/>

WARDS AFFECTED: NONE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to advise the committees about the changes to the scrutiny process for next municipal year and to ask each committee to consider and formulate a work programme consistent with the new process.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

Each Committee is recommended to consider the report, to formulate a work programme and to agree their annual report for submission to the Scrutiny Board.

BACKGROUND

At their meeting on 20th December 2001 the Board met to review the experience of operating scrutiny for some eighteen months and to consider whether any changes should be made to the process. An open invitation had been issued to Members and senior officers and a number attended. The meeting was organised as a seminar and those present broke up into two groups to consider what had worked, what hadn't and what improvements should be made. The clear consensus was that a much more limited work programme focused on the 'big issues' and a more planned approach to the scrutiny of each topic would yield better results. The process is set out in the following table:

No.	Step	Activities
1	Scoping, planning, method, evidence, witnesses, stakeholders, publicity	Define the scope of the topic, identify all the aspects which need to be considered but exclude those which should not. Plan how the study is going to be carried out, decide what information is required and who should be called as witnesses to give evidence. Identify people and organisations who have an interest in the topic and should be invited/involved/consulted. Decide whether and how the work of the panel should be publicised. Plan the process for collecting evidence and interviewing witnesses (e.g. whole panel, individual Members etc.)
2	Evidence and information	Carry out the plan, site visits if appropriate, consult stakeholders to find out their views, collect information
3	Analyse the evidence/information	Identify any gaps in the evidence or information, follow up to fill the gaps, check any information or evidence which conflicts, identify common threads.
4	Reach conclusions and formulate recommendations	Conclusions should be based on the evidence and information. Consult stakeholders about the recommendations.
5	Report	Prepare and agree a report to the Executive/Council. The report should describe the work which has been done, summarise the evidence and information about the topic, justify the conclusions based on the evidence and argue the case for any recommendations.

In addition the Board decided that the process of appointing panels of three Members to oversee best value reviews should be continued.

Subsequently the Board has also decided that each scrutiny committee should be asked to nominate two Members of the committee to consider best value performance indicator statistics and, where appropriate, the relevance and effectiveness of the improvement plans designed to address performance issues. The full committee will then only be asked to consider performance indicators if the two Members feel that a performance issue is not being adequately addressed. Nevertheless it was felt that the information about performance indicators should go to all Members of the appropriate committee so that they would be kept fully informed and would be able to raise concerns if they had any.

REPORT

Following the decisions of the Board I undertook a wide-ranging consultation. This involved a letter to all Members of the Council that was copied to all Directors and Heads of Service with a suggestion that it be considered at their departmental management teams. I also wrote an article for the staff newsletter, LBC News, and placed an advertisement in the March issue of Luton Line. The results of the consultation have been incorporated as Members and Officers priorities in the following table which sets out the Council's vision, goals, priorities and the major projects that are in progress or about to start.

Ref.	Area	Topic	Cttee.
	Service Improvement	Top ten performance issues (BVPIs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The percentage of citizens satisfied with the overall service provided by the Council • The percentage of undisputed invoices paid within thirty days • The proportion of Council Tax collected • Vehicle crimes per 1,000 population • The percentage of household waste recycled/composted • The cost of waste collection per household • The percentage of planning applications determined within eight weeks • The gross weekly cost per child of children looked after by the authority • The proportion of pupils level 4 or higher in Key Stage two Maths • The cost per visit to public libraries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board • PR&A • PR&A • R&C • E&NE • E&NE • E&NE • LL&SI • LL&SI • L&SI
	Vision 2010 Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deprivation – to improve all wards and no ward to be amongst the 10% most deprived in England • Economic regeneration – employment levels to be above the average for the Eastern Region • Education – achievement at all levels to be above the national average • Crime – residents to feel less fear of crime than those of three quarters of similar urban areas • Environment – over 75% of people to be satisfied with their immediate environment • Health improvement – halve the gap between life expectancy of people in Luton and the rest of the country, eliminate the gap between the rates of deaths of babies in Luton and in the rest of the country • Transport – increase by 15% compared to 1999 the use of public transport to travel to the town centre 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> R&C R&C LL&SI R&C E&NE LL&SI E&NE

