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To: Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Date: 9 December 2015

Subject: Welfare Reform

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## 1 Purpose of the Note

- 1.1 The Welfare Reform Working Together group, made up of agencies from across the City, listed in Appendix 1, have produced information for the Committee on Welfare Reform.

## 2 Recommendations

- 2.1 Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee is recommended to:
- 1) Consider the content of the reports and presentation.
  - 2) Support the continued work of the Working Together on Welfare Reform Group
  - 3) Identify any further recommendations for the appropriate Cabinet Member

## 3 Information/Background

- 3.1 The Government has introduced wide scale changes to the welfare system. Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee has dedicated several meetings to the subject and the aim of their consideration of the Welfare Reform agenda has particularly been to explore:
- What are the combined implications of changes on individuals and communities that decision-makers need to understand?
  - What can be predicted about future impacts that need to be planned for now?
  - How do we make sure that actions being taken now are providing long term sustainable solutions for people, not short term fixes?
  - How is the city's approach to services and support being co-ordinated to avoid either duplication or gaps?
  - Is the Council doing everything required to discharge its responsibilities for elements of the welfare reform agenda?
- 3.2 The Welfare Reform Working Together group, made up of agencies from across the City, will be presenting information on a number of areas. Data contained within the attached documents includes
- Appendix 1 – The Welfare Reform – Working Together Group, its membership and remit.
  - Appendix 2 – Welfare Reform report by the Welfare Reform Working Together Group which contains information under each section on suggested actions to mitigate effects, which will be useful when Members are considering recommendations.
  - Appendix 3 - Welfare Reform Timeline.
  - Appendix 4 – Case studies on the impact of welfare reform changes on individuals, including the impact of those in work.

- Appendix 5 - Council Tax Support and Welfare Reform Factsheet containing data on the number of people who have felt the changes and hotspots of areas in the City most affected.
- Appendix 6 - Report of Survey into the Impacts of Welfare Benefits Reform, November 2015 by Wendy Eades that covers upcoming challenges and changes including information on implementation of Universal Credit.
- Appendix 7 - Welfare benefit related highlights in the Spending Review and Autumn Statement November 2015.