

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE AGENDA



Friday 3 August 2007

at 2.00 pm

in Owton Manor Community Centre,
Wynyard Road, Hartlepool

MEMBERS: SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE:

Councillors Akers-Belcher, Brash, R W Cook, S Cook, Fleet, Flintoff, James, Laffey, A E Lilley, G Lilley, A Marshall, Plant, Preece, Shaw, Simmons and Wright.

Resident Representatives:

Linda Shields, Ian Campbell and Iris Ryder

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS**

3. **MINUTES**

3.1 To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 29 June 2007.

4. **RESPONSES FROM THE COUNCIL, THE EXECUTIVE OR COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL TO REPORTS OF THE SCRUTINY COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

No Items

5. **CONSIDERATION OF REQUEST FOR SCRUTINY REVIEWS FROM COUNCIL, EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AND NON EXECUTIVE MEMBERS**

No Items

PLEASE NOTE VENUE

6. FORWARD PLAN

No Items.

7. CONSIDERATION OF PROGRESS REPORTS / BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK DOCUMENTS

No Items

8. CONSIDERATION OF FINANCIAL MONITORING/CORPORATE REPORTS

No Items.

9. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

9.1 Scrutiny Investigation into the Authority's Postal Service:-

- (a) Scoping Report – *Scrutiny Manager*
- (b) Setting the Scene Covering Report – *Scrutiny Manager*
- (c) Setting the Scene Presentation – *Central Services Manager*

9.2 **Scrutiny Forums – Progress Reports:-**

- (a) Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee – *Chair of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee;*
- (b) Children's Services Scrutiny Forum – *Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny Forum;*
- (c) Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum - *Chair of Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum;*
- (d) Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum – *Chair of Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum;* and
- (e) Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum – *Chair of Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum.*

9.3 Request for Items for Discussion – Joint Cabinet/Scrutiny Event – 11 September 2007 – Scrutiny Manager

10. CALL-IN REQUESTS

11. ANY OTHER ITEMS WHICH THE CHAIRMAN CONSIDERS ARE URGENT

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- i) **Date of Next Meeting Friday 14 September 2007, commencing at 2.00 pm in Owton Manor Community Centre, Wynyard Road, Hartlepool.**

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

MINUTES

29 June 2007

The meeting commenced at 2.00 pm at Owton Manor Community Centre, Hartlepool

Present:

Councillor: Marjorie James (In the Chair)

Councillors: Stephen Akers-Belcher, Jonathan Brash, Rob W Cook, Mary Fleet, Bob Flintoff, Michelle Plant, Arthur Preece, Chris Simmons and Edna Wright.

In accordance with Paragraph 4.1 of the Council's procedure rules Councillor Carl Richardson attended as substitute for Councillor Jane Shaw and Councillor Gladys Worthy attended as substitute for Councillor Ann Marshall.

Resident Representatives:

Linda Shields, Ian Campbell and Iris Ryder

Officers:

Chris Little, Assistant Chief Financial Officer
Charlotte Burnham, Scrutiny Manager
Angela Hunter, Principal Democratic Services Officer

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Shaun Cook, Pauline Laffey, Ann Marshall and Jane Shaw.

2. Declarations of interest by Members

None.

3. Minutes of the meetings held on 18 May 2007

Confirmed.

4. Responses from the Council, the Executive or Committees of the Council to Reports of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

None.

5. Consideration of request for scrutiny reviews from Council, Executive Members and Non Executive Members

None.

6. Forward Plan

The Executive's Forward Plan for July 2007 – October 2007 was submitted for the Committee's consideration. Members were asked to identify any issues in the Forward Plan that they felt should be considered by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee or one of the four forums. Although Members felt that there had been a slight improvement in the content of the Forward Plan, they still had concerns at the level of information it contained.

It was suggested that to enable more detailed consideration of the Forward Plan, it be disseminated departmentally and reported to the appropriate Scrutiny Forum on a quarterly basis with Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee continuing to receive the whole document.

Members raised concerns in relation to Selective Licensing of Privately Rented Houses (Ref. NS104/06) and requested that the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities be informed of the Committee's following concerns:-

(a) That the proposed introduction of selective licensing may be not sufficient / or productive by restricting licensing to selected areas and consideration should be given to lobbying Government for the necessary enactment of a blanket approach to compulsory licensing across the whole of the town; and

(b) That it appeared to be increasing practice in Hartlepool, whereby landlords were opening up joint bank accounts with their tenants to gain direct access to their tenants' rent, avoiding the need for the Council to pay the landlord direct. It was felt that the Benefits Section should highlight these concerns with housing benefit claimants and ensure that tenants are made aware of their right to pay their rent by the method most appropriate to their needs.

