

COMMUNITY SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
UPDATE AND WORK PROGRAMME 2003/4

Agenda Item No.

2

10 JUNE 2003

Recommendations made to Cabinet/Executive Member/Chief Officer at the last meeting:

1. *"The Chief Officer write to the Environment Agency to thank them for their co-operation with HCC's flooding initiatives and suggest they consider prioritising their early warning system so that residents in areas such as Little Hadham where there is a very short lag time between receiving rain falling and flooding occurring receive the first calls."*

Response

A letter has been sent to the Environment Agency. A reply has yet to be received.

Update on petitions presented to the last meeting:

None

UPDATE ON PREVIOUS SCRUTINY ITEMS

	ITEM	C'TTEE DATE	EFFECTS OF SCRUTINY	STATUS* (see endnote)
1	Trading Standards Inspection Programme – inc. Food Service Plan	11/10/00 13/03/01	Following a decision by Cabinet, the Food Service Plan is now submitted on an annual basis, to both Cabinet and full Council. Quarterly updates, detailing inspection and sampling work are submitted to the Executive member and group spokespersons, as directed by the Cabinet.	Work outside scrutiny
2	Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS) Accommodation	4/07/01	This item has been the subject of written and oral updates at each select committee. Members have been appraised of progress on the developing options for the service, including costs of new accommodation.	Monitoring
3	Best Value Review of Coroners – Implementation Monitoring Sheet	30/10/01	The Scrutiny follows on from a Best Value Review of the Service. The completion of the review was on time and to budget. Since then there has been ongoing monitoring of the recommendations of the review as the service develops and grows. A report updating Members on matters arising from the Fundamental review and the Shipman report will be given at the October 2003 meeting.	Monitoring
4	Fire & Rescue Service Equal Opportunities Recruitment Targets	30/10/01	Superseded by report on 29 October 2002. A review of recruitment standards and targets is anticipated as part of modernisation agenda.	Ongoing investigation
5	Civil Funerals	12/03/02	The scrutiny of this service is still ongoing. At the meeting on 11 March 2003 the Committee requested a further report in 12 months time.	Monitoring
6	Fire & Rescue Service Initiatives with Young People	12/03/02	The Committee agreed to establish a short life topic group to deal with this subject. Due to the industrial action the commencement of this work was postponed. Nominations received to date for the topic group are Peter Ruffles, Peter Channell, Moyra O'Neill, John Usher, Lorna Kercher,	Ongoing investigation

			Sue Jones and Stephen Giles-Medurst. 1 nomination is still required from the Labour Group (a CSF representative) and 1 nomination required from the Conservative Group to replace Keith Emsall. The first meeting will be called shortly.	
7	Installation of Sprinklers in New Developments	12/03/02	The Committee agreed to establish a short life topic group to deal with this subject. Due to the industrial action the commencement of this work was postponed however the Topic Group had their first meeting on 6 June 2003 and members of this group are John Usher, Bryan Hammond, Peter Channell, Jane Hobday and Michael Colne.	Ongoing investigation
8	Public Access to Information Technology (ICT) in Libraries	11/06/02	The committee decided that a future meeting should receive a progress report, on ICT issues, especially Internet access and connection speeds. A future meeting would also scrutinise disabled access to libraries with particular reference to the blind and partially sighted. A report on ICT issues is coming to this meeting and a report scrutinising disabled access will be going to the meeting in October 2003.	Monitoring
9	Partnership Ceremonies	29/10/02	The scrutiny of this proposed service is ongoing. It is a controversial service. Members have requested further information be obtained about the service from authorities currently offering it before a report comes back to the committee.	Awaiting action
10	Fire & Rescue Service Update on Performance Targets for the Recruitment and Retention of Women and People from Ethnic Minority Backgrounds and a Profile on the Non-Uniformed Workforce	29/10/02	The Committee has asked for an update to the October 2003 meeting. A costed proposal for the Women's Access Course has been requested from North Herts College and approaches have been made to other colleges in Hertfordshire.	Monitoring

