

By: Paul Wickenden, Overview, Scrutiny and Localism Manager
To: Scrutiny Board - 24 February 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) At its meeting on 16 October 2009 the Policy Overview Co-ordinating Committee (POCC) agreed to establish a Select Committee on Renewable Energy. This Select Committee falls within the remit of the Environment, Highways and Waste Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee (POSC).

(2) The Membership of the Select Committee is as follows; Mr Keith Ferrin, (Chairman), Mr Richard King, Mr Charles Hibberd, Mr Chris Smith, Mrs Elizabeth Tweed, Mrs Paulina Stockell, Mr David Hirst and Mr Tim Prater. It held its inaugural meeting on 26 January 2010 and agreed the attached scope and terms of reference (**Appendix A**).

(3) This review has requested written evidence and will carry out its hearing sessions over the next few months. Its final report will be submitted to County Council on 14 October 2010.

Extended Schools Select Committee

(3) The Membership of this Select Committee is Mr Robert Burgess (Chairman designate), Mrs Ann Allen, Mr Alan Chell, Mr Mark Dance. Mr Richard Parry, Mr Ken Pugh, Mr Kit Smith and Mr Martin Vye.

(4) This review is due to hold its inaugural meeting in March 2010.

(5) Having spoken to the proposers of this review, Mr Hill and Mrs Hohler the timeframe no longer is the middle of the year. To be an effective outcome focused piece of work I am therefore seeking the Scrutiny Boards approval to extend the timeframe of the review with a view to its report being submitted to the 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 indentified for this review and background research will be started shortly.

Dementia Select Committee

(7) POCC agreed that the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) would be invited to pick up the review and that the research officer to the HOSC would support this review. This needs to be monitored carefully as the workload for the HOSC is enormous and this might not be possible. However it maybe that this will be a project which the Research Officer to the Cabinet Scrutiny Committee will be able to assist in supporting.

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) It would therefore be helpful to start the process of looking for suggestions for future topic reviews. In the past this has been done via the POSC, the Members Information Bulletin and the Chief Officers Group. This process could be used again but any other suggestions as to how the request for suggestions for reviews could be widened would be welcomed. Our current process is that the proposer of any suggestion is asked to fill out an assessment form (copy attached as **Appendix B**) which is then sent to the Cabinet Member(s) and Directorate(s) for their comments. It is then for the Scrutiny Board to hear from the interested parties (ie the proposer, Cabinet Member(s) and Officers) before deciding which topics to include in the work programme.

Recommendations that

(a) the progress of the Select Committee topic review on Renewable Energy be noted

(b) the Board be requested to agree to extend the timeframe for the review on Extended School and that it will submit its final report to County Council on December 2010.

(c) to note the proposal for delivering the Select Committee review on the subject of Dementia, and

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

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RENEWABLE ENERGY SELECT COMMITTEE

Agreed Terms of Reference (TOR)

1. To determine existing and emerging national and local policies and strategies with regard to renewable energy and their effect on Kent.
2. To establish a baseline position and future projections for Kent with regard to energy requirements, generation and distribution including the contribution from renewable energy.
3. To identify key challenges as well as opportunities in relation to renewable energy in Kent.
4. To identify and explore the views of suppliers and consumers in relation to renewable energy.
5. Having considered the above, to make recommendations which will contribute to increased energy efficiency, energy security and prosperity for Kent residents and businesses as well as supporting the national transition to a low-carbon future.

Agreed Scope

1. To determine existing and emerging national and local policies and strategies with regard to renewable energy and their effect on Kent.
 - a. Examine current policy and plans in relation to renewable energy both at national and local level in Kent.
 - b. Determine Kent's progress towards the achievement of local targets relating to renewable energy, including work being done or planned in partnership with other authorities or organisations and how these targets fit in with national priorities.
2. To establish a baseline position and future projections for Kent with regard to energy requirements, generation and distribution including the contribution from renewable energy.
 - a. Determine the current demand and sources of supply (energy mix) for Kent.
 - b. Identify trends and issues affecting demand including progress towards increasing energy efficiency.
 - c. Examine the options for future energy supply and the contribution different sources of renewable energy can make to meeting Kent's energy demands through national, community and individual building-level schemes.