Members noted the decision in relation to setting the level of Adult Education fees and hoped that any increase would be at the level of inflation as a maximum. It was noted that any decision made in relation to this would be considered as part of the budget process.

Further clarification was sought on the decision making process and final decision maker for items in relation to the Development at Hartlepool College of Further Education and Choice Based Lettings.

Decision

- (i) That the Forward Plan be received; and
- (ii) That the concerns expressed by Members in relation to the Executive Decision entitled 'Selective Licensing of Privately Rented House (Ref No. NS104/06)' to be taken in August 2007 be brought to the attention of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities

7. Consideration of progress reports/budget and policy framework documents

None.

8. Consideration of financial monitoring/corporate reports – 2006/2007 Final Outturn Strategy *(Chief Financial Officer)*

The Final Outturn Strategy for 2006/07 was reported to and noted by Cabinet at its meeting on 11 June 2007 and was submitted for the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's information and consideration.

Concern was raised by Members in relation to a Cabinet decision to allocate £70k of underspend to Cabinet's Special Projects. Members felt that this decision was inappropriate and breached the trust built up with back bench Members. . Members felt a more appropriate allocation of this underspend would have been into the General fund for reallocation by Council. Members requested that a letter be sent to The Mayor outlining the Committee's concerns.

Members sought clarification on funding provision for Ship Dismantling and Related Development/Dial a Ride legal costs. The Assistant Chief Financial Officer indicated that it was still unclear exactly what these costs would involve. Members were reassured that if there was any surplus/shortfall in funding after dealing with these issues it would be reported back to Cabinet and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee.

Further information was sought from a Member on the funding of consultants and contractors by the Authority. The Assistant Chief Financial Officer agreed to forward the requested information to the Member directly.

Decision

- (i) Members noted the outturn strategy for 2006/07.
- (ii) A letter be compiled and forwarded by the Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to the Elected Mayor on behalf of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee that reflected the concerns raised in relation to the allocation of the £70k underspend identified in the final outturn figures to the Portfolio Holders Projects.

9. The Role of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee (Scrutiny Manager)

The Scrutiny Manager submitted a report outlining the role of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee. The report set out the Committee's functions and detailed the schedule of meetings until October 2007.

Decision

That the report be noted.

10. Determining the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's Work Programme for 2007/08 (Scrutiny Manager)

The Scrutiny Manager presented a report that requested the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to identify a Work Programme for the 2007/08 Municipal Year, together with a timeframe for each review.

The Deputy Mayor, Portfolio Holder for Performance, and the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities, the Assistant Chief Executive, the Chief Financial Officer and the Chief Personnel Officer were the foundation sources for this report. Along with key documents such as the Local Area Agreement Reward Element Targets (also known as LPSA2); Corporate Plan (BVPP); and the recent Viewpoint Surveys to enable this Committee to compile its Work Programme.

From these sources and the work programme from 2006/07, the following list of potential subjects for investigation had been identified: -

Building Schools for the Future (BSF)
 Implementation of the Authority's Single Status Agreement
 The Operation of the Authority's Postal System
 Implementation of the Enhanced Role for Overview and Scrutiny (as outlined in the Local Government Bill 2006 / Police and Justice Act 2006 - Community Calls for Action)
 The Use of Agency Staff within the Council
 Service Improvements

A significant level of discussion took place in relation to the BSF issue and the consultation associated with it. Everyone was encouraged to attend and input to the consultation meetings arranged over the coming weeks. Most Members had received numerous telephone calls and emails from concerned parents and members of the public. Members were asked to note that Scrutiny would continue to be incorporated into key stages of consultation process where appropriate. In addition to this it was suggested that a further Members briefing be arranged with a representative from the Children's Services Department in attendance to discuss the concerns and issues raised in more detail including provision of school uniform, school transport and proposed admission zones.

It was suggested that the work of the Single Status Working Group continued with its current membership to maintain a consistent arrangement. The Administrative Group agreed to confirm their nominated representative on this Group.