11	Fireworks	14/01/03	At the meeting in January 2003 a topic group was established that has now met on two occasions. Members of this topic group are Bryan Hammond, Peter Ruffles, John Usher, Michael Colne and Reg Smith. Over 150 written responses have been received from members of the public following press releases across the county. A visit was arranged to a local supplier – Fantastic Fireworks and at their last meeting on 16 May 2003 the group heard from a cross section of people who came in person to offer their views. General themes that have emerged clearly from the responses received are that fireworks are a nuisance, creating noise pollution and distress and that a curfew and legislation should be introduced to curb their use. The group will be meeting again on 4 July 2003 and will be formally reporting back to the Committee at the October 2003 meeting.	Ongoing investigation
13	Report of the Responding to Emergencies Topic Group	11/03/03	The Committee asked that a report be submitted in a year's time outlining the progress of recruiting flood wardens and the readiness of Parish Councils to respond to flooding emergencies.	Monitoring

* Status definitions:

- **Ongoing Investigation** – The scrutiny committee has commissioned work, which could be from a topic group, officers, consultants or other parties which is not yet complete but will report to the main committee in the future.
- **Work outside scrutiny** – an item which has been raised by the scrutiny committee where work is being taken forward through another mechanism in response to the item being raised by scrutiny– a panel, external body or officer mechanism for example.
- **Monitoring** – Items which the scrutiny committee has scrutinised in the past where it has asked for occasional or regular updates. This update could be a planned report, in which case the dates should be given, or monitoring through the update report. Items where there is work outside scrutiny can also be monitoring items.
- **Awaiting Action** – Items the committee wishes to scrutinise or review where the timing is unclear due to awaiting events or the outcome of other investigations. E.g. government guidance

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

	ITEM	C'TTEE DATE	SCRUTINY FOCUS
1	Update & Work Programme Report 2003/04	14/10/03	This report will seek to update Members on all new and live scrutiny items and review the work programme for forthcoming meetings.
2	Report back from Fire & Rescue Service Initiatives with Young People Topic Group	14/10/03	This report will provide Members with an update on progress of the topic group.
3	Report back from the Sprinkler System Installation Topic Group	14/10/03	This report will provide Members with an update on progress of the topic group.
4	Fire Safety Education to Minority Ethnic Groups	14/10/03	
5	Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies (HALS) Accommodation	14/10/03	This report will update Members on the progress of the accommodation situation.
6	Information Available to the Consumer	14/10/03	A report to scrutinise the availability of reliable information for consumers – how HCC supplies this information and if there is a better way of doing this.
7	Annual Library Plan (3.4.6)	14/10/03	A report to scrutinise the effectiveness of library services for people with disabilities (in particular people with visual impairments).
8	ENJOY!	14/10/03	A report back on the implementation and achievements of the cultural strategy.
9	Best Value Review of Coroners Implementation Monitoring	14/10/03	A report to update Members on matters arising from the Fundamental Review and Shipman Report.
10	The Effectiveness of HCC in Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships	14/10/03	As requested by Ian Laidlaw-Dickson via the Resources Scrutiny Committee.

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1 1	Update & Work Programme Report 2003/04	13/01/04	This report will seek to update Members on all new and live scrutiny items and review the work programme for forthcoming meetings.
1 2	Hertfordshire Archives & Local Studies (HALS) Accommodation	13/01/04	This report will update Members on the progress of the accommodation situation.
1 3	Report of the Responding to Emergencies Topic Group	16/03/04	This report will update Members on the progress of recruiting flood wardens and the readiness of Parish Councils to respond to flooding emergencies.
1 4	Civil Funerals	16/03/04	As requested by the Committee at the meeting in March 2003 this report will provide an update on the progress of the Civil Funerals service.
1 5	Coroners Service	16/03/04	As requested by the Committee at the meeting in March 2003 this report will update Members on the progress of the new arrangements for the Coroners Service.