

PROSPERITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

16 JUNE 2010

ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME AND POLICY REVIEW 2010-11

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 For Members to determine the Annual Work Programme for the Scrutiny Committee during 2010-11, including the main theme for a detailed policy review.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Committee is responsible for setting its own work programme within the following scope:

General Scope: To consider issues relating to the economic prosperity of the city

Remit: Inward Investment and Business Support; Regeneration; Improving employability; Encouraging economic prosperity; Boosting the skills and knowledge level of the workforce; City Centre; and Marketing & Tourism.

- 2.2 The Council's Scrutiny Committees are aligned to the relevant priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy – the Sunderland Strategy. This allows each Scrutiny Committee to focus on the priority areas and targets in the Sunderland Strategy and Local Area Agreement (LAA) and for the work of all Scrutiny Committees to consistently address those areas of performance requiring detailed examination.

- 2.3 This approach allows a clear themed focus on the outcomes for the people of Sunderland, and allows for cross-cutting examination of issues, with potential for linking areas of knowledge and expertise that would not ordinarily be brought together, so increasing the likelihood of the committees identifying novel approaches and solutions to the issues they consider.

- 2.4 The most relevant Sunderland Strategy priority for this committee is:

Prosperous City: To create an enterprising and productive global city with a strong and diverse economy providing jobs and careers for generations to come. A city where everyone has the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from the regional economy, to fulfil their potential to be skilled, motivated and wealth creating without losing the special characteristic of Sunderland's balanced way of life.

2.5 All Scrutiny Committees will take a role in the scrutiny of partnership and area issues and have a role in engaging with partners, external scrutiny, community and public engagement, and engaging with media and area scrutiny.

3. Policy Review

3.1 Policy review is the process of maintaining an overview of council policies and will usually examine whether the Council and its partners intended policy outcomes have been achieved. The process will also explore issues such as the service user’s perspective.

3.2 Policy reviews are project planned with appropriate methodology applied to investigate the chosen topic. This may include meetings, site visits, surveys, public meetings or analysis of comparative practice in other local authorities.

3.3 Previous reviews carried out by this Scrutiny Committee have included. All previous reviews are available at <http://cityweb/directorates/chief-executive/scrutiny/scrutinyhome.shtm>

3.3 Following the selection of a topic for review, the Committee will receive a report setting out a possible approach to the review. This will include the terms of reference, definitions, links to corporate goals, partnerships, the national and local context, and proposals for gathering evidence.

3.4 The shortlist of topics for 2010-11 is listed below. The Committee is recommended to select one topic from this shortlist for an in depth review. The list includes all topics suggested by Members from the discussions held at the Scrutiny Conference on 20th May 2010.

Policy Review Proposals	
Low carbon economy	The low carbon economy is a central component of the Economic Masterplan. The review would explore the definition of a low carbon economy and investigate the land, skills and infrastructure requirements to become a low carbon city. To explore the level of low carbon industries in operation in the city and consider how best to market the city in order to attract new low carbon industries and to involve individuals in making low carbon choices.
Skills Review	To investigate the current and future skills requirements of the city’s working population. To consider the skills requirements of employers and the action being taken to meet these needs. To consider how we can go about ensuring we have the right skill set for the future so our people can participate in job market. To consider how best the people of Sunderland can participate in the jobs

	market and close the skills gap.
Science City	To consider what we mean by the concept of a “science city”. To consider the features of a science city and the potential to introduce concept in Sunderland in order to provide sustainable employment and growth through science and technology.
Tourism	To investigate the measures being taken to promote tourism in the city and to explore how to further develop the city’s tourism offer. To build on the work of last year’s Task and Finish Group on Tourism in the city.
Economic Masterplan	To undertake a review of the Economic Masterplan. How far will it contribute to the economic prosperity of the city.?
Business Support	To review the current infrastructure in place to support local businesses and explore ways to provide additional support. Is the right type and level of support being provided to local businesses and how far is it meeting their needs.
Regeneration of the City Centre	To explore the ways in which the necessary improvements can be made to the city centre, with particular emphasis on Fawcett Street.

4. Work Programme

- 4.1 A draft work programme for 2010-11 with items already scheduled is attached as Appendix A.
- 4.2 The work programme can be amended during the year and any Member of the Committee can add an item of business to an agenda (See Protocol 1 Overview & Scrutiny Handbook).

5. Conclusion & Recommendation

- 5.1 The Committee is asked to :
- (a) Consider the draft Annual Work Programme for 2010-11 and indicate any additions or amendments
 - (b) Consider the list of suggestions for policy review and determine one topic for review.
- 5.2 Subject to any amendment at this meeting, the work programme will be submitted to the Management Scrutiny Committee in its coordinating role.

6. Background Papers

None

Contact Officer : Jim Diamond 0191 561 1396
james.diamond@sunderland.gov.uk