Decision

- i) In addition to the consideration of corporate and financial reports throughout the 2007/08 Municipal Year, it was agreed that the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's Work Programme for 2007/08 would include:-
 - (a) an examination of the Operation of the Authority's Postal System;
 - (b) the Use of Agency Staff within the Council; and
 - (c) the Implementation of the Enhanced Role for Overview and Scrutiny in light of the Local Government Bill 2006 and the Police and Justice Act 2006
- ii) That a further Members' Building Schools for the Future Consultation Meeting be held on Friday 13 July 2007 commencing at 2.00 pm, subject to written confirmation to Elected Members and the availability of the Lead Officer, the Assistant Director – Resources and Support Services in Children's Services.

11. Draft Work Programme – Adult and Community Services and Health *(Chair of Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum)*

The Chair of Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum, reported that the Forum at its meeting on 12 June 2007 agreed that its sole investigation would be that of examining the Pathway to Healthcare and the Development of Primary and Community Services in Hartlepool. As the Scrutiny Forum was responsible for Health Scrutiny, the Forum was also required to produce a rolling three-year health scrutiny programme following consultation with relevant stakeholders and these were; Prime care/Urgent Care, Alcohol Abuse, Health Eating/Obesity and Smoking.

Members sought reassurances that the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum's Referral into the recent closure of the primary care facility at Wynyard Road would be included within this investigation. The Chair of Adult and Community Services and Health reassured Members that the investigation would examine primary care provision across the whole of the town.

Decision

That the Work Programme of the Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum for the 2007/08 Municipal Year be agreed.

12. Draft Work Programme – Children's Services Scrutiny Forum *(Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny Forum)*

In the absence of the Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny Forum, it was reported that the Forum at its meeting on 11 June 2007 agreed to examine Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool as it its main scrutiny investigation.

The Forum had also considered a non-mandatory Referral received from the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum in relation to Extended Schools, including the implications for sustainability and accountability of community usage and agreed that as the Extended Schools scheme was in its infancy, it was felt perhaps too early to investigate this area. The Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee expressed concern that since that Referral had been made, that there was clearly a misunderstanding and that the actual issue did not relate to Extended Schools but that of community buildings securing grants / funding for community usage (for example a school securing funding for outside of its core hours to run sports-based activities for the local community) and that once the revenue budget allocation had been used the scheme ceased immediately, resulting in a loss of a community-based service.

Decision

That the Work Programme of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum for the 2007/08 Municipal Year, be agreed, subject to a discussion being held between the Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee, the Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum and the Scrutiny Manager in relation to the Forum's decision to not undertake the non-mandatory referral of the South Neighbourhood Consultative Forum.

13. Draft Work Programme – Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum *(Chair of Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum)*

The Chair of Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum, reported that the Forum at its meeting on 11 June 2007 agreed to examine two topics being School Meals Provision and Transportation Links to a new Hospital Site/Neighbourhood Services Transport Provision. The Forum also gave consideration to an investigation into the Coastline Defences and Shoreline Management and suggested keeping this investigation in reserve should time allow.

It was also noted that the Forum would receive quarterly reports on the referral made by the North Consultative Neighbourhood Forum in relation to Recycling.

Decision

That the Work Programme of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum for the 2007/08 Municipal Year be agreed.

14. Draft Work Programme – Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum *(Chair of Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum)*

In the absence of the Chair of Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum, it was reported that the Forum at its meeting on 14 June 2007 agreed to examine two topics that being the Availability of Affordable Rented Accommodation in Hartlepool and Seaton Carew Regeneration Needs and Opportunities.

Decision

That the Work Programme of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum for the 2007/08 Municipal Year be agreed.

15. Call-In Requests

None.

16. Any Other Business – Updated Overview and Scrutiny Introductory Guide 2007/08 *(Scrutiny Manager)*

The Scrutiny Manager submitted a report and an updated version of the 'Overview and Scrutiny - An Introductory Guide' leaflet and sought Members' approval on the revisions.

Decision

That the revised 'Overview and Scrutiny – An Introductory Guide' leaflet be agreed and despatched to key public buildings once printed.

MARJORIE JAMES

CHAIR

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

3 August 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Manager

Subject: SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION INTO THE
AUTHORITY'S POSTAL SERVICE – SCOPING
REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To make proposals to Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee for their forthcoming investigation into the Authority's postal service.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 The processes involved in the opening, sorting and delivery of the Authority's mail are all key components in the effective day to day operation of the organisation. At present the service is provided by the Central Services Section of the Chief Executive's Department through the Contact Centre's Administration Team.
- 2.2 Over the recent years it has been evident that the volume of the Authority's incoming and outgoing mail is continuing to grow. Together with increased postal charges and bulk mailings there is a need to ensure that the Authority is providing the most cost effective and reliable service.
- 2.3 As such at a meeting of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee held on 29 June 2007, Members agreed to include this issue as part of their Work Programme for 2007/08 informed by their recent experiences of the postal service.

