

Overview/Scrutiny Committees' current activities

Report by the Chief Executive

1.0 Reason for reporting

1.1 To let members know what work is currently underway and to inform them of their opportunities to contribute to investigations.

2.0 Contributing to scrutiny

2.1 Any County Councillor can ask to have an item considered by an Overview/Scrutiny Committee but task groups offer the main opportunity for members and non-members alike to contribute to investigations.

2.2 Anyone can contribute to overview/scrutiny work by:

- suggesting a new topic for investigation;
- sending in views and questions about something already in the programme;
- attending a hearing (in person or via an audio-link) to contribute their view and answer questions about it.

2.3 You can get in touch by emailing scrutiny@devon.gov.uk or by using the online form at:

http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/councildemocracy/decision_making/scrutiny/scrutiny-gettinginvolved-form.htm

3.0 The committees' work

2.1 The committees usually draw up a work plan for several months ahead and can look at issues either before or after decisions are taken. Apart from the Council's own services, they can look into the provision of health services and issues which may not be part of the services we provide but which affect the economic, social or environmental well being of the area. New legislation has also given them a role in scrutinising how well the Council and its partners are achieving local improvement targets and crime and disorder objectives. Scrutiny work programmes are also published on the Council's web pages and will be updated after each cycle of meetings: <http://www.devon.gov.uk/scrutiny.htm>

2.2 Topics that can be dealt with at one sitting are usually handled by a committee at one of its ordinary meetings but they often appoint small, time-limited task groups to allow members to investigate specific topics in greater detail (see 4.0 below).

4.0 Current task group investigations

4.1 After agreeing the scope of their investigation, the group will hold meetings to receive reports and hear from contributors. They are not required to meet in public as contributors feel able to speak more freely that way. After hearing from all the contributors, the group will draft a set of findings which will be considered in public at the next meeting of the Overview/Scrutiny Committee. Whatever is agreed will be referred to the Cabinet (or other body, if the investigation has been into an outside organisation).

4.1 The current investigations are:

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Health & Adults' Services</p> <p>Older people's mental health (reporting in March 2010)</p> <p>Rural access to health (reporting in March 2010)</p> | <p>Children & Young People's Services</p> <p>14–19 Agenda reporting in April 2010)</p> <p>School Transport (future investigation)</p> |
| <p>Environment, Economy & Culture</p> <p>To be confirmed following the Committee's meeting on 10 November.</p> | <p>Policy Overview</p> <p>At its meeting on 13 November, the Committee will be considering the scope of a proposed inquiry into the role of alcohol in crime and disorder.</p> |

5.0 Work programmes

5.1 The four committees' overall programmes for the next few months are set out in the appendix to this report. these programmes are reviewed at when committees meet and updated on the internet after each round of meetings:

http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/councildemocracy/decision_making/scrutiny/scrutiny_programme.htm

Phil Norrey

Electoral Divisions: All
Cabinet Member: All

| | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| Local Government Act 1972 | | |
| List of Background Papers | | |
| Officer contact: | Nick Beale | |
| Room: | G.36 | |
| Tel No: | 01392 382296 | |
| Background Paper | Date | File Reference |
| — | — | — |

APPENDIX: COMMITTEES' WORK PROGRAMMES

Policy Overview Committee

| Intended date | Topic |
|-----------------|---|
| 11 January 2010 | Local authorities' expanded role in the scrutiny of partners' contributions to shared objectives under the local Area Agreement — how this might be tackled |
| | Property analysis – including Directorate stock, redundant buildings (why and for how long) and achievable market price |
| | Lessons from LGR – delegations and decision making in light of Sustainable Communities legislation, localism and empowering local councillors |
| 24 March 2010 | Update report on the performance of the Council's property management contract with NPS South West Ltd. |
| tbc | Outcomes of the communications review, <i>Delivering a stronger voice for Devon</i> (inc. publications audit and proposals for the in-house printing function) |
| tbc | Transparency over the costs of hospital mortuary facilities for the Coroners' Service (evidence being sought on position in other authorities) |
| tbc | Equalities agenda |
| tbc | Update on the recommendations of the Cabinet's <i>Value for Money in Contracting</i> task group; then further work on major contracting (follow on from the VFM contracting TG) |
| tbc | Proposed cross-committee task group on the Community Infrastructure Levy. |

Children & Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee

| Intended date | Topic |
|-----------------|--|
| 14 January 2010 | CYPS Draft Revenue Budget 2010/11 |
| | Post-Ofsted Action Plan — update |
| | CYPS Comprehensive Area Assessment |
| | Child Sexual Health Service — multi-agency (DSCB Health Sub-Group) report |
| | Safeguarding Task Group — update |
| | GCSE Religious Studies Task Group — update on progress with recommendations. |
| | School examination results |
| | Inspection of Youth Offending Service |
| | Building Schools for the Future |
| | Performance management data |
| 3 March 2010 | Post-Ofsted Action Plan — update |
| | CYPS Draft Capital Programme 2010/11 |
| | Sexual Health Task Group — final report |
| | Choice and Partnership Approach — update on implementation |
| | Communication and Autism Interaction Resource Base (CAIRB) — progress with countywide introduction |
| | Devon Catering and Cleaning Service — update |
| 22 April 2010 | Post-Ofsted Action Plan — update |
| | 14-19 Agenda Task Group — final report |
| | SEN Task Group — update on progress with recommendations. |
| | Performance management data |

Health & Adults' Services Scrutiny Committee

| Intended date | Topic |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 19 November 2009 (Special meeting) | The future of in-house services, including: preparation of in-house residential services for externalisation; development and redesign of domiciliary care services; externalisation of day care services; and plans to pool and centralise services. |
| | The <i>Putting People First</i> programme. |
| | Performance, including areas of performance that show a downward trend, including timeliness of social care assessment; carers receiving needs assessment etc.; delayed discharge; and acceptable waiting times for assessments. |
| | Local Area Agreement Review |
| | Care & Support Green Paper |
| 6 January 2010 | Treatment and support services for alcohol misuse |
| | Malnutrition in hospitals |
| | Additional surgical centres for gynaecological cancers and head and neck cancers |
| | Physical and mental healthcare in Devon's prisons |
| 15 January 2010 | Draft proposals for Capital Programme and Revenue Budget for 2010–11 |
| 11 March 2010 | Local Involvement Network (LiNK): quarterly report |

Environment, Economy & Culture Scrutiny Committee

| Intended date | Topic |
|----------------|--|
| 10 Nov 2009 | Climate Change |
| | Civil Parking Enforcement Update |
| | Progress on the Flooding Task Group Recommendations |
| | Transition Towns |
| | Affordable Rural Housing |
| | Performance Report |
| 7 January 2010 | Staff Green Travel Plan |
| | 21st Century Libraries |
| | "Heat curtains" in shop doorways |
| | Small works gangs — cost breakdown |
| | Coastal water pollution (SSW and Enjoinment Agency) |
| | Tourism in Devon, 2009 |
| 9 March 2010 | Local Transport Plan review |
| | Coastal water pollution (SWW/Environment Agency/Ofwat) |