

Extract from Audit & Scrutiny Minute – 23 June 2020

10. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

There had been circulated copies of an extract from the Audit & Scrutiny Minute of 10 February 2020 regarding a report by the Service Director Customer and Communities, presenting an update on subjects for Scrutiny review as part of the future Scrutiny Work Programme. There were 14 subjects which were due to be taken forward and these were detailed in the appendix to the extract. In light of the impact of Covid-19 the Chairman invited Members to reconsider the Scrutiny Work Programme being recommended for approval to Council and to re-look at the priority order of these subjects for review. In the ensuing discussion, Members agreed that it was appropriate to change the order on the list contained within the appendix and identified the priority subjects for review as: Child Poverty; Welfare Fund; Following the Public Pound – grant evaluations; Grass Cutting Regime & Biodiversity; Police Community Action Teams; and Recycling and Waste Policy. After hearing information from the Chief Officer Audit & Risk that both the Welfare Fund and Funding to Community Groups would be part of the 2020/21 Internal Audit Programme, Members agreed to leave all 14 subjects on the list but to ask the Clerk to the Council, in consultation with the Chief Officer Audit & Risk, to decide an appropriate order of consideration based on the priorities identified above. The Clerk added that Members could agree to include additional subjects on the list at a later date providing these were also agreed by Council.

DECISION

*** AGREED**

- (a) to amend the recommendation to Council in Paragraph 10.2(a) of the Minute of Audit & Scrutiny Committee of 10 February 2020:**
- (b) to recommend to COUNCIL:**
 - (i) approval of the subjects to be included in the Scrutiny Work Programme, as detailed in the Appendix to this Minute; and**
 - (ii) given the response/recovery work required for Covid-19, and its impact on officer resources/time, that the order of the Scrutiny Work Programme is prioritised by the Audit & Scrutiny Committee.**

Extract from Audit & Scrutiny Minute – 10 February 2020

10.0 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

- 10.1 With reference to paragraph 2 of the Minute of 22 August 2019, there had been circulated copies of a report by the Service Director Customer and Communities which presented an update on subjects for Scrutiny review and information as part of the future Scrutiny work programme, to be approved by Council. There were 13 subjects which were due to be taken forward and these were detailed in the appendix to the report. In addition, at the Council meeting held on 19 December 2019, Members agreed that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee would undertake regular monitoring of the implementation of the Best Value Action Plan which had been drafted in response to the findings of the Best Value assurance audit of the Council and this work would be undertaken separately from the Scrutiny Work Programme. With the publication of the information from the Local Government Benchmarking Framework 2018/19 at the end of January 2020, the Chairman had also suggested that the Audit & Scrutiny Committee carry out a follow-up scrutiny of the Council's performance after 6 months of those areas where performance had slipped. However, there were quarterly performance reports provided to the Executive Committee which over a year would cover these indicators. The format of these performance reports was evolving but the Q3 performance report being presented to the Executive Committee on 11 February identified which were LGBF indicators and on what frequency they were being reported.
- 10.2 Given the number of subjects for review, it was unlikely that the Audit & Scrutiny Committee would have time over the coming year to deal with every subject. It was therefore suggested that these should be placed in priority order. When identifying that list, Members also bore in mind the Services which were being covered so that there was an even spread. Councillor Hamilton suggested that with regard to the Grass Cutting regime information, this should also include the effectiveness of any biodiversity measures and this was unanimously accepted.

DECISION

- * **(a) AGREED TO RECOMMEND to COUNCIL the subjects to be included in the Scrutiny Work Programme, as detailed in the Appendix to this Minute, with the subjects to be dealt with in 2020/21 prioritised as follows:-**
- (i) Child Poverty**
 - (ii) Common Ridings and Festivals In-kind support;**
 - (iii) Police Community Action Teams**
 - (iv) Recycling and Waste Policy**
 - (v) Public transport and communities; and**
 - (vi) Balance between 20mph speed limits and street architecture.**
- (b) AGREED that the first update to the Audit & Scrutiny Committee on progress with the implementation of the Best Value Action Plan would be brought to the meeting on Thursday 4 June 2020.**

PROPOSED SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

	SUBJECT	SCOPE & APPROACH	LEAD OFFICER
1.	Child Poverty	Scope: An evaluation of the actions the Council is taking to tackle Child Poverty including Pupil Equity Fund, free school meals, etc.	Stuart Easingwood, Interim Service Director Children & Young People
		Approach: Initial Scrutiny hearing to determine best methodology and reporting	
2.	Common Ridings and Festivals In-kind support	Scope: Review the in-kind support provided to Common Ridings and Festivals by SBC services. <i>(Note: funding of Common Ridings and Festivals is part of the current review of the Community Fund)</i>	Martin Joyce, Service Director Assets & Infrastructure
		Approach: Initial Scrutiny hearing to determine best methodology and reporting	
3.	Police Community Action Teams	Scope: Receive information on the current arrangements for the Police Community Action Teams – governance, management, community engagement.	Stuart Easingwood, Chief Social Work & Public Protection Officer
		Approach: Scrutiny information briefing	
4.	Recycling and Waste Policy	Scope: An evaluation of the effectiveness of the Recycling and Waste Policy	Martin Joyce, Service Director Assets & Infrastructure
		Approach: Scrutiny hearing	
5.	Public transport and communities	Scope: An evaluation of the current situation and future plans	Rob Dickson, Executive Director
		Approach: Initial Scrutiny hearing to determine best methodology and reporting	

	SUBJECT	SCOPE & APPROACH	LEAD OFFICER
6.	Balance between 20mph speed limits and street architecture	Scope: An evaluation of the current situation and future plans	Martin Joyce, Service Director Assets & Infrastructure
		Approach: Scrutiny hearing	
7.	Income Management Policy	Scope: Review the Income Management Policy established in 2012 and benchmark current charges against other areas of Scotland.	David Robertson, Executive Director (Finance & Regulatory)
		Approach: Initial Scrutiny hearing to determine best methodology and reporting	
8.	Grass Cutting Regime & Biodiversity	Scope: Receive information on the existing grass cutting regime and the effectiveness of biodiversity plans.	Martin Joyce, Service Director Assets & Infrastructure
		Approach: Scrutiny information briefing	
9.	Responsible Dog Ownership Policy	Scope: Review the implementation of the policy and establish its level of success	David Robertson, Executive Director (Finance & Regulatory)
		Approach: Scrutiny hearing	
10.	Rural Proofing Policy	Scope: Review of the effectiveness of the current Rural Proofing Policy.	Rob Dickson, Executive Director
		Approach: Scrutiny hearing	
11.	Council resources on Roads, including white lining	Scope: A review of the effectiveness of the application of Council resources to the roads network to provide a benchmark for future years for the national Roads Condition Index.	Martin Joyce, Service Director Assets & Infrastructure
		Approach: Scrutiny hearing	

	SUBJECT	SCOPE & APPROACH	LEAD OFFICER
12.	Following the Public Pound – grant evaluations	<p>Scope: An evaluation of the process for grant monitoring and evaluation</p> <p>Approach: Scrutiny hearing</p>	Jenni Craig, Service Director Customer & Communities
13.	Management and Maintenance of Public Halls	<p>Scope: An evaluation of the community contribution to the management and maintenance of public halls, including those managed by Live Borders.</p> <p>Approach: Scrutiny hearing</p>	Rob Dickson, Executive Director
14.	Welfare Fund	<p>Scope: An evaluation of how SBC manages applications alongside other funds</p> <p>Approach: Scrutiny hearing</p>	Jenni Craig, Service Director Customer & Communities