

Subject:	Scrutiny Update		
Date of Meeting:	5 April 2011		
Report of:	Strategic Director Resources		
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Key Decision:	No		
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:

- 1.1 OSC has a role in coordinating the work of committees and panels, driving forward improvements and promoting innovative scrutiny work.
- 1.2 This report summarises for Members some of the work undertaken during the last three years, as well as presenting in more detail OSC's work over the last 12 months (Appendix 1).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That OSC notes the report.

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

Scrutiny Reviews

- 3.1 Between May 2008 and May 2011 twenty scrutiny reviews have been undertaken. These have covered a wide range of policy areas, looking at some of the major issues affecting the city.
- 3.2 Members have heard evidence from over 200 witnesses ranging from individual residents describing their experiences of council services, to international experts offering insight into technical policy issues and council staff offering insight into internal council technicalities.
- 3.3 Reviews have ranged from 1-6 public meetings, some lasting over a year, some as short as 2 months. The full list of reviews is:
 - Dual Diagnosis of mental health and substance misuse issues
 - Students in the Community
 - Older people and community safety
 - GP Led Health Centre
 - Children and Alcohol Related Harm
 - Dignity at Work

- Environmental Technologies
- Street Access Issues
- Winter Service Plan
- Staff Disability
- Climate Change Adaptation
- 20 mph speed limits
- School Exclusions
- Support Services for the Victims of Sexual Violence
- Dementia Strategy
- Impact of In-Year Budget Savings
- Services for Adults with Autistic Spectrum Conditions
- Cultural Provision for Children
- Renewable Energy Potential
- Private Sector Letting Agents

Details of all scrutiny reviews can be found in the scrutiny section of the council website.

- 3.4 There are currently four review topics that are outstanding and will be offered to Members in the new municipal year, these are:
- Living Wage
 - Alcohol related hospital admissions
 - Music Industry
 - Information Sharing on Vulnerable People

Local Third Sector

- 3.5 The Community and Voluntary Sector Forum has been represented in scrutiny workshops on intelligent commissioning and as OSC co-optee in scrutiny of the 2011-2012 budget proposals.

University Collaboration

- 3.6 Scrutiny Members have been instrumental in recognising the benefits of developing a close working relationship with the city's universities. Two scrutiny panels have enjoyed the participation as co-opted members of academic staff from the University of Sussex and other scrutiny panels have received evidence from academic experts.
- 3.7 Scrutiny Members have been interviewed by university students as part of research projects and scrutiny staff have run seminar sessions on local government and accountability. A final year student is currently undertaking an internship within the scrutiny team.
- 3.8 The Centre for Public Scrutiny has indicated they will be using the scrutiny relationship with the university as a case-study in a forthcoming publication.

Public Involvement

- 3.9 A public consultation ran during the course of July 2010 asking for suggestions for scrutiny topics; a total of 69 separate suggestions were received. The consultation was promoted through a number of means:
1. All Members of the council were invited to submit ideas
 2. All LSP themed partnerships were written to and scrutiny officers attended a number of partnership meetings
 3. Citynews and the Argus both carried articles promoting the consultation
 4. A press release was issued and promoted on Facebook and Twitter
 5. Information was added to the Consultation Portal at <http://consult.brighton-hove.gov.uk/portal>

Communications

- 3.10 A scrutiny twitter account has been created which will be used to promote scrutiny committee and panel work and act as a portal through which suggestions for scrutiny can be channelled. The account is entitled @BHScrutiny
- 3.11 A quarterly newsletter on scrutiny activity goes to all Members, senior officers and partner organisations. This is attached as Appendix 2.

Future Development

- 3.12 Key areas for future development include:
- Ensuring that scrutiny is fully integrated into the Intelligent Commissioning model
 - Moving towards a partnership based scrutiny system
 - Securing greater resident engagement in scrutiny

4. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

- 4.1 Financial Implications:
None directly in relation to this report
- 4.2 Legal Implications:
None directly in relation to this report
- 4.3 Equalities Implications:
None directly in relation to this report
- 4.4 Sustainability Implications:
None directly in relation to this report
- 4.5 Crime & Disorder Implications:
None directly in relation to this report

- 4.6 Risk & Opportunity Management Implications:
None directly in relation to this report
- 4.7 Corporate / Citywide Implications:
None directly in relation to this report

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. OSC Work Programme 2010/11
2. Scrutiny Newsletter

Documents in Members' Rooms

1. None

Background Documents

1. None