

**To**

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

14<sup>th</sup> October, 2009

**Subject**

Scrutiny Chairs' Progress Reports - Scrutiny Board 1 (Finance and Value for Money/Customer, Workforce and Legal Services/Neighbourhoods and Community Safety)

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### 1 Purpose of the Note

To inform the Committee of the work of Scrutiny Board 1 during the period June to September 2009, together with the outcomes of this work.

### 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the information contained in this briefing note and to consider any further action.

### 3 Information/Background

#### 3.1 Activity

- 3.1.1 There have been 5 meetings of the Board during this period, one of which (in May) was an informal meeting to consider which items might be included in the Board's work programme for the year. After the formal meeting in June, the Board held another informal meeting, when Members discussed points relating to the delivery of the Members' Support Service and requested a further report on this.

- 3.1.2 Issues considered by the Board during this period were as follows:-

- Update on progress with ICT Strategy and ICT Programme
- Nurse-led sickness reporting pilot – update
- Scrutiny Board 1 – new remit (Community Safety)
- Consultation on the policy proposals for the specific duties in the Equality Bill
- Customer Services Strategy – Scoping Paper
- Update on the Annual Performance of the Benefits Section
- Council Tax collection
- Sickness absence – 2008/2009 outturn
- Annual report of the Audit Sub-Group as the Council's Audit Committee

#### 3.2 Recommendations

- 3.2.1 The Board made no recommendations during this period.

#### 3.3 Outcomes

### 3.3.1 **Further reports** – the Board asked for further reports on the following:

Update on Progress with ICT Strategy and ICT Programme (in September/October 2009)  
Nurse-led sickness reporting (at an appropriate time in the future, when further progress has been made)  
Update on the Annual Performance of the Benefits Section (in November 2009)  
Council Tax collection (in November 2009)

**Scrutiny Board 1 – new remit** - the Board decided to arrange a meeting with representatives of the "responsible authorities" on the Coventry Community Safety Partnership to hear their perspectives on the Partnership, how it adds value to their areas of work and how they ensure that the priorities agreed by the Partnership are implemented within their organisations.

**Customer Services Strategy** – the Board established a task and finish group to consider the development of the Customer Services Strategy.

**Consultation on the policy proposals for the specific duties in the Equality Bill** – the Board supported the proposed response to this consultation.

### 3.3.2 **Reports noted by the Board:**

Sickness absence – 2008/2009 outturn (the Board had already decided to continue to meet Heads of Service whose staff had high levels of sickness absence)  
Annual report of the Audit Sub-Group as the Council's Audit Committee (this was the last such report, as the Council has now established a "stand alone" Audit Committee)

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**To**

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

14<sup>th</sup> October, 2009

**Subject**

Scrutiny Chairs' Progress Reports - Scrutiny Board 2 (Children, Learning & Young People, Culture, Leisure & Libraries)

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## 1 Purpose of the Note

To inform the Committee of the work of Scrutiny Board 2 during the period June to September 2009, together with the outcomes of this work.

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the information contained in this briefing note and to consider a no further action.

## 3 Information/Background

### 3.1 Activity

- 3.1.1 There have been 4 meetings of the Board during this period, one of which (June 3rd) was an informal meeting to consider which items might be included in the Board's work programme for the year. As part of the work programme the Board have resolved to undertake a number of visits, and during July and August visited the three Integrated Neighbourhood Teams and the referral and Assessment Service.

- 3.1.2 Issues considered by the Board during this period were as follows:-

- Progress on the transfer of LSC planning and funding responsibilities for 16-19 provision
- Looked After Children Education Service
- Domestic Violence and the Impact on Young People
- Primary Curriculum Revisions / The Rose Review
- Report Back on the Visits to Integrated Neighbourhood Teams/Referral and Assessment Service

### 3.2 Recommendations

- 3.2.1 The Board made no recommendations to Cabinet during this period, however the Chair did write to the Council's Management Board to raise the issue of Work-Based Training opportunities and Apprenticeships available within the City Council.

### 3.3 **Outcomes**

#### 3.3.1 **Further reports** – the Board asked for further reports on the following:

- Developments in the transfer of responsibilities from the LSC funding and planning responsibilities for 16-19, to include specific information about developing apprenticeships.
- Plans by the City Council to play its part in the need to increase training places for 16-19 year old in the City.
- The development and quality of Personal Education Plans for all Looked After Children
- Update on the Annual Performance of the Benefits Section (in November 2009)
- Council Tax collection (in November 2009)

**Scrutiny Board 2 – new remit** - the Board has recently had added to its remit the Culture, Leisure and Libraries Portfolio. The next meeting of the Board will focus on an introduction to this portfolio and a session with the Cultural Partnership (part of the Coventry Partnership).

**Childrens Social Care Services** – following the visits to the front-line social work teams a briefing note was compiled listing issues for future discussion and improvement. The Board was pleased to note that a number of issues had been resolved by managers following the visits, most notably the availability of mobile phones for social workers undertaking visits; the issue of arrangements for supervising contacts is also under active review.

