

Committee: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

Date: 7 JULY 2004

Agenda Item No: 4

Title: FORWARD PLAN OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE TWO 2004/05

Author: Ian Orton (01799) 510402

Summary

- 1 Each Committee of the Council is required to publish an Annual Forward Plan for the municipal year. The Plan is then available for the public who may wish to attend relevant meetings and view the democratic process.

Background

- 2 There are five meetings of Scrutiny 2 Committee during the year. Members may wish to consider the following Forward Plan for 2004/05.

7th July 2004

Committee Item	Comments
Performance Management 2003/04 Results and Targets for 2004/05	First full year of Performance Management data
Update on 2003/04 BV Review 's for Planning, Revenues and Refuse/Recycling	Six months progress report
Best Value Reviews for 2004/05 Older Person's Young People	Update
Authorise a report on future options for Scrutiny and Overview within the authority	Part of the review of Committee structures within the authority
Consider which reports from Internal Audit to be scrutinised during the year	The Committee may wish to examine 2 to 3 Internal Audit reports during the year

6th October 2004

Committee Item	Comments
Presentation from Essex County Council – Planning Issues	
Performance Management to April To June 2004	
Internal Audit Reports	Themes to be agreed by Members
CPA Improvement Plan Monitoring	
Best Value Reports 2004-2005	Update

1st December 2004

Committee Item	Comments
Presentation by Essex County Council – Highways Issues	April Performance Management to December 2004
Performance Management April to September 2004	
Quality of Life Corporate Plan Monitoring	
Consider Best Value Review Older Person's	
Consider Best Value Review Young People	

9th February 2005

Committee Item	Comments
Presentation from Essex Police	Theme to be agreed by Members
Internal Audit Reports	Theme to be agreed by Members
Performance Management April to December 2004	
Best Value 2005 – 2006 Review Options	
Performance Management 2005/06 and targets for 2006/07	Targets to be agreed by Members

13th April 2005

Committee Item	Comments
Best Value Performance Plan 2005/06 Options	
Performance Management April to December 2004	
Local Strategic Plan – Progress Report	
Best Value 2005 – 2006 Review Options	
Internal Audit Reports	

RECOMMENDED that:

1. Members note the items to be discussed at 7 July 2004 meeting
2. Members agree the Forward Plan for the rest of the Municipal Year

Background Papers: Scrutiny Committee 2 Files 2004/05

Committee: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

Date: 7 JULY 2004

Agenda Item No: 5

Title: REPORTS FROM INTERNAL AUDIT TO BE CONSIDERED DURING 2004/2005

Author: Ian Orton (01799) 510402

Summary

- 1 Internal Audit carry out a number of reviews each year and normally these are not considered by Scrutiny Committee(s). However these reviews are a very constructive insight into the way the Council is managed and this report recommends that Scrutiny Two Committee consider 2 to 3 reports from Internal Audit per year.

Background

- 2 During 2004 – 2005 Internal Audit will carry out the following reviews:

Review	Comments
Insurance	
Treasury Management	
Credit Payments	
Cash	
Street Cleaning DSO	
Business Rates	
Housing Benefits	
Council Tax	
Refuse and Recycling	
IT	

RECOMMENDED that Members agree two to three reports from above list to be considered during 2004 – 2005 by Scrutiny Two Committee

Background Papers: Internal Audit Files 2004/05

Committee: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2

Date: 7 JULY 2004

Agenda Item No: 6

Title: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT REPORTING 2003/04 & PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT TARGETS 2004/05

Author: Ian Orton (01799) 510402

Summary

- 1 This report contains details of the Performance Management results for 2003/04 (attached) and Performance Targets for 2004/05 (attached). The report includes details of the changes to the methods of collecting and reporting performance during 2004/05.

Background

- 2 Performance Management was introduced to the authority in August 2003 based on a number of local and national performance indicators linked to a Traffic Light reporting method. This data has been reported quarterly to Corporate Management Team and Senior/Executive Management Teams.
- 3 Attached are the 2003/04 Performance results based on a range of Corporate and Service Indicators. There are 72 indicators in all including three that are set and monitored by Essex Police. Of the 69 indicators that are directly managed by the Council there are 46 Ambers (within 10% of Target), 14 Greens (10% or more above Target) and 9 Reds (10% or more below target). The grid below shows details of the 9 Reds. Some of the Reds are an improvement on 2002/03, but the majority are performance measures not collected by the authority in previous years. All 9 Reds have ambitious targets.
- 4 It was agreed by Senior Management Team that where an indicator was on Red the manager responsible would provide a Rescue Recovery Package which will be read out at Scrutiny Committee.