3. OVERALL AIM OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 3.1 To review the operation of the Authority's postal service and identify potential service improvements.

4. PROPOSED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

4.1 The following Terms of Reference for the investigation are proposed:-

- (a) To gain an understanding of Authority's postal service;
- (b) To gain an understanding of the processes involved in the distribution of the Authority's mail in relation to:-
 - (i) Internal Mail;
 - (ii) External Mail; and
 - (iii) Courier Service;
- (c) To identify whether efficiencies can be made in the effective delivery of the Authority's postal service; and
- (d) To identify potential service improvements to be adopted across the Authority

5. POTENTIAL AREAS OF ENQUIRY / SOURCES OF EVIDENCE

5.1 Members of the Committee can request a range of evidential and comparative information throughout the Scrutiny investigation.

5.2 The Committee can invite a variety of people to attend to assist in the forming of a balanced and focused range of recommendations as follows:-

- (a) Cabinet Member with Portfolio Holder for Performance;
- (b) Elected Members;
- (c) Chief Personnel Officer;
- (d) Central Services Manager;
- (e) Head of Procurement and Property Services; and
- (f) Departmental postal services representatives.

5.3 The Committee may also wish to refer to a variety of documentary / internet sources, key suggestions are as highlighted below:-

- (a) Report of the Chief Personnel Services Officer considered by the Performance Management Portfolio on 24 July 2006 entitled 'Postal Arrangements'

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT / DIVERSITY AND EQUALITY

- 6.1 Community engagement together with diversity and equality issues play a crucial role in the Overview and Scrutiny process. However, given the very nature of this scrutiny investigation, they were not considered sufficiently significant or relevant to require inclusion in the overall aim and terms of reference for the enquiry or through arrangements for community engagement as the issue relates to the internal workings of the Authority.

7. REQUEST FOR FUNDING FROM THE DEDICATED OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BUDGET

- 7.1 Consideration has been given, through the background research for this scoping report, to the need to request funding from the dedicated Overview and Scrutiny budget to aid Members in their enquiry. At this stage no additional funding has been identified as being necessary to support Members in their investigation. Members, however, may wish to seek additional funding over the course of the investigation and the blank pro forma attached at **Appendix A** outlines the criteria on which a request to Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee will be judged.

8. PROPOSED TIMETABLE OF THE SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION

- 8.1 Detailed below is the proposed timetable for the review to be undertaken, which may be changed at any stage:-

3 August 2007 – Consideration of Scoping Report / ‘Setting the Scene’

14 September 2007 – Evidence to be determined

19 October 2007 - Consideration of Draft Final Report by the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

12 November 2007 – Consideration of Final Report by the Cabinet (tentative date)

9. RECOMMENDATION

- 9.1 Members are recommended to agree the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's remit of the Scrutiny investigation as outlined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of this report.

Contact Officer: - Charlotte Burnham – Scrutiny Manager
Chief Executives Department – Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council Tel: - 01429 523 087
charlotte.burnham@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

APPENDIX A

**PRO-FORMA TO REQUEST FUNDING TO SUPPORT
CURRENT SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION**

Title of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
Title of the current scrutiny investigation for which funding is requested:
To clearly identify the purpose for which additional support is required:
To outline indicative costs to be incurred as a result of the additional support:
To outline any associated timescale implications:
To outline the 'added value' that may be achieved by utilising the additional support as part of the undertaking of the Scrutiny Investigation:

To outline any requirements / processes to be adhered to in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules / Standing Orders:

To outline the possible disadvantages of not utilising the additional support during the undertaking of the Scrutiny Investigation:

To outline any possible alternative means of additional support outside of this proposal:

