

**RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 25 MARCH 2004
UPDATE AND WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2004 / 05**

Agenda Item No.

7

Chairman : - Adrian Service Tel : 01992 555564

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

County Council Revenue and Capital Budget Monitor

That the Chief Executive circulates a briefing note on the progress made with producing a balanced scorecard reflecting the Council's performance of its activities and services.

Response

A briefing note giving details of the progress made with producing a balanced scorecard was circulated to all members by E mail on 26 February 2004.

Corporate Services and Information Technology - Proposed Resource Budget 2004 / 05 –2007 / 2008

- (a) That officers consider reporting the budgetary provision for Police Community Support Officers through the Community Services Scrutiny Committee.
- (b) In noting that a significant portion of future savings will come through the SHARP project, there was concern that this aspect of the budget should be carefully monitored to ensure savings are realised.

Response

- (i) **The budgetary provision for the Crime Reduction Unit [including Police Community Support Officers] has been transferred {from Corporate Services to Community Services}and will feature in future Budget Monitor Reports to the Community Services Scrutiny Committee.**
- (ii) **The Efficiencies Panel, the Cabinet etc are responsible for monitoring the SHARP project and will observe the financial effects arising from the changes.**

County Council Proposed Resource Budget 2004 / 2005 – 2007 / 2008

- a) It was recognised that circumstances have changed and the Committee welcomed the Executive Members' intention to review the capital strategy. It was noted that this review should include consideration of revenue contribution to future capital needs.
- b) A report on the draft capital strategy to the November 2004 meeting, or earlier meeting if this is possible, was requested.
- c) The Resources Scrutiny Committee welcomed the Executive Members commitment to review the balance between revenue funding and borrowing in the short term.
- d) The Committee welcomed the increase in Police Community Support Officers which links directly to the highest concerns raised in public consultation on the budget. They urged careful thought on the principles on which the distribution of officers in the county would be based.
- e) The Committee again noted their concern about Children Schools & Families Department overspend.

Response

- i) a), b) and c) above - a report containing all these issues will be submitted to a future meeting of the Cabinet.**
- ii) The Crime Reduction Unit are putting forward proposals for the appointment of additional PCSOs and how they should be allocated for the Executive Member for Community Services Committee's approval. These proposals will be reported to the Crime Reduction Panel on 2 March 2004 and the Community Services Scrutiny Committee on 22 March 2003.**
- iii) The Children, Schools & Families and Resources Scrutiny Committees will continue through future Budget Monitor reports to keep an eye on this.**

Best Value Review Monitoring Update

- (a) The Committee concurred that future monitoring reports on Best Value Reviews should be stand alone reports containing a short precis of what the review entailed and state the actual additional costs and savings already incurred / arising matched against those projected over 5 years.
- (b) That a report be presented to a subsequent meeting setting out a future programme of reviews that would be undertaken.

Response

- i) Guidance has been issued to relevant officers regarding the content of future Monitoring reports.**
- ii) A report containing a future programme of reviews is likely to be submitted to the Cabinet on 10 May 2004.**

Scrutiny Update and Work Programmes for 2003 / 04 and 2004 / 05

It was agreed that the following items be added to the Work Programme :-

- a) Completion of the LPSA
- b) Local Strategic Partnerships
- c) Use of Publications – the best way of getting our messages out to our customers
- d) Risk Management

Response

(i) Items a), b) and c) have been added to the Work Programme – see B. items 7 and 8 of 1 July 2004 and item 4 of 4 November 2004.

(ii) The issue of Risk Management was considered by the Audit Committee at its meeting on 4 March 2004 and to avoid double handling of this issue, it will not now be considered by the Resources Scrutiny Committee.

