

**TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL**

**CO-OPERATIVE & COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE– 25 JULY 11**

**2011/12 WORK PROGRAMME**

**REPORT OF SCRUTINY GROUP SPECIALIST**

**1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To enable Members to plan the work programme for the Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 Members agree and prioritise the issues the Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee will scrutinise during 2011/12.**

**3.0 PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- 3.1 N/A

**4.0 BACKGROUND**

- 4.1 The Scrutiny arrangements established in May 2011 and the process for selecting topics for the Scrutiny Work Programme enable each Scrutiny Committee to determine its own work programme within the resources available.
- 4.2 Scrutiny Assembly Members, Cabinet Members, Senior Officers, Town & Parish Councils and partner organisations were invited to put forward their suggestions for the 2011/12 Scrutiny Work Programme. A total of 57 suggestions were received. The Scrutiny Management Board met on 12<sup>th</sup> July to review the suggestions and to agree which Scrutiny Committee, or Scrutiny Committees for cross-cutting issues, would be responsible for each suggestion.
- 4.3 The allocation of statutory scrutiny functions to the Scrutiny Committees was agreed as set out in the table below.

<b>Duty</b>	<b>Scrutiny Committee</b>
Scrutiny of NHS bodies and emerging health and social care structures	Health Adult Social Care
Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership (Safer, Stronger Communities Partnership)	Scrutiny Management Board
Flood & Water Management	Scrutiny Management Board
Partners under LAA (under review)	Co-operative & Communities
Social Care referrals from the LINK	Adult Social Care
Scrutiny of Budget Proposals under the terms of the Council's Constitution	Budget & Finance

- 4.4 Powers relating to scrutiny of partners currently relate to partners under Local Area Agreements which no longer exist. The legislation is being reviewed as part of the Localism Bill and the Centre for Public Scrutiny has been lobbying for the power to be extended to a general description for a local partner as a class of person, rather than setting out a specific list of named partners. A further report will be brought to Scrutiny once the position is clearer.
- 4.5 The Scrutiny Committees will determine the topics for their own work programme. In agreeing the work programme, each Committee will consider the suggestions referred by the Scrutiny Management Board, relevant issues outstanding from previous scrutiny arrangements and any other suggestions the Committee members wish to put forward.
- 4.6 Other Scrutiny suggestions received during the year will be considered at the following meeting of the Scrutiny Management Board, or referred to the relevant Scrutiny Committee to consider at its next meeting.

## **5.0 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

- 5.1 Scrutiny Committees will hold meetings as appropriate to deliver the work programme and within the resources available. The Scrutiny Management Board will co-ordinate the allocation of resources where there are competing pressures.
- 5.2 Scrutiny Committee meetings will be held as public meetings whenever possible.

## **6.0 ISSUES FOR SCRUTINY**

- 6.1 The issues that have been identified as potential areas for scrutiny by the Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee are set out in Appendix 1. The comments of the Scrutiny Management Board are noted in bold.

## **7.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

- 7.1 Members will consider the equal opportunities implications of the issues identified for further scrutiny.

## **8.0 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

- 8.1 There are no environmental impacts directly arising as a result of this report.

## **9.0 LEGAL COMMENT**

- 9.1 The operation of the Scrutiny function of the Council is set out in Part 2, Articles 6 & 8 and Part 4, Section 5 of the Council's Constitution: Scrutiny Procedure Rules. These Rules provide at 3.1 and 3.3 that the Scrutiny Management Board will co-ordinate, oversee and monitor the delivery of the Scrutiny work programme and will allocate suggestions to the Committees and make recommendations about priorities. The statutory functions for Scrutiny are set out in paragraph 4.3 of Section 5. This report and its recommendations accord with the provisions of Part 4, Section 5 of the Constitution.

## **10.0 LINKS WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES**

- 10.1 The Scrutiny Work Programme will link in with emerging priorities.

## **11.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Support for the co-ordination and preparation of the Scrutiny Work Programme is in the form of officer time which is funded from existing budgets.