Performance Measure	Original Target 2003/04	Outturn 2003/04
Working Days lost to sickness	7.00 days	8.57 days
% of staff receiving an appraisal within timetable	100%	56%
% of staff with a training plan	100%	56%
Introduction of Electronic Procurement	25%	5%
Speed of processing benefit claims	6 days	7 days

% of recoverable overpayments	60%	50.27%
Number of refuse collections missed per 100,000	12	13.5
Average time to remove a fly tip	3 days	3.32 days
Major planning applications determined in 13 weeks	45%	29%

5 Also attached are the Performance Targets for 2004/05. Members will note that the data is now presented under eight headings to shadow the service and corporate aims of the authority. There are other differences between last year and the current year:

- CPA was critical that the 10% tolerance between the three Traffic Light Colours was generous and diluted poor performance. This report recommends that we continue to use the Traffic Light system but the tolerance between colours is now 5%.
- Within the Corporate Management section there are a number of measures that will measure performance in cash as well as delivery measures i.e. front line to management costs, services which meet improvement targets against budgets allocated.
- Monitoring of revenue and capital spend during the year
- There are now 88 indicators for 04/05

6 The revisions to the Performance Management system for 2004/05 are required to strengthen the system and ensure that performance management delivers measurable improvements to the organisation. The next CPA exercise will wish to ensure that the authority has moved on in performance terms and that we can clearly demonstrate this improvement.

7 With the 88 indicators it will now be possible to obtain a comprehensive picture of the organisation. However CPA will be looking for examples of Scrutiny & Overview spotting performance drift and recommending a course of action to the appropriate policy committee.

RECOMMENDED that:

- 1 Members note the Performance Outturns for 2003/04
- 2 Members note the Rescue Recovery Packages for the 9 Red Indicators
- 3 Note the additional performance measures for 2004/05
- 4 Agree that the Traffic Light System is changed to Amber for on Target or within 4% tolerance: Green for 5% above Target and Red for 5% below Target

Background Papers: Performance Management Files 2003/05 Inclusive

Committee: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2
Date: 7 JULY 2004
Agenda Item No: 7
Title: BEST VALUE REVIEWS 2003/04 PROGRESS WITH DELIVERING SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLANS
Author: Ian Orton (01799) 510402

Summary

- 1 Scrutiny Two Committee on the 3rd December 2003 agreed the Best Value Reviews of Planning Services, Revenue Services and Refuse & Recycling. The Committee requested that progress in delivering the Service Improvement Plans from the reviews be reported back to Scrutiny Two Committee twice a year.

Background

- 2 During the last six months officers have been managing the delivery of the Service Improvement Plans arising from the four 2003/04 Best Value Reviews. Three of these reviews fall within the remit of Scrutiny Two Committee:

Revenues Best Value Review

There are 38 sections within the Service Improvement Plan. 19 of these sections have been completed within time scale. There are 2 sections that are outstanding and a verbal report will be delivered on the progress in these two sections to the Committee. All other sections within the Service Improvement Plan are on target. Details of the Service Improvement Plan attached

Planning Best Value Review

The Service Improvement Plan from this review is attached. Members will recall that external consultants were engaged to carry out aspects of this and as a result there is a comprehensive improvement plan flowing from the review process. There are 109 sections within the Improvement Plan, 45 have been completed. All other sections are on target but external consultants have been engaged to assist with delivering the improvement plan.

Refuse & Recycling Review

There are 19 sections within the Service Improvement Plan. 3 sections have been completed within time scale and all other sections are currently on target. However the outcomes from this review are very much a partnership with Essex County Council and therefore subject to the pressures of any partnership arrangements.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the progress in delivering the Service Improvement Plans arising from the Planning, Revenues and Refuse/Recycling 2003/04 Best Value Reviews

Background Papers: Best Value Review Files 2003/04

Committee: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2
Date: 7 JULY 2004
Agenda Item No: 8
Title: BEST VALUE REVIEWS 2004/05
Author: Ian Orton (01799) 510402

Summary

- 1 Two of the 2004 – 2005 Best Value reviews Environmental Health and Access to Services fall within the remit of Scrutiny 2 Committee. This report contains details of the scope documents and the progress to date with the reviews.

Background

- 2 Annual Council on 11 May 2004 agreed that the authority would carry out four Best Value Reviews during 2004/05. Two of these reviews Environmental Health and Access to Services fall within the remit of Scrutiny 2 Committee.

Environmental Health Best Value Review

This review started work at officer level in April 2004 and is co-ordinated by Ian Orton. A copy of the draft scope document is attached to the report. The Member Team met for the first on 29 June 2004 and the review anticipate submitting a draft Service Plan to Scrutiny Committee 1 December 2004. To help process the review a critical friend, the former Head of Environmental Health for South Cambs has been engaged.

