
To
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date: 16 April 2008

Subject: Scrutiny Chairs Quarterly Reports – Scrutiny Board 3

1 Purpose of the Note

To inform Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee of the activity, recommendations and outcomes of the work of Scrutiny Board 3 (City Development, City Services, Climate Change, Sustainability and Housing) in the period January 2008 to April 2008.

2 Recommendations

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is recommended to note this information and consider any further action.

3 Information/Background

Activity

The Scrutiny Board was involved in consideration of the following issues:

- Cabinet Member Strategic Plans
- City Centre Masterplanning
- City Centre Director and Assistant Director q & a
- Consultation on a new Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development.
- Economic Development Strategy
- City Services / Contact Centre issues
- Consultation on Licensing Act Simplification Process
- Consultation on Streamlining Local Development Frameworks (LDF)
- Feedback on the completion of the IKEA development
- Verge Maintenance and Verge Parking Review
- Air Quality Management
- Car Parking Strategy Review
- School Travel Plans / Highway Safety Outside Primary Schools
- Coventry Solihull and Warwickshire Waste Partnership – Expression of Interest for Private Finance Initiative Credits & Extension of Waste Disposal Contract.
- Climate Change Strategy

The Board's April meeting was due to consider a number of issues including the Highway Maintenance Programme, Empty Homes Strategy and further information on benchmarking homelessness costs. Unfortunately due to the restrictions on activities during the election period this meeting was cancelled.

Recommendations made:

- The Board received a presentation on the current Masterplanning exercise being undertaken in association with the Jerde Partnership. The Board was impressed with the work undertaken so far and as well as requesting modifications to the presentation the Board has asked for a report on the recent consultation when this has been completed.
- The Economic Development Strategy was amended to include emphasis on "quality jobs" rather than simply "jobs".
- The Board recommended "option 3" in consideration of a scheme to introduce a simplification process to the recent Licensing Act. This would allow the City Council to retain the maximum control via the local licensing policy.
- In considering the draft response to the proposal to streamline LDFs the Board requested officers produce a briefing note for all Members to outline the current position regarding the City Council's work in this area (to include the Regional Spatial Strategy and Core Strategy).
- In considering the Cabinet Member City Services Cabinet Member Plan Review the Board requested further information on a number of topics including the Highways Streetlighting PFI, Parking Enforcement, Whitefriars Housing and current levels of fly tipping.
- The Board has recommended to the Leader of the Council that consideration be given to concentrating the Council's various environmental enforcement powers within the City Services portfolio.
- The Board has been closely involved in the Council's work in supporting the opening of the new IKEA store. Following a short report on the completion of this project a vote of thanks for all officers involved was passed.
- Following consideration of work undertaken in the Highways Department of City Services the Board agreed to establish a task and finish group to examine the Council's policy on grass verge parking and to develop new policy. Officers were also requested to investigate some factual information regarding the context of the issue.
- The Board has agreed to be a sounding board for further developments in the review of the City's Parking Strategy and further information is anticipated early in the new civic year.
- Following an earlier investigation into current highway safety issues in the City the Board has requested that an audit be conducted of the safety of the entrances and approaches to all City Primary Schools.
- Before the Outline Business Case for PFI credits to replace the Waste to Energy Plant is concluded the Board has resolved to hold a special meeting considering the feedback from consultation and an analysis of the various options open to the Council in final disposal of the domestic waste stream.

Outcomes achieved:

- The audit of road safety around Primary Schools will assist in protecting local children by the prioritisation of appropriate safety measures.
- The Council's Waste Strategy continues to be developed sensitively and with the benefit of advice and guidance from the Scrutiny Board.

- In a busy period of consultation and policy review the Board have assisted officers in the relevant departments in developing responses and in the development of policy in the City.
- Following consideration of revisions to the adoption of enforcement powers under the Traffic Management Act (introduced to reduce road congestion and disruption), the Board has agreed to a full review of the implementation of this Act in the summer.

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4th April 2008