



Coventry City Council

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Briefing note

To
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

22nd July, 2009

Subject
Scrutiny Development 2009/2010 – Action Plan

1 Purpose of the Note

To provide the Committee with the proposed Scrutiny Development Action Plan for 2009/2010 (attached as the Appendix to this note).

2 Recommendations

The Committee is requested:-

- a) to consider whether there are any further issues which should be included in the 2009/2010 Action Plan.
- b) to approve the Action Plan, including any additions identified.

3 Information/Background

- 3.1 At its informal meeting on 16th April, 2009, the Committee noted the progress which had been made on the issues included in the 2008/09 Action Plan. It also noted that action was still needed on some issues and that these would be included in the 2009/2010 Action Plan.
- 3.2 That Action Plan is now attached. It includes the issues from last year's Action Plan and one new issue (issue 8 – Call-in Procedure).
- 3.3 The Committee is asked to consider whether there are any further issues which should be included in the 2009/2010 Action Plan.

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Scrutiny Development: Issues and Actions for 2009/2010 Municipal Year

APPENDIX

Vision for Scrutiny: Scrutiny's role is to agree high-quality, relevant recommendations, that are supported by the Executive and partners and lead to measurable service improvements and/or tangible benefits for Coventry residents that would not otherwise have been achieved.

The Issue	Possible Action	Lead Members /Officers	Timescale
<p>1. Planning and Preparing for Scrutiny work/meetings To make the best use of time, proper preparation needs to be carried out. Being clear about the purpose of the piece of work being done and making sure that the right information is prepared is particularly important.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be more rigorous in applying a structured approach for dealing with Scrutiny work streams (a framework for each piece of work that sets out purpose, expected outcomes etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chairs/ Scrutiny Co-ordinators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throughout the year
<p>2. Improving time spent on Scrutiny activity/ in meetings Scrutiny does most of its work through committee style meetings. There are other ways of working that could help make the best use of time and achieve the best outcomes. When a piece of work is being planned we should consider the most appropriate way of working to achieve the outcome.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be more rigorous in considering the best methods of addressing issues – formal meetings, time limited groups, site visits, engagement of experts/service users/members of the public, use of public and private meetings etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Chairs/ Scrutiny Co-ordinators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throughout year

The Issue	Possible Action	Lead Members/Officers	Timescale
<p>3. Improving support, training and development to everyone involved in Scrutiny Lots of people from Members, officers, partner organisations and members of the public get involved in Scrutiny. To help make sure that everyone contributes effectively and gets the most out of the experience, we need to provide a range of development and support activities.</p>	<p>Develop Scrutiny Training and Development Plan. To include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review input to officer induction Review input to Democratic Process training in Corporate Training Plan Review Scrutiny content in Member 1-1's 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance and Scrutiny Manager Performance and Scrutiny Manager Performance and Scrutiny Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within 12 months Within 12 months Within 12 months
<p>4. Encouraging more people to get involved in Scrutiny If Scrutiny is to have a bigger impact on service users and local residents, we need to increase the opportunities for them to engage with the process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use information from the Household Survey and other consultation evidence to shape scrutiny work programme and activity Use information from Member casework, Ward Forums, Neighbourhood Management etc. to shape Scrutiny work Whenever relevant, invite members of the public/special interest groups to take part in Scrutiny meetings e.g. by giving information and explaining their views and experiences Involve experts on relevant issues to help inform Scrutiny activity and support decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny Co-ordinator Scrutiny Co-ordinator Chair/ Scrutiny Co-ordinator Chair/ Scrutiny Co-ordinator 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Throughout year Throughout year Throughout year Throughout year

The Issue	Possible Action	Lead Member/Officer	Timescale
<p>5. Measure the Effectiveness of Scrutiny To help review how much Scrutiny is achieving its objective and to ensure that it is continuously improving, Scrutiny needs its own evaluation process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop mechanisms/criteria for measuring the effectiveness of Scrutiny • Introduce/reintroduce a tracking system for recommendations made by Scrutiny and how they are dealt with (links with issue 7.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance and Scrutiny Manager • Performance and Scrutiny Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By December 2009 • By December 2009
<p>6. Communication Planning and improving communications about Scrutiny will help address all of the issues identified above.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a communications plan for Scrutiny (particularly focussing on good practice and positive outcomes) that targets key stakeholders including Elected Members, officers, partners organisations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance and Scrutiny Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By April 2010
The Issue	Possible Action	Lead Member/Officer	Timescale
<p>7. Implementing requirements of recent and forthcoming legislation (LGPIH, Police and Justice Acts, Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill Making sure arrangements are in place to meet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the requirement for Executives to respond to Overview and Scrutiny reports; • the requirement for some external partners to supply information to Overview and Scrutiny Committees, and for those partners involved in delivering Local Area Agreement Targets to have regard to the report or recommendations produced by those committees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and agree process (links with issue 5) • Identify and agree process when guidance is published 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance and Scrutiny Manager • Performance and Scrutiny Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dependant on government timetable • Dependant on government timetable

The Issue	Possible Action	Lead Member/Officer	Timescale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the provision for individual councillors to place items on the agendas of Overview and Scrutiny Committees ("Councillor Call for Action") the provision for a designated Crime and Disorder Committee (Scrutiny Board 1) to scrutinise the Coventry Community Safety Partnership The requirement to establish a petitions procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate pilot arrangements approved in April 2009 and decide how to progress further Identify and agree how this might best be done Identify and agree process when guidance is published 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance and Scrutiny Manager Performance and Scrutiny Manager Performance and Scrutiny Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By November/December 2010 By September 2009 Dependant on government timetable
8. Call-in Procedure (new issue) Propose revisions to reflect recent developments and ensure that all relevant information can be provided for Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise form to require more explicit reasons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance and Scrutiny Manager /Head of Democratic Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By June 2009
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Propose relevant changes to the Constitution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Performance and Scrutiny Manager /Head of Democratic Services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> By October 2010