



COMMUNITY COMMISSION 19 June 2006

Report of the Director of Corporate and Adult Social Services

Overview and Scrutiny Commissions – Work Planning and Resources 2006/07

RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Commission note and approve the report.
- 1.2 That members:
 - a) Consider and select the topic that the Commission wishes to review in 2006/07 and that this is done in time for the topic to be agreed at the Commission's meeting in July 2006.
 - b) Agree a Commission workplan for 2006/07
 - c) Indicate whether they wish to use the method adopted for the Primary Care Trust review to conduct their 2006/07 review.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 At the beginning of the municipal year it is usual for each Overview and Scrutiny Commission to consider its work plan and to select any topics that they wish to review in the coming year. Reviews can cover anything that affects Derby and Commissions can if they wish review external as well as internal services. Commissions should if possible aim to engage the public in the review process. Appendix 2 sets out the new Commission's portfolio which, following the decision of the Annual Meeting, mirrors those of two Cabinet members. Appendix 3 then shows related scrutiny activity by the previous Commissions. A topic selection matrix is shown in Appendix 4 of this report.
- 2.2 The Constitution limits Commissions to one topic review report every six months which means that it is in theory possible for each Commission to conduct two reviews in each municipal year. This has been achieved in the past, but if a Commission also wants to conduct effective scrutiny it is probably more realistic for it to aim to complete one topic review each year.
- 2.3 Topic reviews are not mandatory, but if the Commission wishes to conduct one during the coming municipal year it is suggested that members should aim to have agreed on the review topic by the date of the Commission's July meeting. If members wish, a special topic

selection meeting can be arranged for a date in June/July to assist in this process.

- 2.4 To enable the Commission to carry out its work plan it can draw on the Overview and Scrutiny budget which, for 2006/07 amounts to £24,000. This sum will need to be shared between the five Commissions.
- 2.5 Overview and Scrutiny is a member led process but the Commissions will be supported by the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordination Team which comprises the Scrutiny and Complaints Manager, three Co-ordination Officers and a Team Administrator.
- 2.6 In 2006/07, the Co-ordination Team will be supporting five Overview and Scrutiny Commissions. To do this with four officers it is proposed to provide a dedicated Co-ordination Officer for the Scrutiny Management, Children and Young People, Adult Services and Health, and Environment Commissions, and for the three Co-ordination Officers and the Scrutiny and Complaints Manager to share the co-ordination for the Community Commission between them.
- 2.7 In 2005/06 the three Co-ordination Officers and the Scrutiny and Complaints Manager worked in pairs with each pair covering three Commissions. This arrangement worked well and provided the flexibility needed to cope with unexpected work load peaks and absence due to holiday or sickness. It is therefore proposed to continue the arrangement in 2006/07 with each pair covering two or three Commissions.
- 2.8 The Commission is advised that for the coming municipal year the Co-ordination Team is able to offer each of the five Overview and Scrutiny Commissions up to 30 meetings of around two hours duration. Depending on the Commission, between six and nine of these meetings will be taken up by the Commission's scheduled meetings, which are as set out in Appendix 5 in the 2006/07 Schedule of Meetings. The remaining meetings are therefore available to the Commission for extended scrutiny or policy development topic reviews, or for any other activities that the Commission considers would enable it to achieve its objectives for the coming year.
- 2.9 In order to make best use of the available meetings, it is suggested that the Commission should develop a work plan for the coming municipal year. The work plan should take into account any known demands on Commission time such as budget scrutiny, and should then allocate the remaining meetings to either topic or scrutiny review work according to Commission members' perception of needs and priorities.
- 2.10 In 2006 all four members of the Co-ordination Team worked together on the Primary Care Trust review and evidence gathering was completed in just one week. This was a new approach that was necessitated by the need to complete a large and complex review

relatively quickly. The approach proved to be very successful and it is therefore suggested that the Commissions might adopt it for their 2006/07 reviews.