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

3 August 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Manager

Subject: REVIEW OF THE AUTHORITY'S POSTAL SERVICE
– SETTING THE SCENE PRESENTATION:
COVERING REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with an introduction to the 'Setting the Scene' Presentation, which will be delivered at today's meeting by the Central Services Manager, as part of the Committee's review of the Authority's postal service.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 On behalf of the Chief Personnel Officer, the Central Services Manager, will be in attendance at today's meeting to deliver a presentation, as part of the Committee's review of the Authority's postal service in relation to the following issues:-
- (a) An overview of the Authority's postal system (to include volume and associated costs);
 - (b) An overview of the processes involved in the distribution of Authority's Internal Mail, External Mail and Courier Service on a departmental basis;
 - (c) An outline of the work currently being undertaken in relation to business process re-engineering that may result in efficiencies / potential service improvements in the effective delivery of the Authority's postal service in the short, medium and long-term.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That Members note the content of both the report and presentation, seeking clarification on any relevant issues from the Central Services Manager where felt appropriate.

Contact:- Charlotte Burnham – Scrutiny Manager
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523 087
Email: charlotte.burnham@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

There were no background papers referred to in the preparation of this report.

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

3 August 2007



Report of: Chair of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee

Subject: SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE –
PROGRESS REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee of the progress made to date of this Committee, since the start of the new 2007/08 Municipal Year.

2. PROGRESS ON THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2007/08

- 2.1 I am pleased to report that this is the second year that the Annual Scrutiny Work Programme has been finalised by the end of June 2007. The planning and preparation that has been undertaken to ensure this date was achieved has been invaluable and certainly good practice to continue in future years.
- 2.2 Following endorsement of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee's Work Programme for 2007/08 on 29 June 2007, the agreed work programme of this Committee is as outlined in the below table:-

Issue/Topic	Timescale
Review of the Authority's Postal Service	August 2007 to October 2007
The Use of Agency Staff within the Council	To be determined
Implementation of the Enhanced Role of Overview and Scrutiny (Community Calls for Action)	On-going throughout the year
Single Status Working Group	On-going
Building Schools for the Future	On-going

- 2.3 In addition to the above, this Committee will also consider corporate and financial issues relating to the Authority as and when appropriate, in particular the Review of the Community Strategy, budget consultation process for 2008/09, Inspection Reports, Quarterly Budget/Performance Monitoring Reports, compilation of the Corporate Plan for 2008/09 and so on.

3. GENERAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ISSUES

- 3.1 Scrutiny Members Training and Development Programme for 2007/08 – I am pleased to report that Scrutiny colleagues have recently had the opportunity to

attend as series of training events which have proved to be very informative and well attended as outlined below:-

- (a) Media Training for Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs held on the afternoon of 17 July 2007; and
- (b) INLOGOV in the North East, a series of scrutiny seminars held by the Improvement Partnership ranging from Chaining Skills through to Scrutiny of Partnerships held on 2-4 July 2007 in Darlington.

3.2 Informal Meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs – I am pleased to report that we held our second informal meeting of the 2007/08 Municipal Year with the Scrutiny Chairs earlier this afternoon. To ensure openness and transparency is maintained, I am pleased to inform Members that the following issues were discussed during the meeting:-

- (a) Feedback on recent Scrutiny Training Events;
- (b) Progress to date on the delivery of the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2007/08;
- (c) Attendance at Future Meetings of the NEREO Joint Members/Officers Scrutiny Network by Scrutiny Chairs;
- (d) Demonstration of the Proposed New Electronic Monitoring of Agreed Scrutiny Recommendations System;
- (e) Attendance at the North East Scrutiny Conference to be held on 13 September 2007; and
- (f) Civic Centre Refurbishment Update.

3.3 Final Reports Recently Considered / Awaiting Consideration – At the time of writing this report I can confirm that there were no Final Reports/Formal Responses awaiting consideration by the Authority's Cabinet or other Committees:

4. RECOMMENDATION

4.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee notes the content of this report.

**COUNCILLOR MARJORIE JAMES
CHAIR OF THE SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

3 August 2007



Report of: Chair of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum

Subject: CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM –
PROGRESS REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee of the progress made to date by the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum, since the start of the new 2007/08 Municipal Year.

2. PROGRESS OF THE SCRUTINY FORUM

- 2.1 Since the Forum's last progress report to this Committee on 13 March 2007, the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum has undertaken the following work:-
- 2.2 Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool - Following confirmation of each of the Forums Work Programmes by Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on the 29 June 2007, the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on the 11 June 2007 approved the Aim, Terms of Reference and Timetable for its investigation of 'Access to Recreation Facilities for Young People in Hartlepool'.
- 2.3 The Forum during the 'scoping' of its investigation received input from the Children's Services Portfolio Holder and at its next meeting, on the 20 August 2007, will begin the evidence gathering process. During this process, the Forum will receive evidence on current provision in Hartlepool and consider input from a variety of sources, including young people and outside organisations/providers. The Forum will also be undertaking a benchmarking visit to observe practice in another Local Authority (Middlesbrough) and work to finalise these arrangements is underway.