late on petitions presented to the last meeting: None

UPDATE ON PREVIOUS SCRUTINY ITEMS

ITEM	Committee Date	EFFECTS OF SCRUTINY	STATUS* (see end note)
Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring	19/10/2000	Report to each meeting.	Monitoring
Review of Performance Monitoring Information	19/10/2000	'Traffic Lights' Report to each meeting [with the exception of the January meeting].	Monitoring
Review of the Best Value Performance Plan	19/10/2000	Reviewed annually.	Monitoring
Review of Treasury Management	25/1/2001	Reviewed annually.	Monitoring
Planning Obligations	15/3/2001	The Topic Group has met on two occasions with its next meeting due on 29 March 2004 and will report its findings to the Resources Scrutiny Committee at its July 2004 meeting and also to the Environment Scrutiny Committee at its June 2004 meeting.	Investigation
Promise Scrutiny 'Improve employment prospects for disadvantaged people'	31/10/2002	The Scrutiny Committee have agreed the definition of disadvantaged people to be used for this exercise and further work is being undertaken.	Investigation
Promise Scrutiny 'Give the public value for money by getting more cost efficient every year.'	23/01/2003	Efficiencies project in preparation. The Simply Done Efficiencies Panel has met three times with the last meeting being on 26 February 2004. The Panel at its last meeting considered information on the Council's usage and expenditure on external consultants for one off projects. The Panel is next due to meet on 7 April 2004.	Investigation

status definitions:

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.

Monitoring 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 FOR 2004 / 2005

July 2004

ITEM	SCRUTINY FOCUS
Budget Monitor	This report will provide Members with the projected revenue and capital expenditure of the County Council as at 31 March 2004.
Promises Monitor Report - Traffic Lights Report	This report will update Members on progress being made to meet promises made to improve the performance of specified Council services.
Promises for 2004/05	This report will outline the promises made by the Council.
Best Value Review Monitoring Update	This report will provide Members with an update on projected actual costs and savings arising from recent best value reviews.
Money Advice Unit – Progress Report	This report will update Members on action taken to encourage greater take up of benefits claimable.
Planning Obligations	To consider the report of the Planning Obligations Topic Group.
Local Public Services Agreement	To scrutinise the contents of the agreed Local Public Services Agreement for Hertfordshire.
Local Strategic Partnerships	This report will seek to update Members on progress made with Local Strategic Partnerships.
Update & Work Programme Report 2004/05	This report will seek to update Members on all new and live scrutiny items and review the work programme for forthcoming meetings.

November 2004

ITEM	SCRUTINY FOCUS
Budget Monitor	This report will provide Members with the projected revenue and capital expenditure of the County Council as at 31 July 2004.
Promises Monitor Report - Traffic Lights Report	This report will update Members on progress being made to meet promises made to improve the performance of specified Council services.
Employment of People with Disabilities by Herts C.C	To consider the current level of staff with disabilities and in particular whether the SHARP programme has assisted in identifying the number of disabled employed by the County Council.
Use of Publications	To consider the best way of getting the Council's messages out to our customers plus alternatives to hard copy information.
Capital Strategy	To consider the current and future strategy for funding the Council's capital spending.
Update & Work Programme Report 2004/05	This report will seek to update Members on all new and live scrutiny items and review the work programme for forthcoming meetings.

January 2005

ITEM	SCRUTINY FOCUS
Corporate Services Proposed Resource Budget	To consider the Corporate Services revenue budget and capital programme proposals for the forthcoming financial years.
County Council Proposed Resource Budget	To consider the Council's total revenue budget and capital programme proposals for the forthcoming financial years.
Best Value Review Monitoring Update	This report will provide Members with an update on projected actual costs and savings arising from recent best value reviews.
Budget Monitor	This report will provide Members with the projected revenue and capital expenditure of the County Council as at 31 October 2004.
CPA for 2004 – Outcome	To consider the outcome of the Council's CPA for 2004
Update & Work Programme Report 2004/05	This report will seek to update Members on all new and live scrutiny items and review the work programme for forthcoming meetings.

April 2005

ITEM	SCRUTINY FOCUS
Budget Monitor	This report will provide Members with the projected revenue and capital expenditure of the County Council as at 31 December 2004.
Promises Monitor Report- Traffic Lights Report	This report will update Members on progress being made to meet promises made to improve the performance of specified Council services.
Update & Work Programme Report 2004/05 & 2005 /06	This report will seek to update Members on all new and live scrutiny items and review the work programme for forthcoming meetings.

RK TO BE PROGRAMMED : -

Review of Financial Delegations