Planning Best Value Access to Services

This review grew out of the Access to Services work that was carried out last Autumn and has built on comments from staff, the public and from Focus Groups. The officer review team started work in April 2004 and is co-ordinated by John Mercer. The Member Team, which is Chaired by Cllr Lelliott met for first time on 28 June 2004 and endorsed the draft scope document which is attached to this report. The Review Team anticipate submitting a draft Service Plan to Scrutiny Committee on 1 December 2004.

- 3 All four Best Value Reviews during 2004-05 will not be subject to the traditionally four C's methodology. Instead more emphasis will be placed on comparative data and the feedback from consultation.

RECOMMENDED that Members comment on the progress with the Best Value Reviews of Environmental Health and Access to Services.

Background Papers: Best Value Review Files 2004/05

Committee: Access to Services Best Value Review

Date: 28 June 2004

Agenda Item No: [Click here to enter number]

Title: Best Value Review Arrangements

Author: John Mercer (01799) 510421

Summary

- 1 This report advises Members of the arrangements for carrying out a Best Value Review of Access to Services. It also seeks approval for the draft Terms of Reference for the Review.

Background

- 2 At the full Council meeting on 11 May 2004 Members agreed to carry out a Best Value Review of Access to Services. The purpose of the review is to examine how Uttlesford's citizens currently access the Council's services and the opportunities that are available for providing more choice, improved service and greater integration with other agencies. The review will also help to progress a number of the Quality of Life Corporate Plan actions within the 'Access to Value for Money Services' theme. Draft Terms of Reference for the Review are attached as an appendix to this report.
- 3 An officer working group has been set up, drawn from staff that assisted in a First-Point-of-Contact exercise, carried out during 2003, which was led by the Interim Director. The staff have been assigned a range of initial tasks, largely centred around information gathering and data collection. Temporary project staff, to assist the Executive Programme Manager, are currently being appointed. Until these staff are in post, the progress of the review will be somewhat constrained. However, the various IT Projects associated with the review are progressing well and further information will be provided at the meeting.
- 4 The Best Value Review will follow established practices and procedures used previously within the Council. Of particular importance for this Review will be comparisons with other organisations, both public and private sector. There is significant scope to learn from best practice adopted elsewhere. It will also be important that the Review rigorously challenges current methods of delivering front-line services & considers all the options potentially available.

Timetable

- 5 It is intended to hold a workshop within the next few weeks to seek Members' views. It is also intended to carry out a series of consultation and challenge processes, as follows:
- a. Citizen Panel Survey ~ July / August 2004.
 - b. Website Survey ~ July 2004.
 - c. Mystery Shopper Survey ~ July / August 2004.
 - d. Challenge Events:
 - i. Front-line staff ~ August 2004.
 - ii. Citizens ~ August 2004.
 - iii. Visiting staff ~ August 2004.
 - e. Exist survey ~ July 2004.

A small budget exists to help support the costs of these exercises.

- 6 A Service Improvement Plan, setting out the various options for developing and improving access to services, will need to be finalised by early September 2004.

RECOMMENDATION: The draft Terms of Reference be approved.

Background Papers: Quality of Life Corporate Plan

Access to Services - Best Value Review

Draft Terms of Reference

The review will examine how Uttlesford's citizens currently access the Council's services & the opportunities available for providing more choice, improved service & greater integration with other agencies. The review will concentrate on the citizen's 'first point of contact' (FPOC) with the council and will cover the following specific access channels:

- 1 Physical access points – the review will identify the offices from which services are presently provided, the services available, the numbers of visitors & the nature of their enquiries, and their perception of the services offered. This information will be used to determine:-
 - a. Whether the Council has the right number and location of FPOC offices, or whether further, or replacement facilities are required. For example, would additional 'satellite' offices, perhaps based upon a building society type model, be appropriate?
 - b. Whether the right services, to the right level & quality, are being provided.
 - c. What opportunities exist for sharing premises & FPOC staff.
 - d. Whether the use of mobile office facilities would be appropriate.
 - e. Whether the Council is fully complying with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.
- 2 Telephony – the review will identify the number of telephone enquiries received, by whom & the level of service offered. This information will be used to inform a review of:-
 - a. The standard of service provided, whether it is consistent across all departments & how standards can be improved.
 - b. Whether telephone-based enquiries should remain on a service-by-service basis, or whether some form of 'contact centre' should be established, possibly in partnership with a neighbouring council.
- 3 Electronic Services – the review will consider the following aspects of electronic service delivery:-
 - a. How E-Government strategy will complement the wider Access to Services strategy.
 - b. How ICT can be used to support other, more traditional, access channels. In particular, the review will consider how the new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system will be used to improve FPOC service delivery.

