

At a meeting of the MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE held in the CIVIC CENTRE on THURSDAY, 16TH FEBRUARY, 2012 at 5.30 p.m.

Present:-

Councillor Tate in the Chair

Councillors Anderson, G. Miller, Mordey, Oliver, Stewart, Walker, S. Watson, Wilson and Wood.

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were submitted to the meeting on behalf of Councillors S. Watson and Wilson.

Minutes of the Last Meeting of the Committee held on 19th January, 2012

1. RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee held on 19th January, 2012 (copy circulated), be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

Declarations of Interest (including Whipping Declarations)

Item 4 – Reference from Cabinet – 15th February, 2012 – Budget and Service Reports

Councillor Tate declared personal interests as Chair of Hetton Home Care Services Voluntary Management Committee, a Local Authority Director of Newcastle International Airport, a Member of Hetton Town Council, Chairman of the ITA Scrutiny Committee, a member of the LGPS, a member of the GMB and a member of the Empire Theatre Trust.

Councillor Stewart declared a personal interest as a member of UNISON.

Councillor Walker declared personal interests as a member of the Empire Theatre Trust and the LGPS.

Councillor G. Miller declared personal interests as a member of the GMB and the LGPS.

Reference from Cabinet – 15th February, 2012 – Budget Service Reports

The Head of Law and Governance submitted a report seeking the Committee's advice and consideration on a number of reports (copies circulated) which were considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 15th February, 2012 as follows:-

- (A) Collection Fund 2011/2012;
- (B) a. Capital Programme 2012/2013 and Treasury Management Policy and Strategy 2012/2013, including Prudential Indicators for 2012/2013 to 2014/2015;
- b. Revenue Budget and Proposed Council Tax 2012/2013 and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011/12 to 2014/2015;
- c. Draft Council Tax Leaflet 2012/2013.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Malcolm Page, Executive Director of Commercial and Corporate Services presented the report highlighting the key issues with regard to the Capital Programme 2012/2013, the Collection Fund 2011/12 and the main Revenue Budget proposals. Mr. Page together with Sonia Tognarelli, Head of Financial Resources then proceeded to address questions and comments from Members in relation to the following issues:-

- the operation of the Council Tax Freeze Grant,
- 'one off' spending pressures including Inward Investment, the Private Housing Stock Survey, the delivery of efficiencies, the Olympics and the renewal of Wellness Centre Equipment,
- the current position with regard to the reform of the National Non Domestic Rates.

The Chairman having thanked Mr. Page and Ms. Tognarelli for their report, commented that Officers and the Cabinet were to be congratulated on the preparation of the 2012/13 budget and moved that the Cabinet actions be supported.

Accordingly it was:-

2. RESOLVED that the Cabinet's action with regard to the preparation of the 2012/13 budget be supported and that the Committee's comments be reported to the Council meeting to be held on 7th March, 2012.

Policy Development and Review 2011/12: Progress on Reviews

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) providing Members with an update on the progress in relation to the two policy reviews being undertaken by the Management Scrutiny Committee into Self Regulation and Illegal Money Lending respectively.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mr. Nigel Cummings, Scrutiny Officer briefed the Committee on the report highlighting that the final self regulation workshop, as detailed in paragraph 5.1 of the report, previously scheduled for Friday, 2nd March would now be held on Monday,

5th March, 2012. In addition the final meeting with Shiney Row Advice Centre had been arranged for Thursday, 23rd February at 2.00 p.m.

Councillor Wood referred to the note of the 'At What cost – Money Lending' Focus Group held on 23rd January, 2012 attached at Appendix 2 of the report as being a very good summary of what had been an extremely worthwhile and interesting meeting.

The Chairman having thanked Mr. Cummings for his report, it was:-

3. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Welfare Reform – Presentation

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) which introduced Fiona Brown, Head of Transactional Services who was to provide Members with a presentation giving an overview of the Welfare Reform Bill together with actions being taken or planned to mitigate the negative impact of the proposed changes.

(For copy report and presentation – see original minutes).

Ms. Brown delivered a comprehensive powerpoint presentation highlighting:-

- the background to the Welfare Reform Programme
- the impact on:-
 - people of working age
 - people with a disability and carers
 - children and young people
 - pensioners
- changes with regard to Housing Benefit and Local Housing Allowance
- the potential impacts on Services including:-
 - Health
 - Social Care
 - Transactional Services
- what the Council and Partners were doing in response to the reform including details of Sunderland's Welfare Reform Project.

Ms. Brown then addressed questions and comments from Members regarding:-

- support being given to people affected by the reforms
- how Housing Benefit would be administered in the future
- concerns regarding the emphasis being place on E claiming
- concerns that changes to tax credit would have the opposite effect than intended i.e. encouraging those in employment/women to give up work rather than encourage the jobless to seek work
- measures to cope with the effect of the transition from Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payment

A number of Members having expressed concern that the reforms would unfairly target the most vulnerable in society, the Chairman thanked Ms. Brown for her presentation and it was:-

4. RESOLVED that the report and presentation be received and noted.

Early Retirement on the Grounds of Efficiency

The Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report (copy circulated) which updated Members on the current process for early retirement on the grounds of efficiency and the number of applications received to date.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Members having congratulated Ms. Stanhope on the report and welcomed the Council's proactive approach to the issue, it was:-

5. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Apprenticeships in Sunderland City Council

The Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development submitted a report (copy circulated) which provided the Committee with an update on the progress of the Corporate Apprenticeship Scheme and as requested by Members, an identification of the existing apprenticeships within the Council.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Members were informed that currently there were 85 apprentices employed with the Council in a variety of roles, 52 of which were aged from 16 to 18 years of age. The aim was for an apprentice to progress into employment although this was difficult at the present time and could not be guaranteed.

The Chairman having thanked Ms. Stanhope for her report, it was:-

6. RESOLVED that the report be received and noted.

Centre for Public Scrutiny Parliamentary Seminar

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) in respect of the above matter.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Members having been advised that Councillor Mordey who had attended the seminar was not present at tonight's meeting, it was:-

7. RESOLVED that consideration of the report be deferred to a future meeting to allow Councillor Mordey the opportunity to provide feedback to the Committee.

Scrutiny Committees Work Programmes for 2011-12

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) attaching for Members' information the variations to the Scrutiny Committee work programmes for 2011/12 and providing an opportunity to review the Committee's own work programme for 2011/12.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

Mr. Nigel Cummings, Scrutiny Officer having briefed the Committee on the report, it was:-

8. RESOLVED that the variations to the Scrutiny Committee's Work Programmes for 2011-12 and to its own work programme as detailed on appendices 1 and 2 to the report be noted.