**"Respect Yourself Strategy" / Teenage Pregnancy** – the Board sponsored a joint seminar with Scrutiny Board 4 on this important area of work, a second seminar is planned for November 20<sup>th</sup>. There are plans to formally consider the progress of this Strategy by the Scrutiny Board early in the New Year.

**Engagement by Young People** – in consideration of the issues around Personal Education Plans (PEPs) and the Looked After Children Education Service (LACES) the Board was pleased to include in its discussion a number of recent care leavers who were able to pass on their experiences and observations of the effectiveness of PEPs to them.

#### 3.3.2 **Reports noted by the Board:**

**Domestic Violence and the Impact on Young People** - this report updated Members on joint work between the City Council and West Midlands Police in screening notifications of DVA and ensuring appropriate follow up by social workers.

**Primary Curriculum Revisions / The Rose Review** - this report was supported by two of the City's Primary Heads who advised the Board of work they had been involved in both locally and nationally in developing more integrated thematic primary curriculum.

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**To**  
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

14<sup>th</sup> October 2009

**Subject**

Scrutiny Chairs' Progress Reports - Scrutiny Board 3 (City Development, City Services, Climate Change, Housing & Sustainability)

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**1 Purpose of the Note**

- 1.1 To inform the Committee of the work of Scrutiny Board 3 during the period June 2009 to September 2009, together with the recommendations and other outcomes of this work.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the information contained in this briefing note and to consider any further action.

**3 Information/Background**

**3.1 Activity**

The Board held 4 meetings during this period:  
24/06/2009; 22/07/2009; 02/09/2009; 30/09/2009.

Issues considered by the Board over the period were as follows:-

Coventry's Core Strategy  
Ironmonger Square  
Asset Management - Development of a Community Asset Transfer Policy  
Hearsall Common - Response to Petition to Voluntarily Register Hearsall Common as a Village Green  
Carbon Management Plan  
Local Area Agreement – Scrutiny of net additional homes and affordable housing targets  
Coventry Homefinder – the Choice Based Lettings System in Coventry  
Homelessness  
Reports Back on Conferences/Seminars – Know Cities Project Meeting/Conference of Atlantic Arc Cities AGM

**3.2 Recommendations**

**Core Strategy** - The Board held a single issue meeting on the Core Strategy at which they considered the proposed amendments, prior to its submission to Government. They advised Cabinet of their views accordingly, and proposed two minor amendments, which Cabinet agreed to.

**Ironmonger Square** - The Board received a presentation on the revised plans for Ironmonger Square. The Board made a recommendation to Cabinet that publicity be produced for the people of Coventry to explain the structural difficulties that have resulted in the delays to the project. They also asked Cabinet to consider the implications of the revised scheme and the safety of pedestrian access from West Orchards to the new square. The Board also recommended that consideration should be given to the enforcement of vehicle access to the new square. Cabinet noted Scrutiny Board 3's recommendations.

**Hearsall Common** - The Board considered the response to the petition to voluntarily register Hearsall Common as a village green and recommended to Cabinet that the public be informed that the Core Strategy contains no proposals to develop Hearsall Common. The Cabinet used this as a prompt to reiterate their commitment to ensuring there would be no development on Hearsall Common.

### 3.3 *Outcomes*

**Core Strategy** - The Board fed into the Core Strategy before it went out to public consultation and welcomed the opportunity to comment on the amendments which arose as a result of feedback from consultees, prior to the final submission to Government. We are awaiting the outcome of the government inspector's findings.

**Ironmonger Square** - The Board have been involved with the Ironmonger Square plans since their inception and welcomed the opportunity to comment on the revised plans. The Board also held a single issue meeting which gave them the opportunity to gather lessons learnt from the project and bring closure to the project. The Board asked for a visit to the undercroft, which they had, to allow them to see the structural concerns and understand how the structural solution will ensure the safety of Coventry's residents. The press were also invited to visit and led to a two page spread in the local paper showing the structural issues.

**Community Asset Transfer Policy** - The Board asked in April to be involved in the development of a Community Asset Transfer Policy. Officers brought to the Board an outline of the initial plans, and the Board gave them a steer on how they thought the policy should be developed. The developing policy will be brought back to the Board at an appropriate stage.

**Hearsall Common** - The Board agreed with officers' recommendations to the Cabinet Member regarding their response to the petition to voluntarily register Hearsall Common as a village green. They made comment that those who had raised and signed the petition might feel more confident in the decision not to support the application if they were aware of the Core Strategy and that Hearsall Common was not included in it as a site for development.

**Carbon Management Plan** - The Board were interested in the Carbon Management Plan and supportive of the work undertaken to date. This is an area where they would like an update as the projects in the Plan are undertaken, to see how outcomes are being achieved against the projected aims.

