

ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME AND POLICY REVIEW 2011-12

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES: SP3: SAFE CITY

CORPORATE PRIORITIES: CIO1: Delivering Customer Focussed Services, C102: Being 'One Council', C103: Efficient and Effective Council, C104: Improving partnership working to deliver 'One City'

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 For members to determine the Annual Work Programme for the Scrutiny Committee during 2011-12, 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 remit:

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 Sunderland Strategy. This allows each Scrutiny Committee to focus on the priority areas and targets in the Sunderland Strategy and for the work of all Scrutiny Committees to consistently address those areas of performance requiring detailed examination.
- 2.3 This approach, linked to strategic priorities, is proposed to allow a clear themed focus on the outcomes for the people of Sunderland, and allow 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, 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 perspective of residents affected by the policy.

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:-

- Economic Challenges facing Sunderland
- Tourism and Marketing
- Working Neighbourhood Strategy
- Low Carbon Economy

All previous reviews are available at:-

<http://www.sunderland.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=3420>

3.4 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.

- 3.5 The shortlist of topics for 2011-12 is listed below. The Committee is recommended to select one topic from this shortlist for an in-depth review. The list includes topics suggested as priorities at the discussions between members, officers and partners at the Annual Scrutiny Conference on 19 May 2011.

Suggested Topics for Policy Review		
	Brief Description	Objective
1.	SubNational Economic Development	The review could consider the implications of the new arrangements to support sub-national economic development (i.e. the abolition of the Regional Development Agencies, changes to Business Link, the introduction of Local Enterprise Partnerships, etc) and how the Council is responding to the challenges and opportunities presented.
2.	Worklessness	The review could consider the implications of the new arrangements to address worklessness (introduction of the national Work Programme, changes to out of work benefits, withdrawal of the Working Neighbourhoods Fund, etc) and how the Council is responding to the challenges and opportunities presented.
3.	University City	To investigate the plans the city has under Aim 1 of the Economic Masterplan to create "a new kind of university city". This will be informed by the Committee developing a good understanding of the influence that the University has on the city's economy currently as well as the potential to increase that. This would include issues such as graduate attraction and retention as well as commercialisable research and business support for growth. It will also require an investigation of the experiences of at least one other similar University and the role it plays in its own city's economy.

4. Work Programme

- 4.1 A draft work programme for 2011-12 is attached as Appendix A. The work programme will be populated with items agreed by members at this meeting and submitted to the July meeting.

4.2 The work programme can be amended during the year. 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 2011-12 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

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