

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL

SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD – 19th SEPTEMBER 2014

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT OF SCRUTINY GROUP SPECIALIST

1. PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of the report is to enable Scrutiny Management Board to agree the priorities for the Scrutiny Work Programme over the next few months.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Scrutiny Management Board:

2.1 Considers the Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and agree the 5 priority pieces of work that should be continued while Scrutiny Support is reduced.

2.2 Consider Appendix 2 which sets out the process to agree Scrutiny Recommendations and Cabinet Response and following comments from the Senior Management Team agree that this is included in the Scrutiny Handbook.

3.0 BACKGROUND

3.1 It is the role of Scrutiny Management Board to:

- Co-ordinate, oversee and monitor the delivery of the Scrutiny work programme and will receive regular progress reports from the Scrutiny team and Scrutiny Chairmen.
- Oversee the allocation of scrutiny officer resources to the Scrutiny Committees, and will make decisions where there are competing demands for resources.

Members have been informed that the support to Scrutiny Committees will be reduced while the post of Scrutiny Officer is recruited to cover the Secondment that has been agreed.

4.0 MANAGING THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

- 4.1 It is necessary to review the Scrutiny Work Programme to take account of the temporary reduction in scrutiny support. Members are asked to consider the Scrutiny Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and agree the top 5 priorities to be continued from the end of September to the beginning of December and a further two issues that will be supported if there is sufficient capacity.
- 4.2 Appendix 2 provides a flow chart setting out the process to for the Scrutiny Committee to agree the report and response and for the response to the recommendations to be agreed. It is anticipated that, by the time the Scrutiny Officer position becomes vacant the two reviews undertaken by the Co-operative and Communities Scrutiny Committee on Benefit Sanctions and the Children's and Young People's Scrutiny Committee on Youth Unemployment will be at the stage where the report and recommendations have been agreed by the Committee. The flow charts sets out the process that will need to be supported to take the report to Cabinet. It is recommended that following discussion with SMT this is included in the Scrutiny Handbook.

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no environmental implications resulting from this report

6.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Scrutiny has a role in ensuring that local government is effective and accountable. This includes undertaking reviews and challenging and monitoring performance. It is also an important part of the budget consultation process which is reflected in the work programme over the period Dec – Feb and is a key piece of work which feeds into the Council's overall budget strategy. The scrutiny officer post and the work programme are managed within existing resources. The financial implications of any recommendations made by Scrutiny should be considered as part of reports as relevant.

7.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Despite the temporary reduction in staff the report sets out the provisions put in place to maintain the statutory requirement to have a Scrutiny Committee to oversee and scrutinise the local authority's decisions. The Council will continue to have an appointed Scrutiny Officer to promote the scrutiny role and to continue to provide support and guidance to both members of the authority and Scrutiny itself in relation to the Council's scrutiny function (these responsibilities are

statutory in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000 as amended).

- 7.2 In addition to selecting the five priorities to look at the Board will also note the proposed procedure at Appendix 2 which is currently not contained in the Constitution or the Scrutiny Handbook.

8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no environmental implications resulting from this report

9.0 WARD IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no direct ward implications resulting from this report

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