

From: Anna Taylor, Scrutiny Research Officer

To: **Scrutiny Committee – 23 June 2020**

Subject: Short Focused Inquiries - Review Programme

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Summary:

The purpose of this report is to set out the suggestions submitted for short focused inquiries and to ask the Scrutiny Committee to agree a work programme.

Recommendation:

That the Scrutiny Committee agree:

- a. an initial work programme for short focused inquiries and set out the priority order; and
- b. delegate to Officers the arrangement of the first inquiry as outlined in the report.

1. Introduction

- a) At the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 9 June Members agreed to temporarily suspend the Select Committee work programme in favour of carrying out shorter and more focused pieces of work concentrating on the impact of COVID-19 and moving towards a recovery phase.
- b) At the request of the Committee, all Members were emailed, and suggestions were requested as to the possible topics of these reviews. Several suggestions were also made at the meeting and these are included in the list in part 2.

2. Suggested Topics

- a) The deadline for receiving suggestions has passed and these are set out below. The inquiries could only cover topics which are within the remit of the Scrutiny Committee. Where the proposals are listed below as being outside the remit of the Scrutiny Committee it would not be possible to have an inquiry specifically on that topic.
- b) Suggestions within the remit of the Scrutiny Committee:
 - i. The Visitor Economy in Kent (including Kent's leisure & hospitality industry)
 - ii. NEETs (Not in Education, Employment, or Training)
 - iii. The impact of coronavirus on care homes and what mitigation might be required.
- c) Suggestions which do not come within the remit of the Scrutiny Committee:

- i. Harvesting and distribution of fresh food.
- ii. Welfare of farm animals.
- iii. Environmental impact of intensive farming methods.

3. Next Steps

- a) Once the Committee has agreed a work programme for short focused inquiries, and assigned an order of priority, work will commence on arranging the inquiry into the first topic.
- b) The way forward being suggested is for a background briefing to be produced for Members by the relevant directorate. Officers in Democratic Services will also scope out the issue and agree with the Chair the people from whom the Committee should hear. A limited number of informal briefings will then be arranged for Members of the Committee. Subsequent to these briefings having taken place, the Committee will need to informally discuss and then formally agree key findings and any recommendations it wishes to make. These findings and recommendations will be submitted to the Leader and relevant Cabinet Member(s) once agreed.
- c) The work programme will be reviewed on a rolling basis by the Committee as reviews are concluded.

3. Recommendation:

That the Scrutiny Committee agree:

- a. an initial work programme for short focused inquiries and set out the priority order; and**
- b. delegate to Officers the arrangement of the first inquiry as outlined in the report.**

4. Background Documents

Scrutiny Committee Update, *Scrutiny Committee 9 June 2020*,
<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s96914/Scrutiny%20Committee%20Update.pdf>

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