Forward Plan – Key Decisions for the Period 1st February 2012 – 31st May 2012

The Chief Executive submitted a report (copy circulated) providing Members with an opportunity to consider those items on the Executive's Forward Plan for the period 1st February 2012 – 31st May 2012 which relate to the Management Scrutiny Committee.

(For copy report – see original minutes).

9. RESOLVED that the Executive's Forward Plan for the above period be received and noted.

The Chairman then closed the meeting having thanked Members and Officers for their attendance.

(Signed) R.D. TATE,
Chairman.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT & REVIEW 2011/12: PROGRESS ON REVIEWS

Report of the Chief Executive

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an update on the progress in relation to the two policy reviews being undertaken by the Management Scrutiny Committee into self regulation and illegal money lending respectively.

2. Background

- 2.1 Initial scoping documents were presented to the Committee on the 14th July 2011 which set out proposed terms of reference for each of the reviews. At its meeting on 15th September, 2011 the Committee considered scene setting reports for both reviews into self regulation (now titled Demonstrating Local Accountability: A look at the emerging national Self Regulation Framework and implications for the Council) and illegal money lending (now titled At What Cost: The Effects of High-Cost Credit and Illegal Loan Sharks on Local Communities).

3. Demonstrating Local Accountability: Policy Review - Update

- 3.1 The fourth and final workshop into Self Regulation took place on Monday 5th March 2012 and was aimed at discussing scrutiny's role in self regulation.

Review and Challenge

- 3.2 Research carried out by the Office of Public Management identified 8 important principles for effective internal review and challenge within local authorities:

- A clear role & purpose within the council's governance arrangements;
- A valued contribution to good governance;
- Focus on important issues;
- Lead and build organisational confidence in challenge;
- Use strong evidence basis for reports & recommendations;
- Aim to influence the council;
- Develop a non-party political and inclusive culture; and
- Provide the foundation for review and challenge of organisations outside the council.

- 3.3 Members at the workshop discussed these 8 principles and noted that in reference to scrutiny the aim was to influence the Cabinet by way of the policy reviews conducted and the recommendations put forward as a result. Members highlighted the importance of the various governance vehicles including scrutiny having the ability to make Cabinet and the decision makers stop and think.

- 3.4 The issue of a non-party and inclusive culture was also discussed and it was recognised that scrutiny had strived to remain relevantly non-political and inclusive. However there was also the acknowledgement that scrutiny operated within a

political arena and had local politicians at its very heart and there was always the need to be mindful of the potential political dimension.

- 3.5 Members at the workshop also highlighted the difficulty in engaging organisations outside the council. Members had experienced first hand the difficulties in getting organisations to attend scrutiny meetings particularly where there was no statutory obligation for an organisation to attend. The Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee was noted as an exception and had been able to engage and challenge outside bodies effectively.
- 3.6 Members recognised that the majority of the principles outlined were already being carried out effectively within the scrutiny environment and noted that the policy review work of the various committees used many of these principles routinely.

Accountability Works for You

- 3.7 The accountability works for you is a flexible, proportionate, locally-led framework that allows for the investigation of decisions, becoming more accountable and transparent and better involving local people. It was pointed out that the framework was not an accreditation regime, an assessment or tick box exercise. It recognises that variation and difference demonstrate bottom-up accountability and not top-down compliance. Importantly it can be used for any scale, size or location and can be tailored to the organisations precise needs.
- 3.8 The framework has some straightforward steps which hopefully will provide the means to understand the most significant challenges and focus on ways to improve:

STEP ONE: establishment of a small project group to set out remit etc.

STEP TWO: this is a high-level evaluation of current arrangements for accountability, transparency and involvement.

STEP THREE: explore in more detail cross-cutting themes from step 2.

STEP FOUR and FIVE: setting of an action plan and the monitoring of that plan in the future.

3.9 Key Benefits of the Framework

Enhances public trust – think and act constructively on good governance;

Big Opportunity – to introduce more thinking around accountability, transparency and inclusiveness to decision making process;

Improve productivity and performance - provide assurance to the public through a robust local governance regime as central government inspection is scaled back;

Delivering better services – the framework can help you to build better, more responsive and more effective services for your clients and customers;

Working in a different way – the framework can help you to prepare the way for successful commissioning, shared services and partnership working.

- 3.10 The CfPS have been piloting the framework with a number of organisations over the last six months. The organisations worked with have found that the framework has provided them with significant assistance both in improving their governance arrangements, and getting them ready for major transformational change. **Appendix 1** of this report provides further details on these pilots.
- 3.11 Members were also informed that in discussing over the 4 workshops the various strands to self regulation it was important to remember that although much of the landscape was changing there were still a number of inspection regimes that remained. The Head of Performance Improvement highlighted the recent Ofsted inspection of safeguarding and looked after children in Sunderland which highlighted that inspection still existed and in particular to those services related to the most vulnerable in society.
- 3.12 Members also expressed concern at how self regulation would be able to detect local government failure and that this was potentially the next big issue. It would be important and would require good self awareness for individual councils to define under performance. The development of regional networks was also seen as positive and could provide a collective response, which could have greater weight, to national consultations and policy direction. Members highlighted that scrutiny already worked on a regional level with a North East Regional Network for scrutiny members and officers and also a regional health network. The risk of fragmentation as evident and members acknowledged the need for regional, sub-regional and local scrutiny had never been stronger in light of the self regulation agenda.

4. At What Cost? : Policy Review - Update

- 4.1 A visit was undertaken to ShARP (Shiney Advice and Resource Project) on Thursday 23rd February 2012 to discuss issues around loan sharks and high cost credit.
- 4.2 Some of the key points arising from the discussions were as follows:
- ShARP were not seeing people coming to them with issues around illegal money lending, the main issues around debt were related to provident loans and catalogue debts.
 - ShARP were able to help the majority of people through being able to work with creditors and set up payment arrangements that were acceptable to all parties. It was noted that this service was free unlike a number of debt consolidation companies in operation.
 - Another major issue was around peoples changing circumstances having an effect on their financial situation. The loss of employment and therefore income was the main issue. However ShARP indicated that they did not see people until they were at crisis point.