3. To identify key challenges as well as opportunities in relation to renewable energy in Kent.
 - a. Identify key obstacles in relation to the development of renewable energy in Kent.
 - b. Identify ways in which KCC could, through its policy, programmes or influence, maximise benefits to Kent and its residents in relation to energy efficiency and renewable energy.

The committee could consider:

- community policy and vision
 - community solutions including district heating and combined heat and power
 - energy from waste
 - planning issues affecting renewable energy installations
 - maximising the role of the business sector
 - maximising the role of the public sector
 - use of renewables in the KCC estate
 - use of biofuels and other options for more sustainable transport
 - funding mechanisms to increase the uptake of renewables
4. To Identify and explore the views of suppliers and consumers in relation to renewable energy:
 - a. Identify areas of KCC work which contribute to greater awareness of sustainable energy issues and the role of renewable energy in the county.
 - b. determine whether further action is necessary to improve leadership on renewable energy and increase public knowledge, confidence and support.
 5. Having considered the above, to make recommendations which will contribute to increased energy efficiency, energy security and prosperity for Kent residents and businesses as well as supporting the national transition to a low-carbon future.

APPENDIX B

ASSESSMENT OF A SELECT COMMITTEE TOPIC REVIEW

(* - sections to be filled in by the proposer of the topic)

*Subject of Proposed Review:-
*Reason for the Review:- (see note 1 below)
*Issues to be covered by the Terms of Reference:-
*Scope of the review:-
*Purpose and objectives of the Review:-
Proposer of the review

To be completed by the Directorate/Cabinet Member(s)

Are there any reasons why this review should not be put forward for inclusion in the work programme for 2009/10? (see note 2 below)
How will the review contribute to corporate objectives and priorities?
Will the review support the achievement of PSA or LAA targets? If yes, please identify targets:-
Does the review need to be completed within a specific timeframe? If yes, please give details:-
How will this review have an impact on KCC policy development and/or help to influence national policy?

How will this review add value to the County Council and residents of Kent?	
Any additional comments from the Portfolio Holder/Strategic Director:-	
Portfolio Holder's Signature:-	
Strategic Director's Signature:-	
Contact Officer:-	Date:-

Notes

Note 1 - Possible reasons for the review

1. Key public issue, identified by
 - Focus groups/citizens panels
 - Member contact with constituents/member surgeries
 - Contact with key representative bodies/forums
 - Media coverage – Public interest issue covered in local media
2. Issue highlighted via POC activities or previous reviews
3. Issue recommended to POC by another body e.g. another POC, Cabinet Scrutiny, Directorate, Cabinet or an external body.
4. Poor performing service i.e.:-
 - High level of complaints/dissatisfaction with service
 - Performance standards poor/below target – (evidence from PI's or benchmarking)
 - Identified through external review/inspection (OFSTED/Audit/ CPA etc)
 - Budgetary overspends
5. Key reports or new evidence published
6. County Council priority
7. Central Government priority/New Government guidance or legislation published

Note 2 - Possible reasons why a review should not be put into the next years/ next two years work

1. Issue being examined by
 - Cabinet
 - Cabinet Scrutiny
 - Officer Group
 - another internal body
 - an external body
2. It has been the subject of a topic review by other Councils from which details of best practice can be obtained.
3. New legislation or guidance expected.
4. **NB:** Before suggesting that a review should not be included in the work programme the following should be considered:-

Could consideration of this issue 'add value' without causing unnecessary duplication, for instance by:

- i) Looking at this issue in conjunction with another group,
- ii) Through appropriate timing of the topic review,
- iii) Through considering another group's findings rather than duplicating the same/or similar activity.