



To
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date 6th February 2008

Subject
Update on Scrutiny Board 3 (City Development, City Services, Climate Change, Sustainability & Housing) Work Programme

1 Purpose of the Briefing Note

- 1.1 To inform Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee as to the progress of the Scrutiny Board 3 Work Programme.

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is recommended to note the Briefing Note and discuss with the Board's Chair any issues arising as appropriate.

3 Background / Information

- 3.1 During October, November and December the Board held three formal Board meetings and continued to progress their published work programme.

The Board considered the following issues during this period:

4 Waste Strategy / Recycling

- 4.1 The Board has a major work programme item regarding the developing Waste Strategy and in October they considered the current progress on recycling. Also Members considered a Government consultation paper "Recycling on the Go" and added comments to the Council's response.
- 4.2 The Board has recently visited the Marchwood Energy Recovery Facility in Hampshire, as an example of a modern incinerator/ waste to energy plant following a visit to the London Road site last year.

5 Urban Traffic Management Centre (UTMC)

- 5.1 The Board received the Cabinet Report on UTMC and have been kept fully informed of City Services various plans to respond to and take up the powers of the Highways Act.

The Board made comments to Cabinet regarding clearly communicating with drivers about the enforcement of bus lanes.

6 Pest Control Services

- 6.1 Following changes in the way customers have utilised the Council's pest control services officers have recommended re-configuring these services to make them more customer focused. The Board supported these changes and requested further information regarding ward-based statistics.

7 Road Safety / Camera Safety Partnership

- 7.1 The Board requested City Services officers to present information regarding the current levels of road accidents in the City. The Board found that there is a very low level of personal injury accidents and that the current policies for developing road safety improvements were working well.
- 7.2 Recent changes to the Camera Safety Partnership have meant that the City Council now has more control over the placement of safety cameras and that more of the funding available from Government is being controlled locally also.

8 Burges and Ironmonger Row

- 8.1 The Board has an historic interest in the proposed developments of this site into new public spaces and in November officers reported on the proposals to implement a phased redevelopment of the site. These included a new public square and enhanced facilities for shoppers.
- 8.2 Members expressed concerns to Cabinet about their concerns that some vehicular access to Burges is still included in the proposals. The Board felt that the development would benefit from being completely traffic free in order to stimulate a more attractive shopping environment and more successful nighttime economy.

9 City Services / Contact Centre

- 9.1 Following consideration of the Cabinet Member (City Services) CMSP the Board has investigated the flow of enquiries through the contact centre. Officers have presented various statistics and trend data that shows that early concerns about reports of City Services issues being reported to the Directorate have now been addressed. The Board requested further information regarding the various types of ways the public contact the Council.

10 Homelessness

- 10.1 As part of the scrutiny of the Climate Change, Sustainability and Housing portfolio the Board included in its work programme consideration of the Council's homelessness services. The Board received a presentation from the Head of Housing Policy on the current levels of homelessness in Coventry and preparations in the event of significant rises in the numbers of homelessness.
- 10.2 The Council is currently conducting a benchmarking exercise with the other West Midlands Districts and the Board have requested to receive the results of this study when it is completed.

11 City Development Recruitment

- 11.1 Following a referral from SB1 the Board requested City Development officers to report on any recruitment difficulties in the Directorate. This followed comments explaining an under-spend in a budget monitoring report. Officers explained that difficulties persisted in certain specialist posts and outlined the actions which were being followed to resolve these difficulties. The Board was satisfied that all that was possible was being done to address the situation.

12 Future Work Programme Items

- 12.1 The Board have a meeting planned in January, which includes discussions on current proposals for Masterplanning in the City, along with a presentation on the Economic Development Strategy and a number of Government consultations.
- 12.2 The Board have identified the development of the Parking strategy as an item for scrutiny, along with further consideration of the Waste Strategy and Grass Verge Parking policy.

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