

## REPORT TO SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 1 JULY 2016

### TOPIC SCORING – OUTCOMES AND 6 MONTH WORKPLAN

#### 1. Recommendations

The Committee is recommended to:

- (i) Note and agree the decisions taken and reasons for decision at its topic scoring meeting on 8 June;
- (ii) Agree to the proposed timetable of meeting weekly on Monday afternoons and/or Wednesdays from September to December 2016; and
- (iii) Agree the key questions/areas to be looked at as part of the investigation to inform the Terms of Reference for the Investigation.

#### 2. Background / Discussion

- 2.1 The Committee met, informally, on Wednesday 8 June to consider topics which had been submitted by Members and Officers for consideration as topics for investigation.
- 2.2 The Committee agreed to undertake an Investigation into Freedom of Information and to request workshops and reports back on a variety of other topics. The topics submitted, the Committee's decisions and reasons are appended as **Appendix 1**.
- 2.3 It is suggested that Members agree to set aside Monday afternoons and all day Wednesdays to undertake the Investigation and/or hold workshops on the topics agreed. Whilst it is not anticipated that every Monday/Wednesday will be used each week this would allow maximum flexibility and clarity to both Members and officers in arranging witness sessions, workshops and report writing/discussions. **Appendix 2** lists possible dates for Members' diaries.
- 2.4 Members are invited to discuss and agree the key questions and areas to be looked at as part of the Investigation. This will inform the Terms of Reference.

#### 3 Equalities, Staffing and Financial Implications

- 3.1 An equalities impact assessment is not required because this report refers to the future work of the Committee, and does not impact on any of the protected groups. Any further actions or recommendations which might impact on these groups in terms of service delivery will have been considered by officers and reported to the relevant Policy Committee. This report has no adverse staffing or financial implications.



<b>APPENDIX 1</b>						
<b>Topic</b>	<b>Inves'n</b>	<b>Workshop</b>	<b>Report</b>	<b>No action</b>	<b>Reasons for decision</b>	
<b>1</b> <b>Freedom of Information Requests</b>	√				The compliance with Freedom of Information legislation is a key process for the Council and Committee felt there was sufficient evidence of concerns about the consistent implementation of the Councils' procedures and the impact of affected individuals to justify further examination through an investigation.	
<b>2</b> <b>Using Complaints to Improve our Services</b>		√			Subject represents a key aspect of the Council's approach to meeting the needs of customers, service users and citizens. Concern that Council repeatedly is subject to SPSO judgements against it on similar issues.  Combine with (3) below on Customer feedback process and request a Workshop on the approach and the issues emerging from the challenge of responding to and learning from complaints and feedback.	
<b>3</b> <b>Customer Feedback Process</b>		√			See above.	
<b>4</b> <b>Effectiveness of the Town centre Health Check exercise</b>		√			Concern on accuracy of some of the findings in particular settlements and on the impact of assessments and conclusions on reputation of towns and potential future development and inward investment.	
<b>5</b> <b>IT system for council tax collection/reduction,</b>			√		Combine with Item 11 below and request a report into effect effectiveness, key issues and programme of improvement, and to include the Council's policy on debt	

							write off, income and debt collection, payment of invoices within 30 days and comparisons with other authorities.
6	<b>Implementation of the Charging Policy for Non Residential Care and Support 2016/17.</b>				√		Committee felt that implementation of the policy was too early to justify an investigation and that it should be left for a minimum of 12 months prior to be examined further.
7	<b>Process of consultation and approving policies prior to changing and notifying the public.</b>				√		Committee felt that due to the ongoing work and future implications of the Future Governance initiative including the respective roles of Council, Policy Committees, Area Committees, and the Scheme of Delegation and how Committees consult that an investigation could not be justified at this time.  The implications of the Community Empowerment Act on the Councils' work and its relationship to communities was also not yet fully understood and therefore an investigation in to consultation and engagement approaches would be premature at this time.
8	<b>Council's strategy for disposing of surplus equipment.</b>			√			Committee felt the issue of how surplus equipment is disposed in order to meet Best Value while maximising potential benefit and opportunities for local businesses and communities and meeting zero waste aspirations was worthy of further consideration.  A report to be requested and to include among others response from Fleet Services, Property, Education, Facilities Management, Waste and Finance (in respect of financial regulations relating to disposals of surplus goods and assets)

9	<b>Self-Directed Support</b>				√	Committee felt that as this is now the responsibility of the Integrated Joint Board for Health and Social Care it was a matter best addressed by the IJB.
10	<b>Performance reporting</b>		√			Committee requested a workshop on approaches to performance management in Aberdeenshire, how data is collected, how it is used and impacts on service delivery and improvement. Further to look at how the Council scrutinises Police Fire and future Health and Social Care performance.
11	<b>Collection of income and debts</b>			√		Link to Item 5 above.
12	<b>Any other topics/areas</b> <b>Council's robustness and responsiveness in respect of Child Protection and lessons learned and implications of the Liam Fee incident in Fife.</b>			√		Request report from Chief Social Work Officer on lessons learned from Liam Fee incident and assurances regarding resources, policies, procedures and approach to Child Protection and link further to IJB responsibilities in respect of wider families' needs such as mental; health and substance use and how joined up respective social work referrals are.

**Appendix 2**

**Dates for SAC Work August – September**

Mon 22 Aug	No meetings clash/ rooms free
Wed 24 Aug	No meetings clash / rooms free
Wed 31 Aug	IJB/Sustainability Sub-committee?
Wed 7 Sept	Gypsy travellers am/ pm; No Ctte rooms but look elsewhere
Mon 12 Sept	No meetings clash
Wed 14 Sept	No meetings clash
Wed 21 Sep	AM only
Mon 26 Sep	Equalities
Wed 28 Sep	No meetings clash
Mon 3 Oct	No meetings clash
Wed 5 Oct	No meetings clash
Mon 24 Oct	No meetings clash
Wed 26 Oct	No meetings clash
Wed 2 Nov	No meetings clash
Mon 7 Nov	No meetings clash
Wed 9 Nov	Sustainability Sub-committee
Mon 14 Nov	No meetings clash
Wed 16 Nov	No meetings clash
Mon 21 Nov	No meetings clash
Wed 30 Nov	No meetings clash
Mon 5 Dec	No meetings clash
Wed 7 Dec	No meetings clash
Wed 14 Dec	No meetings clash
Mon 19 Dec	No meetings clash