**Local Area Agreement** - The Board received an overview of Local Area Agreement targets, and selected two to look at in more detail. National Indicators (NI 154 Net Additional Homes Provided and NI 155 Number of Affordable Homes delivered) were selected due to the current economic climate and to enable the Board to look at the impact of this on achieving targets. Figures for cities of a comparative size were requested, and these will be available at the end of the year. Details of the Planning Delivery grant will be circulated to all Members when the information is available.

**Coventry Homefinder** - A review of Coventry Homefinder, a year after it was introduced, had been undertaken and the Board asked for an update on the system. Partners from Whitefriars Housing and the Wood End Advice and Information Centre (WEAIC) attended to give an external perspective. Members asked a number of questions and for the Director of Community Services to circulate details on the number of social housing stock to the Board.

**Homelessness** - The Board investigated Homelessness. A representative from Mediation & Parenting Support attend to give views on the prevention of homelessness. The Board were satisfied that the situation in Coventry was not as severe as many had expected given the current economic climate.

**Pot Holes** - The Board were also given the opportunity to observe the Nu-Phalt road repair system in action to enable them to see how new technology can be used to repair pot holes. This gave Members a better understanding of the work involved. The visit was opened up to all Members of the Council to maximise involvement, which resulted in a good turn out for the demonstration.

**English Heritage** – Following the Grade II listing of Coventry Market, the Chair visited English Heritage to gain a better understanding of the listing process and the implications for the Market. As a result, English Heritage agreed to part-fund a feasibility study on the market. They also stressed that they wanted to build on the existing good working relationships with Coventry City Council to produce a thriving city centre which was sympathetic to its post war architecture.

#### **Briefing Note Author / Contact for Further Information**

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**To**

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

14<sup>th</sup> October, 2009

**Subject**

Scrutiny Chairs' Progress Reports - Scrutiny Board 4 (Community Services, Health (Policy and Inequality))

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**1 Purpose of the Note**

To inform the Committee of the work of Scrutiny Board 4 during the period June to September 2009, together with the outcomes of this work.

**2 Recommendations**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the information contained in this briefing note and to consider any further action.

**3 Information/Background**

**3.1 Activity**

3.1.1 There have been 4 meetings of the Board during this period, one of which (June 3rd) was a short formal meeting with an informal meeting following to consider which items might be included in the Board's work programme for the year. As part of the work programme the Board resolved to undertake one of the meetings on site at the Caludon Centre, and this meeting included a tour of the various facilities available at this site.

3.1.2 Issues considered by the Board during this period were as follows:-

- Premature Deaths / Fuel Poverty
- Progress towards establishing a West Midlands Health Scrutiny Committee
- Dignity Champions
- Staying Up Late
- Annual Report of the Joint Director of Public Health
- Smoking Cessation Services
- Coventry & Warwickshire Partnership Trust and the Caludon Centre
- Community Mental Health Services
- Dementia Care Services

**3.2 Recommendations**

3.2.1 The Board made recommendations to Cabinet during this period on the issue of Premature Deaths and Fuel Poverty. These recommendations included:

- Greater co-ordination across the sub-region of activity in this area, including a summit and a working group comprising one officer and one member from each authority (Coventry, Warwickshire and Solihull)



- Representations to the government about the activities and effectiveness of Warm Front
- Further training opportunities across the three authorities for both officers and members.

3.2.2 The Board also made formal requests to the local NHS Trusts and to the Director of Community Services regarding the Annual Report of the Joint Director of Public Health.

### 3.3 **Outcomes**

3.3.1 **Further reports** – the Board asked for further reports on the following:

- Developments in the personalisation agenda, particularly in regard to services for the elderly and adults with a learning disability.
- Swine 'flu.
- Arrangements for discharge from the Caludon Centre, including for Elderly Mentally Ill patients (EMI) and those seeking social housing tenancies.

**Mental Health Services** – following the visit to the Caludon Centre the Board have a broad understanding of the current developments and pressures on these services. The closure of a number of services in North Warwickshire has resulted in some re-configurations at the Caludon Centre and the Board received assurances about the capacity of the Centre and the commitment of the Partnership Trust to the development of Community and early intervention services.

**"Respect Yourself Strategy" / Teenage Pregnancy** – the Board sponsored a joint seminar with Scrutiny Board 2 on this important area of work, a second seminar is planned for November 20<sup>th</sup>. There are plans to formally consider the progress of this Strategy by the Scrutiny Board early in the New Year.

**Engagement by Service Users** – the Board has sponsored a second review considering the views of patients with Physical and Sensory Impairment, and this research has recently been undertaken by trained volunteers with experience of using services at the hospital.

3.3.2 **Reports noted by the Board:**

**Dignity Champions** - this presentation by Community Services and UHCW updated Members on joint work undertaken locally to promote dignity in care, and to ensure that the views of service users are fully considered in planning services for them.

**Smoking Cessation Services** - this report updated the Board on plans by NHS Coventry to dramatically increase the scale of smoking cessation services, including the proposal to establish a tariff that non NHS services might benefit from in delivering such services.

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