- c. Whether ICT could be used to replace, reduce, or phase out, any existing access channels.
- 4 Post – The review will identify the number of letters received & answered, response times & the quality of replies. This information will be used to inform a review of:-
- a. The standard of service provided, whether it is consistent across all departments & how standards can be improved.
 - b. Whether monitoring arrangements are adequate.
 - c. How the new corporate document imaging system can be used to improve the service offered to citizens.

Established practices and procedures for Best Value reviews will be followed. Of particular importance for this review will be comparisons with other organisations, both public and private sector. There is significant scope to learn from best practice adopted elsewhere. It will also be important that the review rigorously challenges current methods of delivering FPOC services & considers all the options potentially available.

V2/JKM/1-6-04

Environmental Health Review

Scope Document

1. This document relates to the review of the Environmental Health functions of Uttlesford DC and details the purpose of the review and the scope of matters to be considered.
2. The purpose of the review is to consider how Environmental Health can be improved in Uttlesford DC and what resources might be needed to achieve this. The review will be based on the best value process as it was.
3. In accordance with best value principles it is intended to consult *widely* with members, officers and the Citizens panel to see if agreement can be reached on the key areas to promote Environmental Health in the district. This might also involve a workshop involving members, officers and Citizens panel representatives.
4. The review will include an assessment of what the service provides at present. How this compares with other authorities and the best way to improve the service.
5. It will involve officers visiting other local authorities to seek examples of better ways to deliver the service. This will include a visit to either Manchester or East Midlands airport.
6. The officer group have prepared draft improvement plans for Commercial Services and Environmental Pollution (appendix 1 and 2) and a document submitted by the consultant highlighting some operational issues is also attached (appendix 3).
7. These three documents detail a number of areas of potential improvement, which have been identified for further detailed consideration.
8. The key issues identified for consideration to date include:
 - 8.01. An urgent need to review delegated powers across the whole of the Environmental health enforcement and licensing field.
 - 8.02. The possible need for a dedicated Health Promotion and Health Education officer. This post might also have responsibilities as a sustainability officer or LA21 support officer, and in turn could get involved with some joint projects with the Primary Care Trust.
 - 8.03. Becoming more engaged with the local Health Improvement Plan and other health issues in the Quality of Life Corporate Plan.
 - 8.04. Improved clerical support for frontline officers.
 - 8.05. The need for a dedicated corporate Health and Safety officer.
 - 8.06. The possibility of subsidising advanced and intermediate courses for staff at higher risk food premises and becoming a lead authority in this area.
 - 8.07. Proactive private sector housing initiatives in partnership with the housing relating to 'above the shop' initiatives in Dunmow and Stansted and or long term vacant dwellings (using powers in the new Housing Bill).
 - 8.08. Improved air pollution monitoring activities especially in the region of Stansted airport.
 - 8.09. Examine the necessity for and the possible ways of providing a proportionate 'out of hours' noise complaint service, possibly in conjunction with duties under the new Licensing Act.
 - 8.10. The preparation of written procedures to deal with complaints an environmental pollution enforcement procedures.
 - 8.11. Reviewing planned enforcement activities for food safety and health and safety.
 - 8.12. Reviewing reactive and responsive enforcement activity.
 - 8.13. Reviewing what proactive work could be done to improve the environment and promote positive health in Uttlesford DC.
 - 8.14. Reviewing the means of delivering the food safety and imported foods inspection service at Stansted airport.

- 8.15. Providing a more extensive sampling surveillance programme for imported foods, testing for pathogens and pesticide residues in accordance with Food Standards Agency requirements.
- 8.16. Having a greater input into Community Tasking Group meetings with local Police and others.
- 8.17. Reviewing the structure and leadership of Environmental Health within the new Environmental and Cultural Services Executive to ensure that it is effectively represented and that there is appropriate attractive recruitment and retention at all levels.
- 8.18. Reviewing and improving the web site to meet more of the 'Parsol' criteria and to simplify and improve the search system. *This work is in progress.*
- 8.19. The importance of engaging members more closely in environmental health issues affecting the District Council – including creating a 'political Champion' members role.