## **12.0 OPPORTUNITIES AND RISKS**

- 12.1 The work of the Scrutiny Committees is a major opportunity for Members and Co-optees to influence the work and policy of the

Council and partner organisations. In order to manage the Scrutiny work load effectively Members should identify the issues where Scrutiny can add the most value. Identifying too many issues for the Committee work programme will mean some issues will not be completed with the agreed timescales.

### **13.0 WARD IMPLICATIONS**

#### 13.1 Borough Wide

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## Suggestions for the Co-operative & Communities Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

	<b>Key issue or service area</b>	<b>Area for Scrutiny</b>
1	<p>Economy &amp; Skills  <u>Policy development</u>            The need to make Council services 'business friendly' to encourage existing businesses to remain in the Borough and to attract new investment.</p> <p>Depending on the issues that businesses have, they may be dealing with a number of officers on different issues – there is no 'client management' system to enable those officers to be aware of those other contacts or issues</p>	<p>One Business – single point of access for businesses to Council services. This would be the business equivalent of First Point for residents,</p> <p><b>Budget &amp; Finance Scrutiny Committee to pick up financial aspects.</b></p>
2	Economy & Skills	<p>That with regard to the Co-operative Council approach, the Economy &amp; Skills Service Area's role in managing strategic relationships with the voluntary sector, and supporting enterprise development (this would include supporting the development of social enterprises, co-ops and mutual businesses to help deliver the Co-operative Council approach) could usefully be a part of that review.</p> <p><b>To note for relevant parts of the work programme.</b></p>
3	Environmental maintenance	Environmental maintenance in new town estate wards, Woodside, Brookside & Sutton Hill, is the standard of maintenance on a par with more affluent areas of the Borough?
4	Effectiveness of working with Parish & Town Councils	Effectiveness of working with Parish & Town Councils. An honest assessment.
5	Libraries	To support the service review of Libraries
6	Leisure & Culture	To review the concessions policies in Leisure & Culture
7	Leisure – the role/functions/management of community centres across the Borough	<p>From my own experience and also talking to a number of residents/officers/members across the borough there is a real concern that our community buildings/centres are not functioning properly and many have a poorly developed sense of the changing needs of the local community. I feel that there is more concentration on the physical management of the building rather than with the development of the local community.</p> <p>I believe that scrutiny could look at how the council could strengthen the role of the local community in having a stake in their community centre, enhance partnership working (as part of the co-operative model); identify the issues/problems; look at best practice and to look at a long term commitment/strategy for community buildings across the borough.</p>

8	The effective management of Community Centres within Telford and Wrekin.	<p>We propose that a Development Trust be established (by CVS or some other similar structure) to manage a number of Community Centres on a pilot basis to assess the long term viability of this approach in helping local people have a greater stake and input into the centres serving their community.</p> <p>Effectively bringing these centres within the Voluntary and Community Sector may help to address the stigma some locals undoubtedly have toward what are seen as Council resources. We would also encourage local involvement in the governance of the pilot centres housing local sector groups within them where possible.</p> <p>This is consistent with the approach CVS has taken to its resources in the Lightmoor area of Telford and the forthcoming centre it is purchasing in Wellington. It is proposed that these resources are also managed through a distinct Trust linked to CVS. This would be of a charitable nature enabling the Trust to bid for resources to various regional and national funding streams for maintenance and refurbishment of the centres in ways not perhaps directly possible under current arrangements.</p> <p>There is relative under utilisation of some Community Centres and resources devoted to this by T&amp;W Council have also reduced creating a situation where some are no longer considered viable from a financial perspective.</p> <p>Similarly, neighbourhood working is now co-ordinated from a central area of Telford risking the demise of some of the very close links Council staff have developed with local groups and individuals.</p> <p>Communities would in our view benefit from well resourced and well managed local resources in which they have a stake and which have a future.</p>
9	Social deprivation	<p>Amelioration of social deprivation in high density wards. How can the council best serve those in greatest need?</p> <p><b>Link to CYP scrutiny suggestion to look at child poverty</b></p>
10	Media general	<p>How bias of local and national media has a deleterious effect on the public perception of the democratic process and elected representatives in our Borough.</p> <p><b>The media is not within scrutiny's sphere of influence. A review could only focus on the Council's media strategy.</b></p>