For more information contact:	Mahroof Hussain 01332 255597 e-mail Mahroof.hussain@derby.gov.uk
Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Council Cabinet portfolios relevant to this Commission Appendix 3 - Previous Scrutiny of the new Commission's portfolio Appendix 3 - Topic Selection Matrix Appendix 4 - Schedule of Meetings 2006/07

Appendix 1

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

1. Costs incurred in implementing the Commissions' workplans will have to be contained within the 2006/07 Overview and Scrutiny budget of £24,000.

Legal

2. None arising directly from this report.

Personnel

3. None arising directly from this report.

Equalities impact

4. Effective Overview and Scrutiny will be of benefit to all Derby people.

Corporate Priorities

5. This report has the potential to link with all the Council's priorities for 2006-09.

Appendix 2

Commission Portfolio

Council Cabinet Member

**Neighbourhood, Social
Cohesion and Housing
Strategy
Councillor Amar Nath**

Areas of Responsibility

Area and Neighbourhood Co-ordination,
including Area Panels
Community Development
Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy
External Regeneration Funding
New Deal for Communities
Customer Services
Housing Strategy and Development
Private Sector Housing
Housing Options/Homelessness
Social Cohesion
Housing and Council Tax Benefits
Community Legal Services
Derby Advice

**Housing Management
Councillor Richard Smalley**

Housing Management – Client
The Council's Buildings of Heritage and
Importance

Previous Scrutiny of the new Commission's portfolio

Council Cabinet Member and Areas of Responsibility	Previous Relevant Scrutiny Activity
Neighbourhood, Social Cohesion and Housing Strategy	
Councillor Amar Nath	
Area and Neighbourhood Co-ordination, including Area Panels	Special single item meeting held 27 February 2006 to which all members were invited. Update required from Cabinet Member [as at agenda item 7]
Community Development	Links to forgoing item
Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy)
External Regeneration Funding) Budget scrutiny review special meeting held autumn 2002 made recommendations to Cabinet
New Deal for Communities)
Customer Services	SMC conducted major review in 2003 which fed into Best Value report
Housing Strategy and Development) Several reports scrutinised from Forward Plan and evidence given for the Housing
Private Sector Housing) Allocations and Homelessness topic review
Housing Options/ Homelessness	Topic review report [at agenda item 6]
Social Cohesion	a) Report 1362: Community Based Financial Institutions) b) Community Tensions Reporting considered summer 2003 c) 'Social Inclusion & the Physical Environment' topic review in 2003. d) 'Crime & Disorder and Young People' topic review in 2004 e) Special focussed scrutiny in autumn 2004 on

'Paying the Price' Home Office prostitution policy
f) 'Community Involvement and Consultation' topic review 2005

Housing and Council Tax
Benefits

Regular reports received continuously since
2003

Community Legal
Services

Derby Advice

Housing Management

Councillor Richard Smalley

Housing Management –
Client

Periodic performance reports scrutinised with
attendance from client side and Derby Homes

The Council's Buildings of
Heritage and Importance

- a) Roundhouse call-in late 2003
- b) 'Culture in Derby' topic review – April 2004
- c) Silk Mill covered in Culture & Prosperity
Commission review of Derwent Valley UNESCO
World Heritage Site, April 2005
- d) St Helen's House subject to call-in in October
2005

Topic Selection Matrix

The Commissions are also solely responsible for selecting the subjects on which they will carry overview 'topic' reviews.

Although the Commissions are able to exert considerable control over the subjects they select for review, the amount of time that Commission members can devote to the overview and scrutiny process is usually quite limited. This means that it is important for the Commissions to select for detailed review only those subjects that are likely to justify the time and effort that will be needed to carry out the review

One way of doing this is by making sure the Commissions concentrate on reviewing 'significant' subjects.

Significant subjects are topics and issues that are:

- a) important and/or of interest to the Council and/or to local people, and where:
- b) the Commission will add or gain value by doing the review

The simple decision matrix shown below can be used to assess the significance of subjects for review.

