

Report to: Scrutiny Management Panel Chairperson (3rd September)

Report from: Head of Audit and Performance Improvement

Report by: Paddy May, Corporate Strategy Manager, and Leah Feltham, Strategy Adviser

The Scrutiny Work Programme and Corporate Strategy

1. Purpose

To inform the development of the 2009/10 Scrutiny Work Programme by providing members with details of links between proposed topics, corporate priorities and existing performance issues.

2. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- (i) Consider corporate priorities and performance improvement issues in agreeing the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2009/10
- (ii) Consider whether to include new Scrutiny Reviews in respect of those corporate priorities currently under-represented in the Work Programme (see para 5)
- (iii) Consider whether to include new Scrutiny Reviews in respect of other known performance issues (see para 6).

3. Background

3.1 This report is designed to assist members in deciding which topics should be included on the Scrutiny Work Programme 2009/10. A key role of Scrutiny is to help the council achieve its priorities and improve performance by scrutinising areas of under-performance and recommending ways to improve.

3.2 Members of Scrutiny Panels have put forward suggestions for future reviews and these have been analysed against the council's 8 agreed priorities. These are:

- Reduce crime and the fear of crime
- Increase availability and affordability of housing
- Protect and support our most vulnerable residents
- Improve efficiency and encourage involvement
- Raise standards in English and Maths
- Regenerate the city
- Cleaner and greener city
- Improve public transport

3.3 The proposed scrutiny topics have also been compared to known areas of under-performance or areas where improvements have been identified (e.g. through external inspections or audits). The council measures its performance across a number of areas including:

- Local Area Agreement (LAA) targets (which are agreed with partner organisations and Central Government)
- Key Delivery Targets (KDTs), which are pledges by Cabinet Members to deliver services
- Corporate Health indicators, which measure how the council functions as an organisation
- Delivery of projects

- Managing risks
- Corporate Improvement Plan, which includes areas for improvement identified through external inspections and audits

3.4 Included at **Appendix 1** is a table showing how the proposed Scrutiny Topics relate to the Corporate Priorities and Performance issues as described in 3.2 and 3.3 above.

4. **Scrutiny topics that relate to performance**

The table in appendix 1 shows which of the suggested scrutiny topics relate to performance issues around PCC and the following outlines these issues in more detail.

1. Allocation of housing, including LAH's under occupation policy and its use - Relates to LAA 6.3, Households in temporary accommodation, which was rated 'red' for poor performance at the end of Q1 2009/10. The actual number at this time was 80. Because of the way in which it is scored this indicator is not seen as representative of performance, but officers have commented that they have seen a rise in the number of homeless households placed in temporary accommodation.

2. Social care service (several suggested topics) - The percentage of child protection reviews held within the target time in quarter 1 fell from 100% to 96.99%. This fall can actually be accounted to one sibling group, whose review took place one day after the 91 day maximum. However, LAA 10.2, the percentage of initial assessments for children's social care carried out within seven working days of referral, is also worsening and was at 73% at quarter 1. The number of reviews carried out on time is actually rising but against a backdrop of a higher number of referrals. The service is currently restructuring the social care teams.

3. Business Continuity - This relates to a risk on the Corporate Risk Register that is currently rated red: the risk that a predictable event occurs and impacts on the organisation's ability to deliver and resource services.

4. Combating the use and promotion of illicit substances in schools - Our LAA includes a target to reduce the percentage of young people reporting either frequent misuse of drugs/volatile substances or both (10.10). No recent data is available for this indicator, as it relies on the results of the 'Tellus' survey, but 2008 results show that this was at 14.2%.

5. Sex education in schools and the community - LAA 10.4, teenage conceptions at 15-17, was rated red for performance in quarter 1 because of a significant increase over a one year period, but this is based on relatively small numbers and the three-year rolling average shows a smaller increase. The teenage pregnancy action plan is currently being reviewed.

6. Taking on young people for work experience - This is rated to the number of young people not in employment education or training (NEET), which is measure in our LAA (1.17 and 1.18). This was rated red for performance in quarter 1 as the percentage is rising.

