

**Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee – 2008/09 programme**

v.15 August 2008

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Item	Objectives / notes	Action / timescale
<b>Standing items</b>		
Quarterly Performance Monitoring reports against the Council Plan.	These reports provide a summary of the Council’s performance for the parts of the Council within the committee’s terms of reference. The reports identify which targets are BVPIs (Best Value performance Indicators) and CPA (Comprehensive Performance Assessment) indicators. Key service targets assessed as red or amber are included in the report: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Amber (where there is concern about the likelihood of achieving the performance measure by the end of the year) together with recommendations for action</li> <li>• Red (where the performance measure is assessed as inappropriate or unachievable).</li> </ul> County Council performance for the following BVPIs is included at key stages: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BV002a – equality standard level</li> <li>• BV002b – duty to promote race equality</li> <li>• BV011a – women in top 5% earners</li> <li>• BV011b – black / ethnic minorities in top 5% earners in the county</li> <li>• BV011c – top 5% earners with a disability</li> <li>• BV012 – days / shifts lost to sickness</li> <li>• BV014 – early retirements</li> <li>• BV015 – ill health retirements</li> <li>• BV016a – % disabled employees</li> </ul>	All meetings from November 2008

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BV017a – % ethnic minority employees</li> <li>• BV008 – invoices paid within agreed terms – 10 March 2008: report requested at next meeting.</li> <li>• BV156 – % local authority public buildings accessible to disabled people.</li> </ul>	
Forward Plan	A <i>snapshot</i> of the Council's Forward Plan is appended to each committee agenda. The purpose is to enable members to identify and highlight relevant issues for scrutiny. Options for dealing with items identified include: briefing paper, items on scrutiny committee agenda; more in depth scrutiny review.	All Meetings / Democratic Services
Reconciling policy and resources	<p>24 September 2007: Draft Council Plan policy steers were endorsed by Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee; the committee highlighted concerns on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deficits on the 2006/07 Council Tax Collection Fund accounts for Eastbourne and Hastings borough councils and noted the remedial action being proposed.</li> <li>• The worsening position of BVPIs 197 and 53/ teenage pregnancies and intensive home care support for people aged 65 or over (referred concerns to the Lead Member).</li> </ul> <p>21 November 2007: Committee requested a copy of a benchmarking comparisons report commissioned through the Institute of Public Finance (IPF).</p>	September – March (annual)
<b>Audit functions</b>		
Internal Audit Strategy and Annual Plan	Sets out the internal audit strategy, including key themes and detailed coverage across departments for the year ahead.	June (annual)
Annual Internal Audit Report and Opinion	Gives an overall opinion on the Council's framework of internal control; summarises key audit findings and performance against key indicators.	June (annual)
Internal Audit Progress Reports	<p>These summarise quarterly key audit findings, highlight significant control issues and report on delivery of the audit plan and internal audit services' performance against performance indicators.</p> <p>Reports include comments on sharing information from internal audit progress reports with other scrutiny review boards and committees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 March 2008: Committee requested report back on building maintenance action plan in due</li> </ul>	All meetings (quarterly)

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	<p>course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 March 2008: Building maintenance contractors in schools: Committee requested a report back on the new corporate policy to be in place by April 2008 which will address this issue.</li> </ul>	
Annual Audit and Inspection Plan	<p>Sets out audit and inspection work to be carried out by Council's external auditors. From 2007/08 PKF are the external auditors.</p> <p>19 June 2008: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee highlighted the following areas on which they wished to be kept informed of progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintaining a focus on the improvement programme in adult social care services</li> <li>• Increasing efforts to persuade the waste collection authorities to agree a county-wide waste strategy</li> <li>• Reconsidering how the County Council can deliver an improved transport infrastructure, including energising partners to look for innovative solutions to rural transport matters</li> <li>• Strengthening the council's approach to equality and diversity.</li> </ul>	<p>June (annual)</p> <p>Progress reports to Members at key stages</p>
Annual Governance Report	Sets out the external auditors' conclusions from their audit of the accounts and the <i>Use of Resources</i> element of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).	September (annual)
Audit and Inspection Annual Letter	Sets out the Relationship Manager's overall view of the Council's performance, including the CPA Direction of Travel Assessment, overall CPA scores and results of assessments and inspections by other bodies e.g. Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) and Ofsted.	March or June (annual)
Risk Management Annual report	<p>Provides: an assessment of the adequacy of risk management arrangements; planned improvements for the year ahead; and an update on the strategic risk log.</p> <p>19 June 2008: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee requested future cross referencing between the risk management log and internal audit plan to ensure consistency of information being provided.</p>	June (annual)
Strategic risk monitoring log	Provides a chief officer view of the strategic risks facing the authority.	All meetings

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Monitoring Officer's Annual Review of Governance	Sets out an assessment of the effectiveness of the Council's governance arrangements and includes an improvement plan for the coming year, and the corporate assurance statement which will form part of the statement of accounts.  12 June 07: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee recommended to the Governance Committee that the improvement plan for the Corporate Governance Framework should include reference to diversity and the progress made to date to improve the Council's performance in this area.	June (annual)
The Council's Statement of Accounts	Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee has a responsibility to review the accounts prior to approval by the Governance Committee.	September (annual)
Anti Fraud & Corruption Strategy	10 March 2008: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee considered developments in anti fraud and corruption work, the outcomes of a self assessment against CIPFA's "Managing the Risk of Fraud" and noted the revised anti fraud and corruption strategy before being approved by Governance Committee.	No further action.
<b>Best value and scrutiny reviews</b>		
Scrutiny review of council procurement and local SMEs	19 June 2008: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee established a scrutiny review of "Council procurement and local SMEs". The project board comprises Cllrs Tutt (Chairman), Gadd and Whetstone.  The board will examine the extent to which the Council's procurement processes offer 'a level playing field' to local small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) who wish to access contract opportunities with the Council.  (Project Initiation Document – available on request from 1 September 2008)	Paul Dean (Project Manager)  Mar 09
Best Value Review of a Strategy for a Joint Waste Authority	This review was reported to: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee on 29 November 2006; Cabinet on 30 January 2007; and County Council on 20 February 2007. Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee endorsed the review's recommendations, viz. that all local authorities in East Sussex should (1) continue to work towards closer and better working relationships, potentially including Brighton and Hove, and for that purpose create appropriate formal agreements, and (2)	Complete

