

By: Paul Wickenden, Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager
To: Scrutiny Board – 8 September 2010
Subject: **Select Committee work programme**

Summary: To receive an update on the current Topic Review Programme and the resources available to deliver it.

Resources to Deliver the Select Committee Work Programme

1. I currently have two and a half FTE Research officers supporting the Select Committee topic review programme. They are supported by three Democratic Services Officers from the Overview and Scrutiny team who also support the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In addition I have one Research officer who is dedicated entirely to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. There is also the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee Research Officer, who in addition to supporting this Committee also carry's out a number of specific projects to support the development of the Overview and Scrutiny function.

Select Committee Work Programme – 2010

Renewable Energy Select Committee

2. (1) The Select Committee on Renewable Energy, under the Chairmanship of Mr Ferrin, has now completed its evidence gathering. It has received written and oral evidence from a wide range of stakeholders including the Environment Agency, Energy Saving Trust, Forestry Commission, National Farmers' Union, energy and engineering companies, environmental protection organisations, community groups and individual residents. In addition, a questionnaire has been distributed to Kent schools.

(2) Members of the Committee have also visited the headquarters of a renewable energy company, a national conference (Ecobuild), a regional conference on Combined Heat and Power and Distributed Generation (held at Sessions House) a local conference (Protect Kent's 'Keeping the Lights on') and a Kent primary school which aims to be the first carbon-negative school in Europe.

(3) The draft report is in the process of being agreed by the Select Committee and will be shared with the Cabinet Member(s) and Directorates before it is finalised and submitted to County Council, via Cabinet. In accordance with the agreed timetable this report is due to be submitted to County Council on 14 October 2010. However, due to the large number of stakeholders that need to be consulted on the draft report in order to get wide engagement with the recommendations, it is not possible to do this effectively and submit the report to the meeting of the County Council in October. The Board is therefore requested to extend the timescale for this review to enable

this consultation to take place and the report to be submitted to the County Council at its meeting on 9 December 2010. It should be noted that this will mean that both the Renewable Energy and the Extended Services Select Committee reports will be submitted to the County Council in December 2010.

Extended Services Select Committee

(4) The Select Committee on Extended Services under the Chairmanship of Mr Burgess has now completed its evidence gathering and has interviewed a number of key stakeholders including young people.

(5) A first draft of the committee's report, which is currently being written, will be discussed by the Select Committee in September 2010 and shared with the Cabinet Member(s), Officers and key stakeholders before it is finalised for submission to Cabinet in November 2010 and County Council in December 2010.

Educational Attainment Select Committee

(6) The POCC also agreed that a Select Committee review of Educational Attainment of Pupils in Schools in Areas of High Deprivation would start in the summer of 2010. A research officer has been identified for this review and background research had been started.

Dementia Select Committee

(7) The meeting of the Scrutiny Board on 22 April 2010 it was agreed that the Adult Social Services Policy Overview Committee would be the parent Committee for the topic review on Dementia, with the opportunity for the Membership to include Members from both ASS POSC and HOSC, and that this review would be started in the Autumn of 2010 and reported to County Council in April 2011.

Topics for future reviews

3. (1) Based on the current work programme there will be one full time Research Officer available to begin a new review in the autumn of 2010, with the remaining full time and part time officers being available at the end of 2010.

(2) As agreed at the meeting of the Scrutiny Board on 24 February 2010, during the April and July cycle of Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings Members were given the opportunity to put forward topics for topic reviews, to date no suggestions have been received. Further opportunities to put forward suggestions, via the Members Information Bulletin and Corporate Management Team will be initiated and the outcome reported to this Board.

4. Recommendations that

(a) the progress of the Select Committee topic reviews on Renewable Energy and Extended Services and the proposed Select Committees on Educational

Attainment and Dementia be noted

(b) the timescale for the Renewable Energy Review be extended and that it reports to County Council in December 2010.

(b) suggestions for future topic reviews continue to be sought and reported back to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Board.

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