- Most people who access ShARP are unemployed. Very rarely see people in full-time employment.
 - ShARP were looking at adding services to those they already provided with a particular focus on looking at the underlying issues e.g. employment support, job linkage. SHARP were also looking at linking in with other services in the area to create a multi-agency approach.
 - ShARP were beginning to see more people accessing the services and also recognised the impacts that the Welfare Reforms could have on the area. ShARP also recognised that money management was an important issue and one that could be of greater emphasis in the future.
 - ShARP also queried the involvement of the new Bridges Community Bank in ShARP. It was noted that the Wearside Credit Union also provided an opportunity for local people to access services and it would be beneficial if the Bridges Community Bank could offer something similar.
 - The issue of travel as a major barrier for local people was also noted and this had the potential to make people financially excluded.
- 4.3 The committee also contacted the Sunderland MPs for their view on high-cost credit and illegal money lending. **Appendix 2** of this report provides the full response from Sharon Hodgson MP.
- 4.4 The Shontal performance took place at the Royalty Theatre on Wednesday 29th February 2012 and a number of Members attended the performance. The drama was very powerful and illustrated the dangers of borrowing from a loan shark. Following the performance there was a question and answer session hosted by Cllr Tate with a panel of experts around illegal money lending, welfare rights and trading standards.
- 4.5 Again some of the key points arising from the Q&A session were as follows:
- There are approximately 310,000 households affected by illegal money lending and this figure is rising.
 - It was noted that this performance was the conclusion of the month of action and a range of activities and promotions had been undertaken. There would now be a time of reflection and analysis of what worked well and what should be continued. However it was noted that the illegal money lending team had already received various pieces of intelligence about illegal money lending activities.
 - There was a major concern about how the ILM Team could reassure communities and individuals that they will be safe and not victimised by the people left in the community. The ILM Team reported that the issue of being labeled a 'grass' was a difficult one to overcome but the terrorising stops as soon as it is reported, and more importantly unlicensed loans do not need to be paid back.

- It was also noted that people could report incidents anonymously on the ILM Team 24-hour hotline.
- Following the month of action the ILM Team and partners would look to target areas where intelligence has come from. There will also be the development of a range of support tools and resources that will be made available to local residents.

4.6 The review also contacted the Pallion Action Group (PAG) and discussed the key issues facing this local resource in terms of illegal money lending and high-cost credit. The main points of this discussion were as follows:

- People in the community are frightened to come forward, frightened of the repercussions.
- The area had a lot of people using provident loans to pay bills and stay afloat. PAG highlighted the need for information to be available to people of where they can access help.
- PAG highlighted the make-up of the local front street and the number of fast food outlets, licensed betting shops and payday outlets. PAG noted that this would be duplicated on every front street/high street in disadvantaged areas.
- More and more people living in poverty, as well as an over-reliance on benefits. This included actively discouraging their children from going into employment, training or education in case this jeopardised benefits.
- The PAG Money Advice Worker has seen a steady rise in the number of debt issues he is dealing with and this is estimated to be in excess of £1 million.
- Debt and a poor credit history are very easy cycles to get into. Many young people start with a mobile phone contract, they don't like the phone and stop paying the contract, and they move to another provider and repeat the process. Ultimately creating a poor credit rating through defaulting on a number of contracts, this in turn reduces their future options for borrowing money. There is not the long term thinking and implications of such actions.
- There is the 'want it now' culture particularly with young people.
- Illegal money lending has a huge impact on local communities. Many people are living in poverty and use loan sharks to 'survive'; they live in fear and danger of potential repercussions.
- Lots of young people are also getting caught in the payday loan trap through ease of access and the number of companies offering such services.
- Also if illegal sources and high-cost credit provision is removed what is available to take its place?
- PAG also identified the need to look at this issue with young people from a very early age and get young people to understand and gain an appreciation for money.

5. Next Steps

- 5.1 The evidence collected from the 4 workshops would now be drafted into a report for Management Scrutiny Committee consideration.
- 5.2 The evidence collected, from the various evidence gathering events, would now be drafted into a report for consideration by the Management Scrutiny Committee.
- 5.3 Members need to consider how they wish to discuss the draft reports as follows:
 - (i) That an informal meeting is arranged to go through the findings and discuss the reports and final drafts presented to the April meeting of the Committee;
or
 - (ii) That draft reports are circulated to Members with comments back to the Scrutiny Officer by a specified date and the final drafts presented to the April meeting of the Committee.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 That the information in the report is noted.
- 6.2 That Members give consideration to the options outlined for progress in relation to the drafting and discussion around the policy reviews.

Background Papers

Management Scrutiny Committee Papers - Minutes

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Accountability Works for You Interim Report



“Using this framework has helped us to think completely differently about accountability. We’re now in a position to demonstrate how central it is to value for money and organisational change”

“AW4U has helped to ground in practical reality what could have been quite vague discussions about the importance of transparency and openness in our organisation”

“We think the framework has the potential to offer us a robust and straightforward solution to cultural problems that other forms of evaluation and assessment have missed for years – and a proportionate way to improve”

“Accountability has to be seen as central to the whole approach to transformation and improvement”

- Reflections from the Accountability Works for You pilots

Introduction

In 2010 we published a major piece of research, “Accountability Works”, which set out our vision for accountability, transparency and involvement in the delivery of public services. With the fragmentation in the way that public services are delivered, we considered that traditional forms of accountability might no longer be sufficient to cope with an increasingly complex landscape.

We considered that accountability was best described as a “web” – a connected set of networks and relationships in which a range of people held a range of other people to account for decisions they made and outcomes they achieved. The “web of accountability” has formed the basis of our contention that all those involved in accountability – central Government monitors and inspectors, local non-executives, the press, the public and a range of others – should work together to make decision-making more open and responsive, and to help things to improve.

Central to this is the importance of culture. The attitude of decision-makers, and the attitude of those holding them to account, has to be positive and open for this new approach to accountability to succeed. We focused on cultural change as one of the principal challenges in making public services more accountable, transparent and inclusive.

We decided that, to give this research some practical purpose, and to help organisations going through significant organisational change, we should develop a proportionate and targeted framework allow them to evaluate and improve their governance arrangements. This framework is called **Accountability Works for You.**

Details of pilot areas

The framework involves five separate stages – the formation of a project group, a high-level evaluation, in-depth analysis of a couple of key cross-cutting issues, the formulation of an action plan and finally evaluation and monitoring. As part of the process of developing the framework, we have been working since February 2011 with a number of organisations to work through these stages. Work with two of them – both local authorities – has progressed far enough for us to be able to draw serious conclusions from observing the framework operating “in practice”. Because some of their and our findings on the strength of their governance structures were quite challenging, we have agreed for the moment to anonymise them in the publicity we produce.