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	<p>explore the creation of a consortium of all the authorities.</p> <p>19 June 2007: Transport and Environment Scrutiny Committee considered a draft Municipal Waste Management Strategy and recommended adoption with an annual review of action plans and a five year review, together with all the district and borough councils, of the headline strategy and supporting annexes.</p> <p>Monitoring reports to T&amp;E Scrutiny Committee: Nov 2007 and June 2008.</p>	
<p>Scrutiny review of the County Council's relationship with the voluntary and community sector (VCS)</p>	<p>This cross cutting scrutiny review was managed by the Community Services Scrutiny Committee. Cllr Sparks represented the Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee on the Review Board. It reported to Cabinet 3 June 2008 and County Council on 22 July 2008.</p> <p>Some of the key outcomes of the review were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear guidance on establishing the East Sussex LINK (Local Involvement Network)</li> <li>• improved sharing of bidding and other expertise between the County Council and VCS</li> <li>• alignment of statutory sector funding streams to facilitate access by the VCS</li> <li>• improved guidance for council officers and flexible procurement processes to benefit smaller VCOs</li> <li>• a recommendation that the County Council cease Member nominations to VCOs based on funding requirements, and encourage voluntary relationships with local VCOs and VCS 'infrastructure' organisations instead; Members to be provided with a concise 'signposting' resource.</li> </ul>	<p>Claire Lee (Project Manager)</p> <p>Monitoring reports to Community Services Scrutiny Committee: Nov 08 / June 09.</p>
<p>Executive Best Value Review of Passenger Transport</p>	<p>This review was undertaken by an Executive member board with the opportunity for scrutiny members to provide evidence at key stages. The Board comprised Cllrs Tony Reid (Chairman), Keith Glazier and Matthew Lock. The Board reviewed the impact on key council policies on passenger transport provision; assessing ways of increasing efficiency and maximising income wherever possible. In particular it is addressing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the sustainability of rural bus services and alternatives including community transport</li> <li>• specific areas of high spend including home to school transport , special education needs and social care transport</li> </ul>	<p>Paul Dean (Project Manager)</p> <p>Monitoring reports: T&amp;E Scrutiny Committee: Sep 08 / Nov 08</p> <p>Review Board to reconvene: October</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a range of organisational issues and relationships between departments responsible for commissioning and providing passenger transport.</li> </ul> <p>Reports to Cabinet/scrutiny:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 30 January 2007 / 5 June 2007 – Cabinet: denominational home to school transport</li> <li>▪ 5 June 2007 – Cabinet: mileage allowances for non statutory home to school transport journeys</li> </ul> <p>Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee commented (24 September 2007):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ need to set a timescale for the agreement of the SLAs between Transport and Environment and Children’s Services/Adult Social Care</li> <li>▪ a single taxi <i>contract</i> is preferred to attempting to contract with a <i>single provider</i>; a single contract should include all taxi providers who contract with the Council.</li> </ul> <p>Cabinet endorsed the report on 25 September 2007.</p>	2008
<b>Other scrutiny issues</b>		
Economic development	<p>Presentation by the Head of Strategic Economic Development and Skills on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local Context – Council Policy Steer, recognised economic underperformance etc</li> <li>▪ Nature of the East Sussex economy – evidence base</li> <li>▪ Role of ESCC and the Council priorities</li> <li>▪ Wider national context e.g. Sub National Review.</li> </ul>	Sep 08
Carbon Management Annual Report	<p>In 2004/05 East Sussex County Council took part in the local authority carbon management pilot programme run by the Carbon Trust. Cabinet approved the resulting Carbon Management Action Plan on 19 April 2005 and agreed that an annual report be submitted to the Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee to review progress against the plan. The action plan contains a target to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 14% by 2009/10 compared to 2001/02.</p>	June (annual)

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Age Well Private Finance Initiative (PFI)	November 2006: Committee requested update report to a future meeting.	Future meeting as appropriate
Planning School Places	<p>12 June 2007: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee requested progress report on the implementation of recommendations in the review of planning school places.</p> <p>21 November 2007: Committee noted progress and referred concerns (recommendation 3 of the Audit Commission report) about changes to the way funding for special educational needs pupils occurs. [Children's Services Scrutiny Committee has included this issue in its work programme]</p>	No further action planned
Business Transformation Programme (Adult Social Care)	<p>12 June 2007: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee requested Director of Adult Social Care to report at the end of each phase of the transformation programme.</p> <p>21 November 2007: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee welcomed progress and requested quarterly updates to committee Members.</p> <p>The programme is to reach a conclusion in November 2008. A final report will be available for Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee Members in November if required.</p>	Adult Social Care Scrutiny Committee: Nov 08
Capital projects – improving delivery	<p>12 June 2007: Audit and Best Value Scrutiny Committee requested post implementation reviews conducted on property projects and lessons to be learned from review findings.</p> <p>21 November 2007: Committee endorsed proposals to improve delivery of capital projects and requested future progress reports.</p>	Sep 08
Corporate Sustainable Buildings Policy & Strategy	To consider the strategy.	Sep 08

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