	Corporate objectives	<p>Community Leadership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working collaboratively with other key stakeholders to devise and deliver on a community strategy. <p>Best Value Authority</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing quality services which are of a high standard Receiving positive responses from external scrutineers Delivering best value for the benefit of local people in the context of our commitment to equalities Successfully implementing the modernising agenda Using ICT to improve efficiency and customer care Improving the level of customer satisfaction with our services <p>Best Managed Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reviewing the Council's approach to risk assessment and management Involving, developing and training our employees to maximise their potential and deliver quality services <p>Healthy Financial Position</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining a balanced budget and a prudent level of reserves Minimising costs whilst achieving desired quality outputs Targeting resources to agreed priorities <p>Promoting lifelong learning, education, inclusion and social care</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear improvement in the standard of services as reflected by the views of customers and Councillors and national performance benchmarking <p>Active partner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Being regarded as a positive partner by others Ensuring that we promote Luton's interests, working in partnership to regenerate the town and promote sustainable economic development Participating in partnership working at a regional and national level as well as locally 	<p>Board</p> <p>PR&A</p> <p>PR&A</p> <p>PR&A</p> <p>PR&A</p> <p>LL&SI</p> <p>R&C</p>
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	Priorities for 2002/03	Transforming customer service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree our approach following completion of best value review of customer services • Establish a medium term strategy and action plan for improved customer service and electronic service delivery • Re-direct council resources as appropriate • Communications Review - implement the recommendations 	PR&A
		Community Leadership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community strategy - published in may 2002 • Area committees <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree programme for further development of area committees • Establish clearer links with the strategy for community forums • Corporate impact of boundary changes - assess impact and prepare, for example in terms of research and intelligence functions, communication 	R&C
		Key Performance Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful outcome to the joint review of social services • Corporate and service planning results in effective prioritisation - tackling the really important things first • Respond to IDeA review with robust action plan • Make a success of best value reviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year two reviews to deliver step change • Outcome focus to all reviews • Enter at least one strategic partnership • Aim to be classified as "striving" by the audit commission corporate performance assessment • Manage performance/costs - focus on top ten worst performing performance indicators and identify actions to be taken. Use the BV core group • Reduce sickness absence 	LL&SI
			All
			All
			All
			Board
			All
		Improving Educational Achievement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful OfStEd re-inspection • PFI for schools (as part of this establish a corporate team - officers and members - to oversee all elements of the project) • Clarity and delivery of sports and arts in schools • Deliver Excellence in Cities programme 	PR&A
			LL&SI

		<p>Regeneration and Transport</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New swimming pool negotiations well under way and contract signed • Delivery of regeneration projects and full take up of allocations • Dallow and High Town community centres - effective progress • Agreeing development plan for the Vauxhall site • Housing - delivery of the repairs, new windows and Ashcroft re-cladding programme • Successful Transport and Works Act submission for Translink • Completing inner ring road phase 1 • Progressing Eastern Corridor design and approval process • Develop a quality bus partnership with public transport providers • Town centre gateway project, reaching agreement on the station redevelopment project • Vision and strategy for dealing with the housing needs (this could feed into a strategic discussion with go east) • Establish and begin to deliver long term strategy for the Artezium arts centre • Progress joint venture with University of Luton <p>Balanced Budget and medium term financial plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementing decisions as a result of budget setting for 2002/03 • Managing all budgets to ensure that they perform to the agreed levels - managers work to the cash limits established • Redirecting resources to Council priorities • Trust option for leisure/culture - complete scrutiny review and agree way forward • Corporate approach to property and assets • Arndale Market - successful completion of tendering with new partners making progress on delivering investment 	<p>R&C</p> <p>R&C</p> <p>R&C</p> <p>R&C</p> <p>LL&SI</p> <p>E&NE</p> <p>E&NE</p> <p>E&NE</p> <p>E&NE</p> <p>HP</p> <p>R&C</p> <p>PR&A</p> <p>PR&A</p> <p>LP</p>
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Major Projects/Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OfStEd themed inspection • SSI review • IDeA review – response • Comprehensive Performance Assessment • PFI for schools • Excellence in Cities • New Deal for Communities • Vision/strategy for addressing housing needs • Delivering the balanced budget • Customer Service Delivery • Communications review – implementation • Youth and Community Education restructure • Airport Concession • Eastern Corridor • Inner Ring Road completion Ph.1&2 • Inward Investment/Employment • Football Ground • Translink • Local Plan • University Quarter development • Leisure facilities – funding, operation and management • Railway Station redevelopment • Swimming Pool • Artezium 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LL&SI • LL&SI • Board • Board • LL&SI • LL&SI • R&C • HP • PR&A • PR&A • PR&A • LL&SI • PR&A • E&NE • E&NE • R&C • PR&A • E&NE • E&NE • PR&A • LP • E&NE • R&C • R&C
The Big Issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traffic congestion • Clean Streets • Safe Streets • School Exam Results • Care for the Elderly • Housing for local people • Jobs for local people • Poverty/prosperity • Access and equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E&NE • E&NE • R&C • LL&SI • LL&SI • HP • R&C • R&C • Board
Members' and officers' Priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Airport – environmental aspects • Bus Services • Clean Streets • Traffic and parking • Public Transport • Parking • Congestion • Safety on the roads – speeding • Community safety • Major road schemes – consultation • School Admissions • Allocation of social housing • Frail elders accommodation strategy • Warden services • Equipment and adaptations services • Projects with time limited funding – exit strategies or continuation funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E&NE • E&NE • E&NE • E&NE • E&NE • E&NE • E&NE • E&NE • R&C • E&NE • LL&SI • HP • LL&SI • R&C • LL&SI • R&C