- 2.4 The timetable for the investigation has been approved and it is intended that it will be undertaken over an eight month period, concluding at the meeting of the Forum on the 31 March 2007.
- 2.5 'Closing the Loop' - Sex and Relationship Education – The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on the 16 July 2007 completed its investigation into the 'Provision of Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) in Hartlepool Schools' and presented its Final Report to Cabinet on the 11 June 2007.
- 2.6 Following consideration of the Final Report by Cabinet, the Children's Services Portfolio Holder attended the meeting of the Forum on the 16 July 2007 to convey Cabinet's response and confirm approval of all of the recommendations contained within the report. Details were also provided of progress to date on the implementation of each of the recommendations and the Forum advised of a further Progress Report to be presented on 21 January 2008.
- 2.7 'Closing the Loop' - Raising Boys' Achievements – Bridging the Gap – The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on the 11 December 2006 completed its investigation into 'Raising Boys' Achievements – Bridging the Gap' and presented its Final Report to Cabinet on the 22 January 2007.
- 2.8 Following consideration of the Final Report by Cabinet, the Children's Services Portfolio Holder attended the meeting of the Forum on the 2 April 2007 to convey Cabinet's response and confirm approval of all of the recommendations contained within the report. Details were also provided of progress to date on the implementation of each of the recommendations and the Forum advised of a further Progress Report to be presented on October 2007.
- 2.9 Joint Area Review Outcomes – The Children's Services Scrutiny Forum on the 16 April 2007 received and noted the results of the Joint Area Review of Services for Children and Young People.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee notes the progress of the Children's Services Scrutiny Forum.

**COUNCILLOR JANE SHAW
CHAIR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

3 August 2007



Report of: Chair of the Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum

Subject: ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES AND HEALTH SCRUTINY FORUM – PROGRESS REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To inform Members of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee of the progress made to date by the Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum.

2. PROGRESS OF THE SCRUTINY FORUM

- 2.1 Since the Co-ordinating Committee met to approve the Forum's annual work programme on the 19 June 2007 the Forum has been involved in the following issues :-

- (a) Scoping of Scrutiny Investigation into 'The Development of Acute, Primary and Community Health Care Services in Hartlepool.' The Forum is due to consider a scoping paper for the aforementioned issue at its meeting on 24 July 2007. It is anticipated that the Forum will approve/amend the paper as considered appropriate which identifies the overall aim of the investigation, includes a detailed breakdown of the terms of reference and establishes an indicative timescale for the various stages within the investigation.
- (b) Pathway to Health Care - Members will be receiving a presentation from the Director of Strategic Service Development (North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Trust) at the Forum's meeting on 24th July 2007. 'Pathway to Health Care' refers to the process to plan new hospital, primary and community services and facilities for the people of Teesside as recommended by the Independent Reconfiguration Panel and as approved by the Secretary of State. These issues are inextricably linked to the Forums work programme

this municipal year and thus this presentation will provide useful background information for the review.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee notes the progress of the Adult and Community Services and Health Scrutiny Forum.

**COUNCILLOR JONATHAN BRASH
CHAIR OF ADULT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES AND HEALTH SCRUTINY
FORUM**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

3 August 2007



Report of: Chair of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum

Subject: NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM
– PROGRESS REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To inform the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee of the progress made to date by the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum.

2. PROGRESS OF THE SCRUTINY FORUM

2.1 Since the Forum's the start of the 2007-8 Municipal Year, the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum has undertaken the following work:-

2.2 Determining the Work Programme: At the meeting of this Forum on 13 June 2007 Members discussed a number of potential work programme items. A wide range of information from a variety of sources were used to enable the Forum to compile its work programme, including: the Director of Neighbourhood Services; Portfolio Holders for Regeneration and Liveability and Neighbourhoods and Communities; Local Area Agreement Reward Element Targets (also known as LPSA2); Corporate Plan (BVPP); and the Viewpoint Surveys.