	HIGH Score 4-5	MEDIUM Score 3	LOW Score 1-2	Total
IMPORTANT – is it				
a) Interesting				
b) Controversial				
ADDS VALUE				
URGENT				
Specific				
Measurable				
Attainable				
Relevant				
Trackable				
TOTAL				

By using the matrix, the significance of each potential review subject can be assessed by attributing numerical scores according to:

- **How important the subject is, either to the public or to the Council.** There is little point in spending time reviewing a subject that is not important. To some extent importance will depend on:
 - a) **How interesting the subject will be.** The public are more likely to want to participate in reviews of subjects they consider to be interesting
 - b) **How controversial the subject is considered to be.** Reviewing a controversial topic may present some difficulties but it is likely to generate a lot of interest and public involvement
- **How much value the Commission will add or gain by doing the review.** If no real value will be added or gained by the Commission, there is little point reviewing the subject.
- **Is it Urgent that the Commission carries out the review?** Urgency can in some cases override Importance and Value.
- **Whether the review will be SMART.** Does it have a specific aim, measurable outputs, achievable and realistic objectives and can it be completed in the available time.

The decision matrix can be used to choose which subjects to review. The maximum score is 40 and as a general rule, unless they are very urgent, subjects that score less than 25 are unlikely to justify the time and effort of a review.

The decision matrix was created to assist in the selection of relatively complex subjects for overview 'topic' reviews, and can be used to 'sort' a number of review topics into an order of importance.



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

Appendix 5

Schedule of Meetings June 2006 - July 2007

	Day/Time	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Council	Wed 6pm		19		13		22		24		(Thur) 1*		23#		18
Council Cabinet	Tue 6pm	6	4	1	5	3, 31	28	19	16	20	20	17		15	3
Scrutiny Management	Tue 6pm	20	11		12	31		5	30		6	10	29		3
Adult Services and Health	Mon 6pm		17		11	30		11	22		12	16			16
Children and Young People	Tue 6pm	6	25		19		7	12	23		13			12	24
Environment	Mon 6pm	5	31		25		27		22		26			4	30
Community	Mon 6pm	19	24			2		4	15			2		18	23
Corporate Parenting Sub	Tue 6pm		4		5			12			27			19	
Area Panel 1	Wed 6.30pm	7			6		1		10		7			6	
Area Panel 2	Wed 6.30pm	14			6		8		17		14			13	
Area Panel 3	Wed 6pm	21			20		15		17		21			20	
Area Panel 4	Wed 6.30pm	28			27		29		31		28			27	
Area Panel 5	Wed 7pm		12			4		6	31			4			4
Planning Control	Thu 6pm	22	6 ⁺ ,20	24	7 ⁺ ,28	12 ⁺ ,26	9 ⁺ ,23	14	25	8 ⁺ ,22	8 ⁺ ,22	5 ⁺ ,26	31	21	5 ⁺ ,19
Taxi Licensing and Appeals Committee	Wed 6pm		26			18		20		14		25			11
General Licensing Committee	Wed 6pm		26			18		20		14		25			11
Disabled People's Advisory	Thu 6.30pm	8			21		2		18		15			7	
Minority Ethnic Communities Advisory	Thu 6.30pm	15			7		16		11		29			14	
Women's Advisory	Tue 6.30pm	13			19		21		23		27			19	
Conservation Area Advisory	Thu 5.15pm	8	13	10	14	5	2	7	11	15	15	12	10	14	12
Audit & Accounts Committee	Thu 6pm	29			28			7				5			
Councillor Training Days		29	10		18	10	14	13	8	14	20	11		28	9

* **Council Tax Setting**

^ **Special Budget Meetings**

Annual Council

* Planning Control Committee will be held twice a month for a trial period up to 31 May 2006. Meetings marked + will only take place on these dates if the need continues.

Area Panel 1 – Chaddesden, Spondon, Derwent, Oakwood

Area Panel 2 – Alvaston, Boulton, Chellaston, Sinfen

Area Panel 3 – Arboretum, Normanton, Abbey

Area Panel 4 – Littleover, Mickleover, Blagreaves

Area Panel 5 – Allestree, Darley, Mackworth

Meeting dates after 23 May 2007 have been approved by the Council but should be regarded as provisional as they may be changed at the Annual Meeting of the Council on 23 May 2007.