7. The Property Portfolio - This relates to a recommendation in the current corporate Improvement Plan: 'develop a councillor-led corporate approach to asset management and ensure robust systems are in place to assess suitability and VFM especially with regard to property and maintenance'. At the end of quarter 1 2009/10,

officers rated this recommendation 'amber' for the progress made towards achievement and 'red' for resources available. The Asset Management Plan has been developed and the condition of council properties has been assessed and reported on. New software is now needed for an asset register. Members should note, however, that some of these issues are being considered by the Asset Management Group (a member/officer board).

5. The representation of corporate priorities in the suggested scrutiny topics

Two of the council's eight priorities are currently under-presented in the proposed programme of Scrutiny Topics:

- Cleaner and greener city
- Improve public transport

Members may wish to consider whether there are any issues relating to these priorities that would benefit from a Scrutiny Review.

6. Further scrutiny topics for consideration

The following highlights further performance issues that have not yet been suggested by Members for Scrutiny reviews:

- Staff sickness absence: The average number of sickness absence days taken per employee per year has remained high (at 10.3 days or over) for the last two years.
- Risk Management at PCC: although the Council has robust processes in place for identifying and monitoring risks, progress in implementing control measures has been inconsistent.
- Display Energy Certificates (DECs). These measure the energy efficiency of council buildings and a large proportion of buildings are currently in the worst category (G) either through poor energy efficiency or lack of accurate data.

Signed:

Jon Bell, Head of Audit and Performance

Background List of Documents
Quarterly Performance Reports
Corporate Plan 2008/09

Appendix 1

These proposed scrutiny topics relate directly to known performance/improvement issues	These proposed scrutiny topics directly support one or more of the council's 8 corporate priorities	Other topics not directly linked to improvement issues or corporate priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allocation of housing, including LAH's under occupation policy and it's use ▪ Social Care services - protection of vulnerable children ▪ Social Care services – protection of vulnerable young adults ▪ Business Continuity ▪ Combating the use and promotion of illicit substances in schools ▪ Sex education in schools and the community ▪ Taking on young people for work experience ▪ Property portfolio 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whether to re-commence building council homes (<i>Increase availability, affordability and quality of housing</i>) ▪ Engagement of parents and other significant adults in the welfare and education of children (<i>Raise standards in English and maths</i>) ▪ Provision of education and services to disabled YP in further education (<i>Protect and support our most vulnerable residents</i>) ▪ Provision of education and services to disabled children in secondary education (<i>Protect and support our most vulnerable residents</i>) ▪ Provision of education and services to disabled children in primary education (<i>Protect and support our most vulnerable residents</i>) ▪ Provision of education and services to disabled and disadvantaged children undergoing special measures (<i>Protect and support our most vulnerable residents</i>) ▪ Provision of education and services to disabled children at the pre-school stage (<i>Protect and support our most vulnerable residents</i>) ▪ Discipline and control of unruly pupils (<i>Raise standards in English and maths</i>) ▪ PCC's recycling performance (<i>Cleaner and greener city</i>) ▪ Respite Care (<i>Protect and support our most vulnerable residents</i>) ▪ Care in the community (<i>Protect and support our most vulnerable residents</i>) ▪ Combating the carriage of offensive weapons (<i>Reduce crime and the fear of crime</i>) ▪ Corporate Website (<i>Improve efficiency and encourage involvement</i>) ▪ Access Strategy (<i>Improve efficiency and encourage involvement</i>) ▪ The public and employee suggestion scheme (<i>Improve efficiency and encourage involvement</i>) ▪ Accommodation in the Civic Offices (<i>Improve efficiency and encourage involvement</i>) ▪ PCC's activity surrounding economic development (<i>Improve efficiency and encourage involvement</i>) ▪ The cost of democracy (<i>Improve efficiency and encourage involvement</i>) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Levels of intervention by the Council in the lives of Young People, children and families ▪ Teacher and education worker protection and safety ▪ Councilor's safety and wellbeing ▪ Cemeteries ▪ Identifying space for visiting exhibitions ▪ Sexual Health ▪ Fluoridation of drinking water supplies ▪ Properties under the culture portfolio

