

**ANGUS COUNCIL**

**SCRUTINY & AUDIT COMMITTEE – 24 June 2014**

**OUTCOME OF SCRUTINY REVIEW TOPIC CANVASS**

**REPORT BY JANINE WILSON, SERVICE MANAGER- GOVERNANCE**

**ABSTRACT**

This report informs the committee of the outcome of the first scrutiny review canvassing exercise and provides options for review areas and scrutiny panel composition.

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Scrutiny & Audit Committee:

- (i) agree the process-type review around Building Warrants be remitted to the Service Manager, Governance to take forward within the lean review programme;
- (ii) determine whether they would wish any of the smaller topics identified as Scrutiny Rapid Improvement Events (SRIE's) to be taken forward as a facilitated scrutiny workshops and, if so, choose two of the four areas for initial events;
- (iii) agree that there be two scrutiny panels set up to take forward panel reviews with a chair for each identified at this meeting;
- (iv) agree the Convener and his lead officer allocate the remaining members of the panels, after a canvass of preferences;
- (v) choose the two from three highest scoring panel reviews be taken forward;
- (vi) note that review topics not addressed this year can be carried forward to the next tranche of reviews.

**2. ALIGNMENT TO THE ANGUS COMMUNITY PLAN/SINGLE OUTCOME AGREEMENT/COPORATE PLAN**

This report supports services in the delivery of all local outcomes contained within the Angus Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement 2013-2016.

**3. BACKGROUND**

Reference is made to Item 5 of the minute of meeting of the Scrutiny and Audit Committee of 4 April 2013 where the framework for conducting scrutiny reviews was approved. This framework requires an annual topic canvass to identify areas for review for the forthcoming year.

The canvass exercise for 2014-15 topics has now concluded and this report presents the outcomes for the committee's consideration and decision.

**4. CANVASS OUTCOMES**

As part of the canvass exercise to identify topics a workshop with elected members was held and all members invited. Senior officers were also given the opportunity to raise topic areas for review.

Overall 17 new proposed topic areas were raised and these areas, together with 4 areas brought forward from 2013-14 were evaluated.

[Appendix I](#) details the proposals showing the review areas, the reasons for suggesting the topic, the suggested main questions and the potential improvements which could accrue. The appendix also shows the supporting detail for the various reviews discussed below.

#### *Lean Reviews and SRIE's*

Appendix 1 shows the subjects which were raised as potential lean reviews and reviews which could be taken forward as workshops under the banner of Scrutiny Rapid Improvement Events, summarised below:-

<b>Review Type</b>	<b>Areas</b>
Lean Reviews	Building Warrants (topic 15)
Scrutiny Rapid Improvement Events (Workshops)	Shared business managers for primary schools (topic 11) Housing repairs (topic 12) Encouraging economic development through planning (topic 13) Keptie pond and park (topic 14)

As the above areas are smaller and more focused in subject matter, they have not been scored using the standard model. It is recommended that two of the four areas above be tested out as SRIE's and, if resources allow, the other two areas can follow on.

Committee members are asked to choose the first two reviews to be taken forward and to remit the Building Warrants lean review to the Service Manager, Governance to take forward.

#### *Panel Reviews*

The appendix highlights those areas excluded from review in the first filter exercise with exclusion reasons (topics 16 to 19). The topics remaining, those to be considered as scrutiny panel reviews, were scored by the Convener and Lead Officer, in accordance with the handbook criteria which had been consolidated to remove duplication. The final outcome of the ranking exercise is summarised below:

<b>No.</b>	<b>Potential Panel Review Area</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Rank</b>
1	Improving partnership working	6	1=
2	Homelessness	6	1=
3	Costs and benefits of transforming angus/new management structure	6	1=
4/4a	Education – Additional needs	5	2=
5	Transformational change and communication	5	2=
6	Customer Care	4	3=
7	Public transport	4	3=
8/8a	Pre- School children	4	3=
9	Impact of digital first strategy on ACCESS	4	3=
10	Pupil Unit Cost	4	3=

The results above work show 10 potential areas for panel review and it is recommended that members of this committee choose the two initial reviews from topics 1 to 3, the one not chosen being held as a back up topic.

## **5. SCRUTINY PANEL COMPOSITION**

The 2013-14 reviews were conducted by two panels of 6 members each, with a lead officer independent of the area under review. Administration support was also made available. It is recommended that the 2014-15 reviews follow the same format.

Chairs for each of the panels will be required and it is recommended that the chairs be identified at this meeting. Members are therefore asked to choose two panel chairs.

Lead officers will be sourced from a canvass of Officers through the leadership forum which will allow a senior lead officer support for the reviews. A canvassing exercise for volunteers for the 2014-15 reviews is underway.

Members of the committee will be asked for their preference in relation to a panel to serve on, although first preference cannot be guaranteed.

## **6. NEXT STEPS**

Once the review areas are agreed and the panels appointed the panels will meet to consider background information and, where appropriate, receive briefings from relevant officers which will inform the development of the specific terms of reference for the review. These will be agreed by the panel and the review will then commence.

Arrangements will also be made to take forward the two SRIE's with facilitation being provided by the Service Manager, Governance with the potential of some external support through the Lean process. Members will be canvassed for their interest in attending the SRIE's, along with relevant officers and any appropriate external participants.

## **7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications associated with the terms of this report at this time.

The expectation remains that support for scrutiny reviews will be managed from within existing resources, albeit it will consume staff time which will not be available for other purposes.

There may be a cost in securing external input (of a technical/specialist nature) to support reviews and this would be funded from within the existing Corporate Initiatives revenue budget when required.

In the event that resource issues to support scrutiny reviews arise these can be considered as part of the budget process for future years alongside the potential benefits which would be hoped to arise from review activity.

## **8. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

The issues contained in the report fall within an approved category that has been confirmed as exempt from an equalities perspective.

## **9. CONSULTATION**

The Chief Executive, Strategic Directors, Head of Law and Administration and Head of Finance have been consulted in the preparation of this report.

**JANINE WILSON**  
**SERVICE MANAGER, GOVERNANCE**

**NOTE:** No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

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**List of Appendices**  
Scrutiny Review Canvass Exercise 2013-14