A is a county council operating the leader and cabinet model for decision making. It is high-performing, and has had some significant successes in engaging with the public in an innovative way around budgeting and decision-making (having been cited by a number of organisations as an exemplar of good practice in this regard). However, in the face of organisational change, coupled with a feeling that opportunities for meaningful, continued community engagement have not been followed up, they considered that more work was necessary to ensure that accountability and transparency issues took centre stage. They wanted to look at the way that our framework could help them to open up decision-making and improve productivity.

For council A the high-level evaluation (HLE) was carried out as a desktop exercise by officers. The HLE started to explore some of the underlying governance issues. It crystallised a number of issues – and opportunities – which had previously been difficult to discern or describe. In particular, it helped the council to understand what accountability means in an era where Audit Commission inspection is being removed, being replaced by a more citizen-focused attitude which highlights the need for direct democracy and/or more responsive decision-making.

CfPS worked with council A to extract some cross cutting themes from the HLE. The intention in doing this was to move away from the temptation to adopt individual process solutions to particular, isolated problems or concerns highlighted by the HLE itself. The three main areas for further investigation were:

- **The need for more local and streamlined decision making.** The HLE suggested that decisions had in the past been made centrally. This may reflect wider issues around organisational culture and control. Moving to a more locally-based system for making some decisions would involve a significant change in approach.
- **Performance and improvement.** This links in with plans for local engagement and wider issues around accountability. It was thought that there may be cultural issues to tackle in ensuring that information is made available in such a way that allows constructive comment on matters relating to improvement – particularly through overview and scrutiny;
- **Broader cultural attitudes.** It was apparent that there was a culture of compliance and reaction to external stimuli; an understanding of the importance of public involvement, but a lack of managerial and executive commitment to see it through; an unwillingness to cede control over decision-making to others under certain circumstances (particularly to the public).

Steps were principally put in train to tackle these three issues as part of the development process for a Performance Management Strategy. This combines the in-depth analysis and action-planning in the AW4U framework.

At the time of writing, the strategy is still in draft. As it stands it places more of an emphasis on integrating the views of the public, partners and non-executives in the decision-making process. It suggests the establishment of an entirely new, and quite radical, approach to business planning, typified by transparency and openness. Authority A have committed to continue working with us as these plans develop.

B is an urban council with an executive mayor. Suggestions have been made that decision-making – including by individual senior decision-makers – is geared towards supporting and protecting particular interest groups rather than the community at large.

Council B is consequently keen to enhance the way that the mayor engages both with the community and with other councillors, and to enhance its governance arrangements overall. Transparency is seen as particularly important in gaining and building public trust.

Further to evidence from two scrutiny reviews carried out in 2010/11, and conversations amongst several council colleagues, a HLE was carried out. As with council A, this was a desktop exercise.

As with council A, the HLE found that there was more of an emphasis on the process, rather than the outcomes, of accountability and transparency. In particular, there is perhaps too much of an emphasis on set-piece consultation rather than ongoing inclusion. There seemed to be a disconnect between governance/decision-making and local residents that may arise from this approach. Business planning appeared opaque, making it difficult for the public or non-executives to influence decision-making. There was not much evidence that, apart from meeting statutory requirements, the council makes information available in a way that is actually useful to service users. Accountability and governance across partnerships are also fragmented. When it is considered, accountability is discussed as a standalone issue, rather than as an integral part of wider improvement.

At this stage, the process for deciding which issues to take forward for further discussion is under way.

The lessons we've learned

The organisations we've worked with have found that the framework has provided them with significant assistance both in improving their governance arrangements, and getting them ready for major transformational change.

- **Investigating, evaluating and improving governance can be perceived as risky – but there are substantial potential rewards for organisations that do so;**
- **Commitment to using the framework needs to be given from the top of the organisation, recognising that that the framework can, and should, be challenging;**
- **The framework needs to be shown to be flexible, while still providing a useful tool which is not too vague. This has been a difficult tension to resolve, but the latest version seems to strike the right balance;**
- **Organisations using the framework need to put aside enough time to plan their work. Adequate resourcing is also needed, which is why CfPS has developed an offer alongside the framework itself of external assistance, provided by our Expert Advisers;**
- **The “high level evaluation” (the part of the framework that involves a series of questions about the culture of accountability, transparency and involvement in the organisation) can be carried out as a desktop exercise, but further investigations require the involvement of a wider group of people – including councillors, service users and communities;**
- **External assistance may be crucial at certain key stages in the framework – such as the identification of cross-cutting themes for further investigation and drawing up clear action plans.**

Where we are currently and what happens next

Since February, we have been refining the framework. In particular, we've:

- built in to the high-level evaluation a series of “positive” and “negative” qualities to help people understand more clearly the questions that are being asked;
- amended the whole framework to give more of a clear emphasis to the importance of equality and fairness in dealing with the public and other stakeholders;
- explained more simply how the in-depth analysis element of the framework might work;
- provided three hypothetical, but realistic, examples of organisations using the framework, to make it more real and relevant to prospective users;
- put in more detail about the in-depth analysis that follows the high level evaluation.

We are now publishing the revised methodology for the use of the framework. This will be used for the next group of organisations who decide to use the framework. As organisations use it, and come back with their comments, we will continue to refine it. It is important that our methodology continues to change and develop as the context in which it's used changes and adapts. We will make sure that future changes are made in an understandable and transparent way by ensuring that updates happen at regular intervals, and making clear when this occurs. We are planning to make the first revision to the framework in October 2011.

By October 2011 we hope that our work with the pilot councils will have been completed. At that time, we will publish a final report, with full information on the difference that using our framework has made to their culture and approach. We will also provide an update on other participants, including CfPS itself, which is using the framework to evaluate its own governance and accountability arrangements.

For more information

We have now published the final (June 2011) framework on our website. For more information on Accountability Works for You, please contact Ed Hammond, Research and Information Manager at CfPS, on 020 7187 7369 or at ed.hammond@cfps.org.uk or visit www.cfps.org.uk/what-we-do/accountability-works.

Centre for Public Scrutiny (registered charity number 1136243)
June 2011



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Management Scrutiny Committee
Sunderland City Council
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21 February 2012

To the Management Scrutiny Committee

Illegal Money Lending and High Cost Credit review submission

Thank you for your invitation to give evidence to the Committee's review into the supply of credit and financial services in the city. While I do not feel that it would be useful to the Committee for me to give oral evidence, I welcome the opportunity to make a written submission.