2.3 Following detailed discussion of the information provided to assist in compiling their Work Programme Members agreed to conduct investigations into 'School Meals' and a combined review into 'Transportation Links to a New Hospital Site and Neighbourhood Services Transport Provision'. It was also agreed that a third investigation into 'Coastline Defences and Shoreline Management' should be held in reserve should sufficient time allow for this to be undertaken as well.

2.4 Recycling: This issue had been referred to the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum from the North Neighbourhood Consultative Forum via Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee. The Head of Neighbourhood Management brought a baseline report to the Forum on 4 July 2007 to help

Members monitor the development of the Recycling Service. In addition, a detailed presentation on the following issues was presented to Members:-

- (a) Side Waste;
- (b) Group Presentation Points;
- (c) Service Standards;
- (d) Kerbside Comparisons – Neighbouring Councils;
- (e) Tees Valley Performance; and
- (f) Contract Position.

- 2.5 Members participated in a detailed discussion with the Head of Neighbourhood Management and identified a number of issues around the provision and development of the Recycling Service. The information provided by Members was noted and it was agreed that an update report should be brought back to the Forum in 6 months time.
- 2.6 School Meals: On 4 July Members discussed a Scoping Paper in relation to this issue. Members agreed the Scoping Report and made a number of additional suggestions for incorporation into this investigation. It was agreed that this should be a short investigation to take place prior to the more in-depth review of 'Transportation Links to a New Hospital Site and Neighbourhood Services Transport Provision', and that it should focus on the Neighbourhood Services Department's responsibilities in relation to the Catering Service.
- 2.7 Members requested to go on a school visit as part of the evidence gathering for this investigation. Consequently, visits to Kingsley Primary School and English Martyrs Secondary School were undertaken on 13 July 2007. Members were able to witness the school meals service in both of these schools and to ask staff questions about the service they deliver. In addition, food was provided at the end of the visit so that Members could gain an understanding of the standard of food provided by the Catering Service.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee notes the progress of the Neighbourhood Services Scrutiny Forum.

**COUNCILLOR STEPHEN AKERS-BELCHER
CHAIR OF NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

3 August 2007



Report of: Chair of the Regeneration and Planning Services
Scrutiny Forum

Subject: REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES
SCRUTINY FORUM - PROGRESS REPORT

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To inform the Members of Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee of the progress made to date by the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum, since the start of the new 2007/08 Municipal Year.

2. PROGRESS OF THE FORUM

- 1.1 Since the Forum's last progress report to this Committee on 13 March 2007, the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum has undertaken the following work:-
- 1.2 The Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Accommodation in Hartlepool - Following confirmation of each of the Forums Work Programmes by Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee on the 29 June 2007, the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on the 12 June 2007 approved the Aim, Terms of Reference and Timetable for its investigation of 'The Availability of Good Quality Affordable Rented Accommodation in Hartlepool'.
- 1.3 The Forum will at its next meeting, on the 6 September 2007, be beginning the evidence gathering process with input from the Town's MP and during its investigation will receive evidence on current provision in Hartlepool and consider input from a variety of sources.
- 1.4 The timetable for the investigation has been approved and it is intended that it will be undertaken over a five month period, concluding at the meeting of the Forum on the 6 December 2007.
- 1.5 Consultation – Youth Justice Plan 2007/8 - The Youth Justice Plan is a key strategic document, which forms part of the Council's Budget and Policy Framework, responsibility for which falls within the remit of this Forum. The Forum at its meeting on 22 March 2007 was consulted in relation to its views

in relation to the Draft Youth Justice Plan. Members made a number of suggestions for inclusion and endorsed the plan.

- 1.6 Rail Approaches – The Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on the 18 January 2007 completed its investigation into the ‘Railway Approaches’ and presented its Final Report to Cabinet on the 5 March 2007.
- 1.7 Following consideration of the Final Report by Cabinet, the Regeneration and Liveability Portfolio Holder attended the meeting of the Forum on the 12 July 2007 to convey Cabinet’s response and confirm approval of all of the recommendations contained within the report. Details were also provided of progress to date on the implementation of each of the recommendations and the Forum advised of a further Progress Report to be presented on 17 January 2008.
- 1.8 Youth Unemployment – The Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum on the 22 March 2007 completed its investigation into the ‘Youth Unemployment’ and presented its Final Report to Cabinet on the 11 June 2007.
- 1.9 Following consideration of the Final Report by Cabinet it is intended that the views of Cabinet and its approval of the recommendations contained within the report will be conveyed to a meeting of this Forum in September 2007. Details of progress on the implementation of each of the recommendations will also be provided, with a further Progress Report to be presented in January 2008.
- 1.10 Six Monthly Progress Report - Partnership - The Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum, at its meeting on the 22 March 2006 received, and noted, an update on progress made in relation to the Partnerships investigation. The Forum noted progress against its findings/conclusions.

2. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee notes the progress of the Regeneration and Planning Services Scrutiny Forum.

**COUNCILLOR SHAUN COOK
CHAIR OF REGENERATION AND PLANNING SERVICES SCRUTINY FORUM**

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

3 August 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Manager

Subject: REQUEST FOR ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION –
JOINT CABINET / SCRUTINY EVENT OF
11 SEPTEMBER 2007

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To request items for discussion at the next Joint Cabinet / Scrutiny Event to be held on 11 September 2007.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 As Members will recall it was agreed that the next meeting of the Joint/Cabinet Scrutiny Event would be held on **Tuesday 11 September 2007, commencing at 5.30 pm to 6.30 pm Belle Vue Community Sports and Youth Centre.**
- 2.2 As such items for discussion are sought from Members of this Committee, which will then be used to form the basis of the Joint Agenda in conjunction with the issues received from the Cabinet.

3. RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 That agenda items be sought from Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee for the Joint Cabinet/Scrutiny Event to be held on 11 September 2007.

Contact Officer:- Charlotte Burnham – Scrutiny Manager
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523 087
Email: charlotte.burnham@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

SCRUTINY CO-ORDINATING COMMITTEE

3 August 2007



Report of: Scrutiny Manager

Subject: NOMINATIONS SOUGHT TO SERVE ON THE
AUTHORITY'S CHOICE BASED LETTINGS
WORKING GROUP

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek up to a maximum of five nominations from Members of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee to serve on the Authority's Choice Based Lettings Working Group to be established in the very near future, at the request of the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 'Choice Based Lettings' is a fundamentally different way of allocating housing stock which the Government targets require to be in place in all local authorities by 2010.
- 2.2 The main differences with a traditional points system are that 'Choice Based Lettings' is more 'customer focussed' and transparent. Applicants are registered and placed in a band according to need following a thorough assessment of their housing circumstances and properties from a range of providers are advertised and applicants can 'bid' in a weekly bidding cycle with feedback and support where necessary.
- 2.3 As such Members will be aware that Hartlepool is part of a Tees Valley partnership which has tested the feasibility of a Tees Valley 'Choice Based Lettings' scheme and aims to have a sub-regional scheme operating by Summer 2008 including a Common Allocation Policy Framework.
- 2.4 Some key decisions are imminent although the Authority's Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities has recently requested that the Sub-Regional Co-ordinator seek agreement from the other partners for an additional two to three months to allow Elected Members in Hartlepool to consider the sub-regional scheme in more detail by the formation of this Working Group.

- 2.5 In addition to the Authority's Working Group, Political Groups will be given the opportunity of briefings on 'Choice Based Lettings' by the Director of Regeneration and Planning and that a daytime and an evening seminar is to be arranged for Members, presenting a further opportunity to discuss the latest information and evaluation available together with the proposed Tees Valley Scheme.

3. FORMATION OF THE AUTHORITY'S CHOICE BASED LETTINGS WORKING GROUP

- 3.1 It is envisaged that the Working Group will need to meet regularly over the next two to three months to consider the appropriate way forward and to inform a Portfolio Holders' decision.
- 3.2 The proposed membership of Working Group is as outlined below:-
- (a) Elected Mayor with Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Liveability;
 - (b) Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities;
 - (c) A maximum of five Elected Members nominated from the membership of the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee (ie 3 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat and 1 Administrative Group);
 - (d) Director of Regeneration and Planning;
 - (e) Principal Housing Advice Officer; and
 - (f) A representative from Housing Hartlepool.

4. RECOMMENDATION

- 4.1.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee nominates a maximum of five Elected Members (3 Labour, 1 Liberal Democrat and 1 Administrative Group) from its membership, to serve on the Authority's Choice Based Lettings Working Group.

Contact Officer:- Charlotte Burnham – Scrutiny Manager
Chief Executive's Department - Corporate Strategy
Hartlepool Borough Council
Tel: 01429 523 087
Email: charlotte.burnham@hartlepool.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.