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

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

**Date: 10<sup>th</sup> June 2013**

**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(s), Executive Board Member(s) and Partnership Chair, 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:
  - (i) confirm the areas of Scrutiny for the forthcoming municipal year
  - (ii) authorise the Chair, in conjunction with officers, to draw up inquiry terms of reference for subsequent approval by the Scrutiny Board.

## **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 Strategic Partnership Boards continues to promote a more strategic and outward looking scrutiny function that focuses on the City Priorities, as set out within the City Priority Plan 2011 to 2015.
- 2.3 The City Priority Plan was established to replace the Leeds Strategic Plan. This city-wide partnership plan summarises the key outcomes and priorities to be delivered by the Council, and its partners, over the next 4 years. As such they are the "must-do" priorities or "obsessions" for each partnership and may be supported by more detailed action plans as the partnerships sees fit.

## **3.0 Main issues**

### Alignment with the Strategic Partnership Boards

- 3.1 As set out within its terms of reference, this Scrutiny Board is authorised to review or scrutinise the performance of the Safer and Stronger 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. 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
- 3.2 The current Council Business Plan 2011 to 2015 was refreshed in 2012 to update targets but it was agreed that it would be more formally reviewed after two years. This review has now been undertaken, including consultation with the Resources and Councils Services Scrutiny Board in April 2013. The new Best Council Business Plan 2013-17 is now due to be considered by the Executive Board on 19<sup>th</sup> June 2013 prior to its approval at Full Council. Any changes to the Business Plan which relate to this Scrutiny Board's portfolio will be shared with the Board in due course.
- 3.3 In line with the Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules, the Scrutiny Board will also continue to act as 'critical friend' to the Safer and Stronger Communities Board. In line with this approach, the Scrutiny Board will assess how well the Partnership is working in practice. However, in determining items of scrutiny work this year, the Scrutiny Board is also encouraged to explore how it can add value to the work of the Partnership in delivering on the city priorities.

### Other sources of Scrutiny work

- 3.4 As well as the focus on partnership scrutiny, Scrutiny Boards have and will continue to challenge service directorates. The Scrutiny Boards' terms of reference are determined by reference to Directors' delegations.
- 3.5 The Scrutiny Board may therefore undertake pieces of scrutiny work in line with its terms of reference, as considered appropriate. Such pieces of work may arise from the Scrutiny Board's performance monitoring role. However, other common sources include requests for scrutiny and other corporate referrals.
- 3.6 In its capacity as a 'Crime and Disorder Committee', this particular Scrutiny Board will also be required to consider any referrals made by elected members to review or scrutinise local crime and disorder matters. The Board also has powers to review or scrutinise decisions made (or action taken), in connection with the discharge by the 'responsible authorities' of their crime and disorder functions. Further details are set out within the joint protocol between Scrutiny and the local Community Safety Partnership.

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

- 3.7 Last year, the Scrutiny Board had undertaken a review aimed to improve recycling participation levels through effective communication and education. Linked to this, it was the Board's original intention to test out communication assumptions by targeting 3 areas of the city based around current recycling participation levels. However, during the review, the Scrutiny Board agreed that it would be more prudent to work closely with the service in evaluating the responsiveness of residents to communication materials/channels in helping to drive forward the Council's strategy of implementing alternate weekly collections of recyclable and residual waste citywide. The intention is therefore to undertake this piece of work during August/September in readiness for the phase 2 roll out of alternate weekly collections.
- 3.8 The Executive Board Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Support Services made a request for the Scrutiny Board to review income generation opportunities linked to the Council's CCTV and security function. The Scrutiny Board agreed that it would be appropriate to undertake this piece of work during the 2013/14 municipal year.

### Utilising the Leeds Census as a valuable data source

- 3.9 The Census is a vital planning tool for both the public and private sectors and the data that is derived from it is an essential element in intelligence led decision making. Such data also helps to build a comprehensive picture of conditions in localities and helps identify the critical issues facing neighbourhoods.
- 3.10 The last Census took place on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2011. It was conducted on a resident basis and the statistics relate to where people usually live, rather than where they were on Census night. Students who were studying away from home during the terms were enumerated at their term-time address.

- 3.11 The “Leeds: The Big Picture” report provides a factual analysis of the data produced from the 2011 Census. It compares the data for Leeds to the averages for England and Wales and, where possible, includes comparisons to information from the 2011 Census. This report is available on the Leeds Observatory under the “Resources and Documents” section (<http://www.westyorkshireobservatory.org/Leeds>).
- 3.12 To complement the “Leeds: The Big Picture” report, an additional document has also been produced based on Census data published by the Office for National Statistics on 30<sup>th</sup> January 2013. The “2011 Census: Comparing the results across Leeds” document focusses on the comparisons between the ten Area Committees in Leeds, but also makes reference to the results by electoral ward and Lower Super Output Area to further demonstrate the extent of the differences across the city at the small area level. A copy of this report has therefore been provided to Board Members as a valuable data source, particularly in relation to the Stronger Communities portfolio (Appendix 1).

## **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 the Director(s) and Executive Board Member(s) holding the relevant portfolios and also the Partnership Chair.
- 4.1.2 Unfortunately the Executive Board Member for Environment and the Executive Board Member for Neighbourhoods, Planning and Support Services are unable to attend today’s meeting. However, their views have been shared with the Chair of the Scrutiny Board prior to today’s meeting and will be reported to the Board during the meeting. The Director of Environment and Neighbourhoods will be attending today’s meeting.
- 4.1.3 Also attached for Members consideration are the latest Executive Board minutes (Appendix 2).

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

- 4.2.1 The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules now 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 more 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 and Stronger 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 Director(s), Executive Board Member(s) and Partnership Chair, 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:

- (i) confirm the areas of Scrutiny for the forthcoming municipal year
- (ii) authorise the Chair, in conjunction with officers, to draw up inquiry terms of reference for subsequent approval by the Scrutiny Board.

## **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.