Unlicensed lending has been, and probably will continue to be, a long-standing problem – particularly for families on low incomes who lack both the knowledge of alternatives and the means to secure credit from mainstream sources, such as high street banks.

Legislation is in place to protect those who either knowingly or unknowingly borrow money from an unlicensed lender. As they have no legal basis to pursue repayment, unlicensed lenders often use harassment, intimidation, and violence to compel repayment – all of which are criminal offences.

It would be useful if the Council or its partners could distribute this information, together with information on debt advice services and licensed, low-cost lending options such as credit unions available in the local area, to those who are most at risk of being targeted by unlicensed lenders. These households could be identified using indicators such as households dependent on out-of-work or disability benefits, as well as using existing untargeted means of distributing information, such as mailings to families with children. Additionally, information could be distributed in council buildings, and education sessions including debt advice could be delivered through facilities such as Children's Centres and professionals who work with the kind of households who may be at risk.

One of the biggest issues on the national level is the proliferation of high-interest 'payday' lenders, operating both over the internet and through retail premises. High interest rates and seemingly lax vetting is resulting in more and more

Recent research by R3, a group which represents debt advisors, showed that nearly a third of people who took out payday loans had to get another to pay it off, and that around three and a half million people in the UK are expected to take one out during the first half of this year.

Labour MP Stella Creasy is currently leading a campaign in Parliament for a cap on the cost of credit, and more generally to highlight the practices of high-interest lenders. While the proposals do not appear to be gaining any traction with Ministers, the campaign has been well reported, and has hopefully raised awareness of the pitfalls of high interest loans. While it is not within the purview of the Council to back such a campaign, I believe that it would be a useful time to capitalise on that heightened awareness by embarking on the kind of information/education drive detailed above.

Where possible, I also feel that it would be beneficial to the residents of Sunderland if payday lenders were discouraged from citing walk-in shops in the City centre and other commercial areas within the authority, where this can be achieved within statutory guidance on planning and business rates etc. Although a new outlet may provide a limited number of jobs, I feel strongly that having outlets of this kind readily available to residents will only serve to encourage take-up of high-cost credit, and therefore the number of residents who find themselves with unsustainable debts.

However, as the growth area in this industry is online, there are clearly limits to what the Council can do to limit exposure of residents to such options, particularly given the aforementioned marketing tactics. Once again, I feel that the most useful steps that the council can take is providing accessible advice both on debt management and the range of lending options available locally.

I hope that this submission is helpful to the review process. Please contact me on sharon.hodgson.mp@parliament.uk for any further questions or clarifications.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sharon Hodgson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Sharon Hodgson MP
Labour Member of Parliament
Washington and Sunderland West

CENTRE FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY PARLIAMENTARY SEMINAR

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 For the Committee to receive feedback from the delegate who attended the Centre for Public Scrutiny's Parliamentary Seminar held on 14th February 2012.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Handbook contains a protocol for use of the Scrutiny Committees budget by members to attend training and conferences relevant to the remit of the Committee.

3. Current Position

- 3.1 The Parliamentary Seminars aim to give elected members the opportunity to learn about parliamentary scrutiny and discuss what local and national scrutiny can learn from each other. The Seminars provide the opportunity to hear from a chair of a select committee and put questions directly to them. Seminars also include a "Questioning and chairing skills session" which explore the skills needed to evaluate evidence, understand some issues faced in scrutiny, and practice the select committee style of questioning skills.
- 3.2 Councillor Mordey attended the seminar held on 24 January 2012 and will provide Members of the Management Scrutiny Committee meeting with a brief verbal feedback of the seminar attended.

4. Recommendation

That the Committee note the comments and feedback from Councillor Mordey on the content and value of the Seminars attended.

5. Background Papers

There were no background papers

Contact Officer: Nigel Cummings 0191 561 1006
Scrutiny Officer

MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

SCRUTINY COMMITTEES WORK PROGRAMMES FOR 2011-12

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

15 March 2012

Strategic Priority: ALL

Corporate Improvement Objective : ALL

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The report attaches, for Members' information, the variations to the Scrutiny Committees work programmes for 2011/12 and provides an opportunity to review the Committee's own work programme for 2011/12.

2. Background

- 2.1 The role of the Management Scrutiny Committee is two-fold, firstly it has a role in co-ordinating efficient business across the seven Scrutiny Committees and manage the overall Scrutiny Work Programme and secondly to consider the Council's corporate policies, performance and financial issues.
- 2.2 The aim of its co-ordinating role is to avoid duplication, make best use of resources and to provide a corporate overview of the Overview and Scrutiny Function. As such the remainder of this report outlines the current work programmes of the Scrutiny Committees.

3. Scrutiny Committees Work Programmes

- 3.1 **Appendix 1** sets out the changes this month to the Scrutiny Committee work programmes from those endorsed at the start of the municipal year. Each Scrutiny Committee receives its own work programme in full each month in order to review progress.

4. Management Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme

- 4.1 **Appendix 2** outlines this Committee's full work programme for the year, updated to reflect new additions and amendments requested by Committee as the year has progressed.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 That the Committee notes the variations to the Scrutiny Committees Work Programmes for 2011-12 and to its own work programme.

6. Background Papers

Scrutiny Committee Agendas – April 2012 cycle of meetings.

Contact Officer: Nigel Cummings, Scrutiny Officer
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	JUNE 9.6.11	JULY 21.7.11	SEPTEMBER 8.9.11	OCTOBER 20.10.11	DECEMBER 8.12.11	DECEMBER 14.12.11	JANUARY 12.1.12	FEBRUARY 23.2.12	APRIL 5.4.12
Cabinet Referrals and Responses		Article 4: Youth Justice Plan 2011/12 (JH/GK)	Cabinet Response to 2010/11 Policy Review – Learning at Work (NC) Article 4: CYPP Annual Report			Evidence Gathering Meeting			Article 4: CYPP Update
Policy Review	Proposals for policy review (NC)	Scope of review (NC)	Approach to the Review (NC)	Update on Policy Review (NC)	Policy Review – Update Expert Jury Event		Policy Review	Policy Review – Update Policy Review 2010/11 - Update	Policy Review – Draft Report
Performance	Looked After Children and the Court System (MB) Youth Commissioned Contracts (SM)	Schools Performance - Termly Report (MF) Breaks for Carers of Disabled Children (KP)	Provisional KS Results (MF/AB) Performance & VfM Annual Report (BS) Monitoring of Scrutiny Recommendations (NC)	Complaints Annual Report 11/12 (BS) SSCB Annual Report and Business Plan (JV) New Ofsted Inspection Framework (MF)	Ofsted Annual Children's Services Assessment (BS) Performance Q2 April – Sept (BS) Admissions Report Fixed Penalty Notices (MF)		Review of Acute Special Paediatric Service (LT) Outcomes from Unannounced Inspection Early Intervention Core Offer Library Plan (JH)	Verified Key Stage Results (MF) Education Act 2011 CAMHS - specialist Community Children and young People's Service (NHS).	Schools Performance – Termly Report (MF)
Scrutiny	Work Programme 2011/12 (NC) Forward Plan (NC) Safe & Sustainable Consultation: Children's Heart Services (NC)	Work Programme 2011/12 (NC) Forward Plan (NC)	Work Programme 2011/12 (NC) Forward Plan (NC)	Work Programme 2011/12 (NC) Forward Plan (NC)	Work Programme 2011/12 (NC) Forward Plan (NC)		Work Programme 2011/12 (NC) Forward Plan (NC)	Corporate Parenting Annual Report (MB) Work Programme 2011/12 (NC) Forward Plan (NC)	Scrutiny Annual Report (NC) Work Programme 2011/12 (NC) Forward Plan (NC)
CCFA/Members items/Petitions									

