

Overview & Scrutiny Commissioning Committee- Work Programme Suggestions

At the Overview and Scrutiny Commissioning Committee (OSCC) meeting on 8 September members suggested potential topics they may wish to explore in further detail. The text below provides narrative to the suggested work programme topics and also a basis for further discussions of the work the OSCC may wish to pursue.

Locality Working- is it working?

The Getting Closer to Communities (GC2C) programme is dedicated to developing strong working relationships with our partners and communities in Buckinghamshire. The aim of the programme is to:

- *provide services to meet community needs.*
- *ensure local services are joined-up*
- *improve local access to public services*
- *enhance the community leadership role of our local Members*
- *increase community empowerment*

A piece of scrutiny work could examine whether GC2C is meeting the programme aims listed above and make recommendations to Cabinet and partners to improve outcomes for the wider community. Alternatively members could focus on one of the programme aims and pursue the success of this in greater detail.

Partnerships

In 2008 overview and scrutiny undertook a joint scrutiny review into the '*The effectiveness of Buckinghamshire's Local Area Agreement (LAA) in its early stages*'.

Members may wish to follow on from this review and examine the way in which the Council, along with its partners, delivers strategic plans, frontline services and meets performance targets. The options listed below are some ways in which members may wish to explore further:

Local Area Agreement (LAA)

The Buckinghamshire LAA is a 3 year agreement between partners in Buckinghamshire and central government. It is a delivery plan for the Sustainable Community Strategy that sets out the shared outcomes towards which partners will work together to improve the quality of life for local residents.

Having already examined the effectiveness of the LAA in its early stages, members may wish to examine specific targets within the LAA. Such a review could be undertaken in numerous forms, these could include:

- Receiving an exception report of the LAA indicators and then choosing to focus in detail on an area of under or poor performance.
- Holding a half day select committee style committee examining how a specific partnership is performing or to ascertain their key concerns and issues which scrutiny could potentially contribute to, e.g. Safer & Stronger Bucks Partnership

Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA)

The CAA is a joint inspectorate judgement about how well public services are tackling local priorities. This focuses on 3 key questions:

1. How well do local priorities express community needs & aspirations?
2. How well are outcomes and improvements being delivered?
3. What are the prospects for improvement?

The final report is due to be published on 10 December 2009. Members could assess the findings of the area assessment process to see what issues could be usefully addressed within the committee's future work programme.

Any review that the committee commissions to examine issues associated with locality or partnership working should seek to extend its membership to include our partners. Members could co-opt representatives from the district councils,

Inequalities or Tackling Disadvantage

Tackling Disadvantage has been identified as a priority for partnership activity through the family of sustainable community strategies and the Buckinghamshire LAA 2008-11. The programme board for the Tackling Disadvantage has chosen to initially focus on geographic areas where disadvantage has clustered.

Buckinghamshire County Council is involved in the *Tackling Disadvantage Partnership Programme*. This is a strategic approach to addressing needs of those experiencing unfavourable conditions or circumstances within the county.

Scrutiny could seek to add to this work by undertaking reviews in the following areas:

- By scrutinising the progress of the programme one year on.
- Tackling disadvantage could be examined within the context of a review into locality working.
- By examining a specific area in relation to disadvantage, e.g. rural disadvantage.