

By: Peter Sass, Head of Democratic Services

To: Scrutiny Board – 26 May 2011

Subject: **Select Committee Work Programme**

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

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## **1. Resources to Deliver the Select Committee Work Programme**

(1) There are currently two and a half FTE Research officers supporting the Select Committee topic review programme. On 4 April 2011 the line management of these officers was transferred to the Business Strategy Division of the Business Strategy and Support Directorate. They are continuing to work on their respective Select Committee. They are supported by three Democratic Services Officers from the Overview and Scrutiny team who also support the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committees. In addition there is one Research Officer who is dedicated entirely to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and a Research Officer to the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee, who in addition to supporting the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee also carries out a number of specific projects to support the development of the Overview and Scrutiny function.

## **2. Select Committees that have completed their work**

### *Renewable Energy and Extended Services Select Committees*

(1) In accordance with the monitoring process agreed by the County Council, an action plan for the recommendations from the Renewable Energy Select Committee was submitted to the Environment, Highways and Waste POSC on 8 April 2011. The Select Committee will be re-convened at the end of 2011 to receive a report on progress with their recommendations.

(2) The action plan for the Extended Services Select Committee recommendations will be submitted to the 8 July meeting of Customer and Communities POSC and 19 July Education, Learning and Skills POSC. This was postponed from the April cycle of meetings as a process of informal and formal consultation on the future resources and structure for extended services was being carried out.

## **3. Select Committee – Topic Review Programme**

### *Select Committee – Attainment at Key Stage 2*

(1) The Select Committee which is looking at the reasons for variations in Key Stage 2 performance within Kent Schools, with a focus on schools in areas of deprivation, held its inaugural meeting on 3 February 2011. Mr C T Wells was elected Chairman. They also held an informal briefing session on 25

March 2011 where they selected 46 Schools which would form the study groups for the review.

(2) During June/July the Select Committee will have briefing sessions with officers from the 11 Districts (no schools were identified for the Dartford area) which cover the selected schools, in preparation for visits in late September/October 2011.

(3) The timetable has been revised to take account of the evidence gathering needed to support the review and availability of members and the school diary. Further evidence will be gathered in mid Sept to early November. The Committee will meet during November to discuss the focus groups, findings and areas for recommendation. It is expected that the report will go to Cabinet in April 2012 and will then be submitted to the next available County Council.

#### Select Committee: Dementia

(4) The Select Committee on Dementia under the Chairmanship of Mrs Dean is continuing with its work. Hearings with carers and other key stakeholders have been held throughout March and early April 2011.

(5) The Select Committee will be meeting in early June to discuss evidence and recommendations and the Focus Group of Professionals will meet shortly afterwards to give their input, and will identify any further evidence required at that point, prior to production of a draft report in the summer. The timetable for the review is challenging but it is still intended for the report to be submitted to Cabinet in November and to County Council on 15 December 2011.

#### Select Committee - The Student Journey

(6) The Select Committee held its inaugural meeting on 27 April 2011. Mr Kit Smith was elected Chairman, with Mr Dance as Vice-Chairman. Mr Lees was co-opted onto the Committee. The Committee agreed its terms of reference and scope (**Appendix 1**). Views on these have been received from two of the relevant Cabinet Members but are awaited from the third.

(7) The Committee is due to start hearing evidence in June and will continue until October (with a break for the school holidays).

(8) It is intended that the Select Committee will submit its final report to the Cabinet in April 2012 and to County Council in May 2012.

<p><b>4. Recommendation:</b> that the progress of the Select Committees on Educational Attainment at Key Stage 2, Dementia and the Student Journey be noted.</p>
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*Background Papers – Nil*