To be scheduled: Behaviour & Attendance Strategy
School Place Planning
Contact, Referral and Assessment Arrangements – Action Plan

COMMUNITY AND SAFER CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2011-12

	JUNE 07.06.11	JULY 19.07.11	SEPTEMBER 06.9.11	OCTOBER 18.10.11	DECEMBER 06.12.11	JANUARY 10.01.12	FEBRUARY 21.02.12	APRIL 03.04.12
Cabinet Referrals and Responses			Response to the 10/11 Policy Review – Alcohol, Violence and the Night Time Economy (JD)					
Policy Review	Annual Work Programme and Policy Review 2011/2012 (JD)	Policy Review into Community Cohesion - Scoping Report (JD)	Policy Review into Community Cohesion – Scene Setting (JD)	Policy Review into Community Cohesion -Evidence Gathering (JD)	Policy Review into Community Cohesion – Evidence Gathering (JD)	Policy Review into Community Cohesion – Evidence Gathering (JD)	Policy Review into Community Cohesion - Evidence gathering (JD) Show Racism the Red Card (JD)	Policy Review: Final Report (JD)
Scrutiny			Performance Report (Gillian Robinson) Progress on Past Recommendations (JD)		Performance Q2/ Policy Review Progress (Mike Lowe)			Performance Q3/ (Mike Lowe)
Scrutiny (Performance)	Food Law Enforcement (Norma Johnston) Forward Plan (SA)	Police Reform and Social Responsibility Bill - Update (Stuart Douglass) Drug Misuse – Update (Leanne Davis) Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Emergency Planning (Barry Frost) Neighbourhood Helpline (LSL) Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 (SD) Work Programme (JD) Forward Plan (JD)	Work Programme (JD) Forward Plan (JD)	Work Programme (JD) Forward Plan (JD)
CCFA/Members items/Petitions								

Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee 2011/12

REASON FOR INCLUSION	JUNE 13.06.11	JULY 25.07.11	SEPTEMBER 12.9.11	OCTOBER 24.10.11	NOVEMBER (TBA)	DECEMBER 12.12.11	JANUARY 16.01.12	FEBRUARY 27.02.12	MARCH 13.03.112	APRIL 02.04.12
Cabinet- Referrals and Responses			Response to the 10/11 Policy Review – Sunderland 'the Place'							
Policy Review	Annual Work Programme and Policy Review (HL)	Scoping Report and Setting the Scene (HL/Les Clark)	Approach to the Review (HL)	Low Carbon Public Transport (Nexus, Go NorthEast, Stagecoach) Policy Review Progress Report (HL)		Policy Review Progress Report (HL) Response to the Review (from city MPs) (HL)	Procurement of Low Carbon Vehicles (Ian Taylor, NEPO) Policy Review Progress Report (HL) Best Practice (HL) Expenditure in support of the Policy Review (HL)	Low Carbon Vehicle Sector (TBC) Cost Benefit Analysis - Genex (Les Clark)	Policy Review: Draft Final Report (HL)	Policy Review: Final Report (HL)
Performance			Performance Q1 (Kelly Davison-Pullan) Policy Review Recommendations: Performance (HL)			Performance (Kelly Davison-Pullan)				Performance (Kelly Davison-Pullan)
Scrutiny	Seaburn Masterplan and Design Code (Keith Lowes) Forward Plan (SA)	Highways Maintenance (Graham Carr) Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (Neil Cole) Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Public Conveniences (Les Clark) Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Public Transport (Nexus) Waste Management (Les Clark) Catchment Flood Management Plans (Neil Cole) Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Prioritisation Framework for Traffic and Road Safety (1) (Les Clark)	Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Prioritisation Framework for Traffic and Road Safety (2) (Les Clark) Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Fawcett St (Les Clark) School Travel Plans (Les Clark) Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Local Development Framework (Neil Cole) –Annual Update Community Infrastructure Levy (Neil Cole)	Draft Scrutiny Annual Report (HL) Street Lighting Annual Update (Graham Carr/Aurora) Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)
CCFA/Members items/Petitions	Request for Inclusion of an Item - Planning Applications (HL)									

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2011-12

	JUNE 08.06.11	JULY 19.07.11	SEPTEMBER 6.09.11	OCTOBER 19.10.11	23.11.11	DECEMBER 07.12.11	JANUARY 11.01.12	12.1.12	FEBRUARY 22.02.12	29.2.12	APRIL 4.04.12	
Cabinet Referrals & Responses			Cabinet Response to 2010/11 Hospital Food & Veterans Policy Reviews		Policy Review: Evidence Gathering Day			Policy Review: Evidence Gathering Day		Policy Review: Community Event		
Policy Review	Work Programme & Policy Review – Delayed Discharge & Reablement (KB)	Scope of Policy Review (KJB)	Endorse co-opted representation Setting the Scene – Delayed Discharge (JC/AN) Monitoring Action Plans: Dementia, Home Care, Health Inequalities	Community Health Services (BA) CQC In-patient survey leaving health services			Out of Hours (JU)					Final Report
Performance			Q4 Performance Report (KDP)			Q1 & Q2 Performance (ML)						Q3 Performance (SL) Veterans Review Update (KB)
Scrutiny	Safe and Sustainable: Consultation (KB) Integrated Strategic & Operational Plan (STPCT) Health & Well-Being Board (NR)	Campus Completion Programme (PCT/NTW) Training Standards Care Homes (GK)	Procurement of social care for adults with a learning disability – progress report (PF)	Meals at Home Service (PC) Barnston Medical Centre Procurement (PCT) End of Life Facilities (PCT)		In-patient beds for LD (NTW) Community Covenant (KB) Social Care Contributions consultation (GK)	HHAS 15 year strategy (NR/DA) Health Watch (JC) Acutely sick children consultation (SOTW)		Public Health Transition update (SR) Health Strategy consultation (VT) 'Clear & Credible' Plan (CCG)			Annual Commissioning Plan (STPCT) Urgent & Emergency Care Services (NHS SOTW)
CCfA/Members items/Petitions		Request to attend conferences Feedback visit to Wearmouth View								Draft Annual Report (KB)		

