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**Report of Head of Scrutiny and Member Development**

**Report to Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny Board**

**Date: 30<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

**Subject: Sources of work for the Scrutiny Board**

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

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**Summary of main issues**

1. Scrutiny Boards are responsible for ensuring that items of scrutiny work come from a strategic approach as well as a need to challenge service performance and respond to issues of high public interest.
2. This report provides information and guidance on potential sources of work and areas of priority within the Board's terms of reference. In consultation with the relevant Director and Executive Board Members, the Scrutiny Board is requested to consider and confirm the areas of Scrutiny for the forthcoming municipal year.

**Recommendation**

3. Members are requested to use the attached information and the discussion with those present at the meeting to confirm the areas of Scrutiny for the forthcoming municipal year.

## **1.0 Purpose of this report**

- 1.1 To assist the Scrutiny Board in effectively managing its workload for the forthcoming municipal year, this report provides information and guidance on potential sources of work and areas of priority within the Board's terms of reference.

## **2.0 Background information**

- 2.1 Scrutiny Boards are responsible for ensuring that items of scrutiny work come from a strategic approach as well as a need to challenge service performance and respond to issues of high public interest.
- 2.2 The alignment of the Scrutiny Boards to the City Priorities continues to promote a more strategic and outward looking scrutiny function that focuses on the "Best City for..." priorities, as set out within the City Priority Plan 2011 to 2015. This city-wide partnership plan summarises the key outcomes and priorities to be delivered by the Council and its partners.

## **3.0 Main issues**

### Best Council Plan

- 3.1 A refresh of the Best Council Plan was agreed at Executive Board in March 2014, to reflect the progress made over the past year and the significant changes to the context in which the council is working, and to fully align it with the approved 2014/15 budget. The resulting 'Best Council Plan – Plan on a Page' is attached as Appendix 1.

### City Priority Plan and alignment with the Strategic Partnership Boards

- 3.2 This Scrutiny Board is authorised to review or scrutinise the performance of the Safer Leeds Partnership and the Communities Board. In doing so, the Scrutiny Board will review outcomes, targets and priorities within the "Best City....for Communities" priorities, as set out within the City Priority Plan. These priorities are as follows:

- Reduce crime levels and their impact across Leeds
- Effectively tackle and reduce anti-social behaviour in our communities
- Ensure that local neighbourhoods are clean
- Increase a sense of belonging that builds cohesive and harmonious communities

In determining items of scrutiny work this year, the Scrutiny Board is therefore encouraged to explore how it can add value to the work of the Partnerships in delivering on the city priorities.

- 3.3 In line with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules, the Scrutiny Board will also continue to act as 'critical friend' to the Safer Leeds Partnership and Communities Board through an annual assessment of how well these Partnerships are working in practice.

### Other sources of Scrutiny work

- 3.4 The Scrutiny Boards' terms of reference are also determined by reference to Directors' delegations. As such, Scrutiny Boards have always challenged service directorates across the full range of council activities and the Scrutiny Board may therefore undertake pieces of scrutiny work in line with its terms of reference, as considered appropriate.
- 3.5 During the course of the last year, each Scrutiny Board has redefined the performance management information that it receives in line with its own requirements. The Board's performance monitoring role can often lead to the identification of areas for more detailed scrutiny.
- 3.6 Other common sources of work include pre-decision scrutiny, requests for scrutiny and other corporate referrals. The Board is also required to be formally consulted during the development of key policies which form part of the council's budget and policy framework.
- 3.7 Scrutiny Boards have always sought to work in partnership with one another where appropriate, in particular in cross-cutting areas which span more than one Scrutiny Board's terms of reference. In setting the work programme for the coming year, the Board is encouraged to consider areas of work which may benefit from a partnership approach.

### Areas of Scrutiny work brought forward from the previous year

- 3.8 Last year, the Board worked in conjunction with the Environment and Housing Directorate to evaluate the phase one roll out of alternate weekly collections (AWC) of recyclable and residual waste to inform preparations for phase two. Stemming from this work, the Board agreed to assist the directorate in determining appropriate waste collection options for areas of the city not expected to receive AWC. It was expected that this piece of work would primarily take place during the 2014/15 municipal year.

## **4.0 Corporate Considerations**

### **4.1 Consultation and Engagement**

- 4.1.1 It is recognised that in order to enable Scrutiny to focus on strategic areas of priority, each Scrutiny Board needs to establish an early dialogue with relevant Directors and Executive Board Members holding the relevant portfolios.
- 4.1.2 The Director of Environment and Housing, Assistant Chief Executive (Citizens and Communities), Executive Member for Cleaner, Stronger and Safer Communities and the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Personnel have been invited to attend today's meeting to discuss priority areas of work with the Scrutiny Board.

## **4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration.**

4.2.1 The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules state that, where appropriate, all terms of reference for work undertaken by Scrutiny Boards will include ‘ to review how and to what effect consideration has been given to the impact of a service or policy on all equality areas, as set out in the Council’s Equality and Diversity Scheme’.

## **4.3 Council Policies and City Priorities**

4.3.1 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the City Priorities. This particular Scrutiny Board is authorised to review or scrutinise the performance of the Safer Leeds Partnership and the Communities Board. In doing so, the Scrutiny Board will review outcomes, targets and priorities within the Business Plan and “Best City....for Communities” priorities, as set out within the City Priority Plan.

## **4.4 Resources and Value for Money**

4.4.1 Over the last few years of Scrutiny Board work, experience has shown that the process is more effective and adds greater value if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time and focus its resources on one key issue at a time.

4.4.2 Before deciding to undertake an inquiry, the Scrutiny Board is advised to consider the current workload of the Scrutiny Board and the available resources to carry out the work.

## **4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In**

4.5.1 This report has no specific legal implications.

## **4.6 Risk Management**

4.6.1 There are no risk management implications relevant to this report.

## **5.0 Conclusions**

5.1 Scrutiny Boards are responsible for ensuring that items of scrutiny work come from a strategic approach as well as a need to challenge service performance and respond to issues of high public interest. This report provides information and guidance on potential sources of work and areas of priority within the Board’s terms of reference. In consultation with the relevant Directors and Executive Board Members, the Scrutiny Board is requested to consider and confirm the areas of Scrutiny for the forthcoming municipal year.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

- 6.1 Members are requested to use the attached information and the discussion with those present at the meeting to confirm the areas of Scrutiny for the forthcoming municipal year.

## **7.0 Background papers<sup>1</sup>**

- 7.1 None

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<sup>1</sup> The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.