There is inevitably some duplication in this lengthy list and there are a number of topics that have aspects which come within the remit of more than one scrutiny committee. If a topic is chosen which crosses committee boundaries there are a number of ways this can be dealt with as follows:

- Each committee could deal just with the aspects which come within their remit
- One of the committees could take the lead, with the other committee(s) delegating responsibility for the aspects which come within their remit to the lead committee
- The committees could meet together to scrutinise the topic
- A panel of scrutiny Members could be formed with the sole purpose of scrutinising the topic; the panel could include Members of the committees with an interest in the topic under scrutiny.

There are three panels working on topics at present as follows

- The Housing Panel – originally established by LL&SI and R&C to examine the options and opportunities presented in the Housing Green Paper but subsequently with a wider remit to look at the allocation of social housing and the mismatch between predicted supply and demand of all types and tenures of housing. The Executive reconstituted this panel so that Executive Members could be included; therefore, technically, it is not a scrutiny panel.
- The Community Cohesion Panel – established by LL&SI and R&C committees and including Members from those committees and the Board with a remit initially to look at the relevance and applicability to Luton of the report on Bradford by Lord Ouseley but extended to encompass all issues of race and religion.
- The Leisure Panel – established by the Board with Members of R&C, LL&SI and the Board to look at the proposal to establish a trust or trusts to improve, manage and operate the Council's leisure facilities; the remit has been broadened to include the consideration of other potential models of management and operation.

There is clearly a limit to the capacity of both Members and officers to support the work of panels in addition to scrutiny committees so it is suggested that if cross cutting or overlapping topics are chosen these are 'counted' against the work programme of one of the committees.

There are some outstanding issues where committees have asked for further reports or periodic reports on progress and these will be fitted into the work programme at a later stage.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR COMMITTEES

The Board, at their next meeting, will be asked to give further consideration to the arrangements for and the remits of the scrutiny committees and the committees are asked to consider the present arrangements and how they have worked and whether any improvements could or should be made. This may arise from the consideration of the work programme if Members want more topics included than can realistically be accommodated within the existing committee structure.

ANNUAL REPORTS

The Council's constitution requires that once a year each of the scrutiny committees reports to the Board and the Board reports to the Council. Attached (or to follow) is the draft report of this committee which has been prepared in consultation with the Chair and is submitted for consideration prior to submission to the Board.

PROPOSAL/OPTIONS

The committee is asked to consider which topics represent the 'big issues' within their remit and to select three or four in priority order for inclusion in the work programme for next municipal year so that the Board can consider the whole programme. The ability to deliver the suggested work programmes will need to be considered by the Board and a prioritised list of proposed topics will make this easier.

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D

Best Value Performance Plan and Corporate Plan 2002/03