

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Report of Corporate Director for Corporate Services
to

Place, People and Policy & Resources Scrutiny
Committees

On 8th, 9th and 11th July 2013

Report prepared by:
Fiona Abbott

Agenda
Item No.

Suggested in depth Scrutiny projects – 2013 / 14 A Part 1 Agenda Item

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 For each Scrutiny Committee to select the in depth scrutiny project it wishes to undertake during the 2013 / 14 Municipal Year.
- 1.2 The report also attaches some information about the work carried out by the Scrutiny Committees in the 2012 / 13 Municipal Year.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Scrutiny Committee selects the in depth scrutiny project it wishes to undertake during 2013/14.
- 2.2 To note the information attached at **Appendix 3**, the summary of work of the 3 Scrutiny Committees during 2012 / 2013.

3. Background

- 3.1 Members and co opted members were contacted on 21st May 2013 asking for their suggestions for topics they would like to see tackled as an in depth scrutiny study during the municipal year. I advised that all suggestions will be considered at the appropriate Scrutiny Committee in the July cycle of meetings, with one project being selected for each Committee.
- 3.2 Each Scrutiny Committee is now asked to consider the suggestions received for in depth study. The deadline for submitting views was 25th June 2013, however other suggestions may of course be made by members at the relevant Scrutiny Committee meetings.
- 3.3 Involvement with the in-depth studies enables Members to 'get their teeth into' a particular topic and also to influence and shape proposals before they are implemented. Members should therefore aim to select a topic which can identify real service improvements.
- 3.4 Each of the studies are led by a Member project team / programme working party - the appointments were agreed at Council on 16th May 2013 and the membership is set out at **Appendix 1**. To assist the Committees in selected a topic, a list of previous topics undertaken for in depth study is attached at **Appendix 2**.

4. Topic suggestions

4.1 Place Scrutiny Committee – the following topics have been received for this Scrutiny Committee:

- a) Promoting a positive image for the town (Suggestion from Officers).
- b) Climate change (Suggestion from Officers).

4.2 People Scrutiny Committee – the following topics have been received for this Scrutiny Committee:

- a) Sexual health (Suggestion from Officers and also Cllr Flewitt).
- b) Serving the diverse communities in the town (Suggestion from Officers).
- c) Southend primary schools' falling grammar school entry figures (Suggestion from Cllr Morgan).

See also 4.3 (a) and (c) below).

4.3 Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee – the following topics have been received for this Scrutiny Committee:

- a) Impact of welfare changes (including Storehouse). (Suggestion from Officers). (Alison Semmence has suggested this could be joint scrutiny project with the People Scrutiny Cttee).
- b) Drugs and gangs (Suggestion from Officers).
- c) Homelessness and problems of begging (Suggestion from Cllr Caunce). (Alison Semmence has suggested this could be joint scrutiny project with the People Scrutiny Cttee).
- d) Maintenance of Council owned property assets (Suggestion from a number of Councillors in the Independent Group).

5. Corporate Implications

5.1 Contribution to Council's Vision and Critical Priorities – Becoming an excellent and high performing organisation.

5.2 Financial Implications – there are costs associated with organising in depth projects relating to officer time but this will all be contained within existing resources.

5.3 Legal Implications – none.

5.4 People Implications – none.

5.5 Property Implications – none.

5.6 Consultation – as described in report.

5.7 Equalities Impact Assessment – none.

5.8 Risk Assessment – none.

6. Background Papers –

Email to Members, co opted members - 21st May 2013

Replies from Members, co opted members – various dates

7. Appendices

Appendix 1 – membership of project teams / programme working parties

Appendix 2 – list of previous in depth topics

Appendix 3 – summary of work of the 3 Scrutiny Cttees 2012 / 2013

Membership of project teams (Programme Working Parties)

People Scrutiny Programme Working Party

| Party | Members | Total 9 | Substitutes |
|-------|--|---------|--|
| CON | A Kaye (Chair) M Flewitt (Vice – Chair) S J Carr M Caunce R E Hadley | 5 | E Day A J Jones I Robertson C W Walker |
| LD | M A Betson M R Grimwade | 2 | A Crystall D F Russell |
| IND | A Chalk | 1 | M Assenheim S Ayles B Ayling R Morgan M Stafford M Terry P Van Looy R A Woodley |
| LAB | A P Jones | 1 | D A Norman |

Place Scrutiny Programme Working Party

| Party | Members | Total 9 | Substitutes |
|-------|---|---------|--|
| CON | A Holland (Chair) R H Brown T Byford D Garston C W Walker | 5 | S J Carr M F Evans S Habermel A J Jones |
| LD | D F Russell | 1 | P A Wexham |
| IND | R Morgan M Terry (Vice-Chair) | 2 | M Assenheim S Ayles B Ayling A Chalk M Stafford P Van Looy R A Woodley |
| LAB | J McMahon | 1 | J Ware-Lane |

Policy & Resources Scrutiny Programme Working Party

| Party | Members | Total 9 | Substitutes |
|-------|--|---------|---|
| CON | L Burdett (Vice – Chair) T Byford M F Evans S Habermel I Robertson | 5 | R H Brown D Garston R E Hadley A Holland |
| LD | B A Godwin G E Longley | 2 | P Collins P A Wexham |
| IND | B Ayling | 1 | M Assenheim S Ayles A Chalk R Morgan M Stafford M Terry P Van Looy R A Woodley |
| LAB | I Gilbert (Chair) | 1 | M L Borton |

Scrutiny project list

The Council has undertaken a number of in depth scrutiny projects and to date has looked at the following areas:

- Housing – how we plan to meet the growing demand for social rented housing in the current poor national economic climate – 2012 / 13
- To identify improvements so that looked after children are given the best chances in life and that they do not become NEET statistics (not in education, employment or training – 2012 / 13
- Child poverty – 2011/12
- Volunteering in Cultural Services - 2011/12
- Youth anti social behaviour – perception & reality – 2011/12
- End of life care for adults – 2010/11
- Economic climate – 2009/10
- Young Carers – 2010/11
- Preparation for the 2011 Census – 2008/09 & continued in 2009/10 and 2010/11
- Carers need Care too – 2008/09
- Buses – 2007/08
- Housing - a study to highlight some of Southend's most crucial housing issues – 2007/08
- To consider how well placed Southend is in relation to the independence and well being of older people - 2006/07
- Regeneration of the seafront – 2006/07 (& reviewed by Chairmen's Scrutiny Forum in September 2011)
- Out of hours mental health services – 2004/05
- Contribution of further and adult education establishments in combating the skills deficit experienced by the residents of the borough – 2004/05
- Economic growth aspirations for Southend-on-Sea – 2004/05
- Harming the environment: its causes and solutions – 2004/05 (reviewed by Chairmen's Scrutiny Forum in 2010)
- Progress and achievement in non-selective secondary schools – 2004/05
- Learning disability services – 2003/04
- Raising the attainment of pupils from disadvantaged communities – 2003/04
- Evaluation of the Census result for Southend-on-Sea – 2003/04
- Assessment of the effects of Decriminalised parking enforcement in Southend-on-Sea – 2003/04
- Access to primary NHS dental services (under separate health Scrutiny powers) - 2003
- Town centre – 2000/01
- Anti social behaviour (& reviewed by Chairmen's Scrutiny Forum in 2010)
- Corporate Parenting – 2000/01 (& reviewed by Chairmen's Scrutiny Forum in 2011)
- Pier and Foreshore – 2000/01

For further information please go to www.southend.gov.uk and then to the Council & Democracy pages.