PROSPERITY AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2011-12

	JUNE 07.06.11	JULY 19.07.11	SEPTEMBER 06.9.11	OCTOBER 18.10.11	DECEMBER 06.12.11	JANUARY 10.01.12	FEBRUARY 21.02.12	APRIL 03.04.12
Cabinet referrals and responses			Response to the 10/11 Policy Review – Low Carbon Economy			Wearmouth Masterplan (ML)		
Policy Review	Annual Work Programme and Policy Review 2011/2012 (JD)	Policy Review - Scoping Report - Aim 1 of Economic Masterplan – University City (JD) Policy Review – Scene Setting (JD)	Policy Review – Evidence Gathering (JD) Visit to Port (JD)	Policy Review - Evidence Gathering – Links with Business	Policy Review – Evidence Gathering (JD) Visit to example of best practice – Sheffield Hallam University (VT)	Policy Review – Evidence Gathering (JD) University of Sunderland visit (JD)	Policy Review – Evidence Gathering – Skills (JD)	Policy Review: Final Report (JD)
Performance			Performance Q1 (Mike Lowe) Progress on Previous Policy Reviews (JD)		Performance Q2/ Policy Review Progress (Mike Lowe)			Performance Q3/ (Mike Lowe) Update on Previous Policy Reviews (JD)
Scrutiny	City Centre Improvement Programme – Support for Business(GF) Seaburn Masterplan (KL) Forward Plan (SA)	Work Programme (JD) Forward Plan (JD)	Work Programme (JD) Forward Plan (JD)	North East Chamber of Commerce (Jonathan Walker) Review into Tourism – Feedback (JH) Port of Sunderland – Feedback from Visit (JD) Work Programme (JD) Forward Plan (JD)	Welfare Benefits (Fiona Brown) Work Programme (JD) Forward Plan (JD)	Sub National Economic Development - LEP (JD) Work Programme (JD) Forward Plan (JD)	Sub National Economic Development - LEP (JD) Wear Bridge (VT) Work Programme (JD) Forward Plan (JD)	Portas Report Work Programme (JD) Forward Plan (JD)
CCFA/Members items/Petitions								

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2011-12

	JUNE 14.06.11	JULY 26.07.11	SEPTEMBER 13.09.11	OCTOBER 25.10.11	DECEMBER 13.12.11	JANUARY 17.01.12	FEBRUARY 28.02.12	APRIL 17.04.12
Cabinet- Referrals and Responses			Response to the 10/11 Policy Review – Role of Culture in Supporting Sustainable Communities (Cllr Kelly)					
Policy Review	Annual Work Programme and Policy Review 2011/2012 (HL)	Policy Review – Scoping (HL) Scene Setting (JDG/VF)	Approach to the Policy Review (HL)	Active Sunderland Board (VF)	Policy Review Progress Report (HL) Community and Education Facilities (HL) 2012 in Sunderland Update (VF)	Sport and Physical Activity Providers (HL/VF)	Mapping Exercise and Consultation Results (Incorporating Future Priority Sports/Activities (VF) Sport England (I Thurlbeck & J Rasmusson)	Policy Review: Final Report (HL)
Performance			Performance Q4 (KDP) Policy Review Progress (HL)		Performance (KDP)			Performance Policy Review Progress (HL)
Scrutiny	Housing Allocations Policy (AC) Forward Plan (HL)	Private Sector Enforcement Policy 2010/11 – Update (AC) Work Programme (HW) Forward Plan (HW)	Empty Property Plan (AC) Work Programme (HW) Forward Plan (HW)	Empire Theatre Annual Report (VM) Maudlin St (AC) Low Carbon Social Housing Pilot (AC) Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Annual Heritage Report (VM) Built Heritage (ML) Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (AC) Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Cultural Strategy (CDA) Community Development Service and VCS Annual Report (JDG) Enabling Independence Strategy Update (AC) Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Localism Act: Housing (AC) Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)	Empty Properties Year End (AC) Cultural Strategy Progress (JH) Work Programme (SA) Forward Plan (SA)
CCFA/ Members items/Petitions								

REASON FOR INCLUSION	JUNE 16.6.11	JULY 14.7.11	SEPTEMBER 15.9.11	OCTOBER 13.10.11	NOVEMBER 10.11.11	DECEMBER 15.12.11	JANUARY 19.1.12	FEBRUARY 16.2.12	MARCH 15.3.12	APRIL 19.4.12
Cabinet Referrals and Responses		Revenue & Capital Budget Variations 1 st Q – 2011/12 (ST)	Response to the 10/11 Policy Review – Smarter Working (NC)	Proposal for Budget Consultation 2012/13 (ST) Budget Planning Framework 2012/13 (ST) Revenue & Capital Budget Variations 2 nd Q (ST)			Council Tax Base 2012/13 (ST) Revenue & Capital Budget Variations 3 rd Q (ST) Provisional Budget Proposals 2012/13 (ST)	Budget & Service Reports - Collection Fund 11/12 - Revenue Budget & Proposed Council Tax 11/12 - Capital Programme 12/13		
Policy Review	Proposals for Policy Review (NC)	Self Regulation & Illegal Money Lending Scoping Paper for Policy Review (NC)	Approach & Setting the Scene Policy Reviews (NC)	Self Regulation & Illegal Money Lending Policy Review Progress Report (NC)	Presentation by the ILM Team (NC)	Self Regulation & Illegal Money Lending – Policy Review Update (NC)	Self Regulation & Illegal Money Lending – Policy Review Update (NC)	Self Regulation & Illegal Money Lending – Policy Review Update (NC)	Self Regulation & Illegal Money Lending – Policy Review Update (NC)	Policy Review Draft Reports (NC)
Performance	Service Planning Arrangements for 2012/13 (JB)		Performance & VfM Assessment (SR)			Performance Management Q2 (SR) Annual Audit Letter (GB)				Performance Management (Q3) (SR)
Scrutiny	Forward Plan (NC) Work Programme (NC)	Forward Plan (NC) Work Programmes of all Scrutiny Committees (NC) CfPS Conference Feedback (HL) Annual Scrutiny Conference Feedback (SA)	Forward Plan (NC) Work Programmes of all Scrutiny Committees (NC) Request to attend Conference (NC)	Forward Plan (NC) Work Programmes of all Scrutiny Committees (NC) H&S Report: Changing the Safety Culture in StreetScene (SS)	Forward Plan (NC) Work Programmes of all Scrutiny Committees (NC) LSP Annual Review (JM)	Forward Plan (NC) Work Programmes of all Scrutiny Committees (NC) LGC Conference Feedback (CB)	Forward Plan (NC) Work Programmes of all Scrutiny Committees (NC) Request to attend seminar (NC) CfPS Annual Conference attend (NC)	Welfare Reform Bill (FB) Apprenticeships & Early Retirements (SS) Forward Plan (NC) Work Programmes of all Scrutiny Committees (NC)	CfPS Seminar - Feedback Forward Plan (NC) Work Programmes of all Scrutiny Committees (NC)	The Localism Act (JB) Draft Scrutiny Annual Report (NC) Forward Plan (NC) Work Programmes of all Scrutiny Committees (NC)
CCFA/Members items/Petitions										

MANAGEMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

FORWARD PLAN – KEY DECISIONS FOR THE PERIOD 1 MARCH 2012 – 30 JUNE 2012

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

15 MARCH 2012

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide Members with an opportunity to consider those items on the Executive's Forward Plan for the period 1 March 2012 – 30 June 2012 which relate to the Management Scrutiny Committee.

2. Background Information

- 2.1 Holding the Executive to account is one of the main functions of Scrutiny. One of the ways that this can be achieved is by considering the forthcoming decisions of the Executive (as outlined in the Forward Plan) and deciding whether Scrutiny can add value in advance of the decision being made. This does not negate Non-Executive Members ability to call-in a decision after it has been made.
- 2.2 To this end, it has been agreed that the most recent version of the Executive's Forward Plan should be included on the agenda of this Committee. The Forward Plan for the period 1 March 2012 – 30 June 2012 is attached marked **Appendix 1**.

3. Current Position

- 3.1 In considering the Forward Plan, Members are asked to consider only those issues which are under the remit of the Management Scrutiny Committee. These are as follows:-

Corporate Improvement Plan; Sunderland Strategy; Partnerships (including relations with external bodies); enhancing the role and reputation of Sunderland regionally, nationally and internationally; co-ordination and development of the Scrutiny Function; Asset Management, Property Services and Building Maintenance; Area Frameworks; Corporate Communications; External Assessments; Public Protection and Trading Standards; Governance; Emergency Planning (to refer to appropriate Scrutiny Committee); Budget, financial resources and value for money; and to review any matter not falling within the remit of the other Scrutiny Committees.

- 3.3 In the event of Members having any queries that cannot be dealt with directly in the meeting, a response will be sought from the relevant Directorate.

4. Recommendations

- 4.1 To consider the Executive's Forward Plan for the period 1 March 2012 – 30 June 2012.

5. Background Papers

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

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**Forward Plan -
Key Decisions
for the period
01/Mar/2012 to
30/Jun/2012**



**E Waugh,
Head of Law and Governance,
Sunderland City Council.**

14 February 2012

Forward Plan: Key Decisions from - 01/Mar/2012 to 30/Jun/2012

No.	Description of Decision	Decision Taker	Anticipated Date of Decision	Principal Consultees	Means of Consultation	When and how to make representations and appropriate Scrutiny Committee	Documents to be considered	Contact Officer	Tel No
01562	To approve the Public Health Transition plan	Cabinet	14/Mar/2012	Cabinet, Council Directorates, Council Partners connected to health agenda	Discussion and circulation of drafts of the plan through the Early Implementer Health and Wellbeing Board in early draft (public meeting) and advisory boards. Circulation of draft plan through the LSP and on the LSP website	Via the Contact Officer by 22 February 2012 - Health and Well-Being Scrutiny Committee	Public Health Transition Plan for Sunderland and Cabinet paper	Sarah Reed	5611134
01563	To approve the arrangements for admissions to schools in Sunderland for the academic year 2012/2013	Cabinet	14/Mar/2012	All Sunderland schools, CE & RC Diocese, neighbouring LAs, Commercial and Corporate Services	Distribution of documents and publication on website	Via the contact officer by 22 February 2012 - Children, Young People and Learning Scrutiny	DfE Guidance on school admissions	Val Thompson	5611372
01565	To approve the Local Authority Mortgage Scheme	Cabinet	14/Mar/2012	Cabinet, Service Users and Ward Members, Portfolio Holders	Briefings and/or meetings with interested parties	Via the Contact Officer by 22 February 2012 - Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee	Full Report	Phillip Foster	5662042

Forward Plan: Key Decisions from - 01/Mar/2012 to 30/Jun/2012

No.	Description of Decision	Decision Taker	Anticipated Date of Decision	Principal Consultees	Means of Consultation	When and how to make representations and appropriate Scrutiny Committee	Documents to be considered	Contact Officer	Tel No
01556	To agree the new Equality Scheme for the Council and respond to the Equality Act 2010.	Cabinet	14/Mar/2012	Citizen Panel, Equality Forums, Voluntary Community Sector Forum, Employees	Briefing and attendance at group sessions.	Via Contact Officer by 22 February 2011 - Management Scrutiny Committee	Cabinet report and Equality Scheme	Jane Hibberd	5614587
01561	To approve the Highway Maintenance Programme for 2012/13.	Executive Director of City Services	18/Apr/2012	Member with Portfolio for Attractive and Inclusive City; Utility Companies; Elected Members;	Meetings; Correspondence	In writing to Decision Taker by 21 March 2012 - Environment and Attractive City Scrutiny Committee	Key Delegated Decision and Report	Graham Carr	5611298
01564	To approve the new Landlords Accreditation Scheme.	Cabinet	18/Apr/2012	Cabinet, Service Users and Ward Members, Portfolio Holders	Briefings and/or meeting with interested parties	Via the Contact Officer by 21 March 2012 - Sustainable Communities Scrutiny Committee	Full Report	Alan Caddick	5662690