Operational Issues

Uttlesford DC – Environmental Services

- Consideration should be given to providing inspection team members with laptop computers and home connections to the Councils computer system to reduce the need for office based working, reduce travelling times and costs and improve efficiency.
- The Councils web page for Environmental Health scored low in the recent 'Parsol' national comparison of Local Authority web sites. Uttlesford met only 7 of the 16 Health and Licensing criteria. In addition, the search facility compares badly to other authority sites when searching for basic Environmental Health information.
- Under the new structure Environmental Health is no longer headed by a second tier officer and all member liaison and technical committee work will now fall to the two remaining third tier officers, as an additional workload. This could diminish the status of the Environmental Health in the Council. It may also adversely affect recruitment and retention of ambitious staff.
- There is the need to raise the profile of Environmental Health in Uttlesford DC. One way forward is to involve members more in Environmental Health activities and having a 'Political Champion' for Environmental Health.

Committee: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2
Date: 7 JULY 2004
Agenda Item No: 9
Title: WORK PROGRAMME SCRUTINY TWO
COMMITTEE 2004/05
Author: Ian Orton (01799) 510402

Summary

- 1 Scrutiny and Overview Committees generally set their Work Programme for the year. This report contains details of a number of corporate and service areas and invites Members to select the areas that will require scrutiny during 2004/05

Background

- 2 To ensure neutrality and flexibility of choice Scrutiny and Overview Committees tend to set their own work programmes. This gives Scrutiny Members the opportunity to pursue the areas within the Council that Members feel need attention.
- 3 However officers are encouraged to present options to Members to help plan an annual work programme for the committee. Elsewhere on the agenda are the Forward Plan and requests to consider reports that have been prepared by Internal Audit. Members may wish to consider selecting 10 to 12 themes from the list below and these will be added to the Forward Plan of the committee.

- Emergency Planning
- Flood Control
- Recycling Routes
- Licensing Functions
- Cross Cutting Working
- Public Engagement
- Communications
- Impact of CPA on the organisation
- Best Value as a tool to improve services
- The impact of Complaints and Compliments
- Member Training
- Role of the Environment Agency
- Communications and Publicity
- Economic Development
- Contract management
- Partnership Working

RECOMMENDED that Members agree 8 to 10 of the above 16 themes to be considered during the four remaining meetings of Scrutiny Committee One during 2004/05

Background Papers: Work Programme Scrutiny 2 Committee 2004/05

Committee: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2
Date: 7 JULY 2004
Agenda Item No: 10
Title: SCRUTINY & OVERVIEW COMMITTEE
OPTIONS FOR THE FUTURE
Author: Ian Orton (01799) 510402

Summary

- 1 As part of the Quality of Life Corporate Plan a project to *Conduct a formal review of the democratic structure of the Council* will be carried out. The project should be completed by 31st December 2004. Part of the process will involve seeking the views of Members on ways to strengthen the democratic process within Uttlesford.

Background

- 2 The Local Government Bill requires councils to set up one or more overview and scrutiny committees. These committees are required to have the same political balance as the full council and to meet in public. As Uttlesford District Council is below the 80,000 population threshold the authority has more freedom to manage scrutiny and overview. Uttlesford established two Scrutiny Committees in 2001/02. These broadly cover the activities of the policy committees of the council. This is a hybrid model that allows a scrutinising function while still retaining a traditional committee structure.
- 3 The formal review of the democratic structure OF THE council will involve a Member Workshop and other opportunities to comment on ways in which the democratic process of the authority can be managed. This report is an opportunity for Members to pass comments on the existing Scrutiny & Overview functions of the Council and to make suggestions for any improvements.
- 4 Good scrutiny should:
 - Provide critical friend challenge to executive as well as external authorities and agencies
 - Reflect the voice and concerns of the public and its communities
 - Take the lead and own the scrutiny process on behalf of the public

- Make an impact on the delivery of public services
- Hold the policy committees to account
- Review policy
- Regularly examine Best Value and the performance of the authority
- Ensure the authority obtains maximum benefits from CPA
- Scrutinises external services

Does Scrutiny within Uttlesford meet the above criteria?

5 If not should the authority consider other models of scrutiny? Among the options are:

- Introduce two Scrutiny Committees one monitoring the Performance of the Council i.e. Performance Management data, monitoring Best Value reviews, examining budgets, comparative data with other authorities. The other Scrutiny Committee would examine policy and recommend new ways of doing things.
- A number of small Scrutiny Groups that would meet to scrutinise a particular task, almost like a review team and then disband once the project is completed.
- Specialist Scrutiny Groups that would examine Health, Police, partnerships. These could work with the PCT or Essex County Council.

6 This report suggests some options for Members to consider when discussing future models for Scrutiny & Overview so that the views of Members can be fed into the review of the Council.

RECOMMENDED that Members comment on the existing and future arrangements for Scrutiny & Overview within the Council.

Background Papers: Future of Scrutiny File 2004