

Suggested Items for Inclusion in the Scrutiny Work-plan

The following items have been suggested by Members for inclusion in the Scrutiny Work-plan for June 2011 to November 2011.

1. Title	Scope	Commission Decision
Open spaces data to support residential planning applications	To review the current situation where the Council is at in maintaining an accurate list of the areas of open space and recreation within the District, including any bodies of water and environmental areas. It is noted that a previous open spaces review was using data that was approximately 4 or more years out of date. To request that when any subsequent open space reviews are carried out, that a copy of the draft data is sent to each relevant ward councillor and also parish councils, with a request to a) verify the accuracy of the data provided, and b) submit a list of any open spaces that may be omitted. Such a request would not require a member or a parish council to travel around the area, but apply their local knowledge as a desk exercise only. To request that for any future open spaces review, closed off areas (e.g. the fenced-off Lake in Broughton Astley which people are forbidden to access) are only included in a separate land area total and the land area is not merged with all other accessible open spaces.	Item to be forwarded to the Local Development Framework Task Panel.

2. Title	Scope	Commission Decision
Member Consultation or Notification	To review the procedures in place for notifying ward members of matters of public interest that are about to happen in their ward, and to review the cut-off level at which officers deem matters not significant enough for member consultation. Examples: non-standard tree or ground works, installing new play equipment, creating new play areas, creation of new recycling bring sites, installing	This item is already provided for in the Council's Constitution.

Appendix B

	new fencing	
--	-------------	--

3. Title	Scope	Commission Decision
Review of non-prosecution policy for electoral registration offences	To review the current policy of not prosecuting repeat offenders who commit electoral registration offences. It is noted that the percentage of completed returns has increased recently to around 96%. However, within the remaining 4% there are occupiers who repeatedly refuse to provide their names, even after they have been visited a number of times by Council staff. There is a significant danger here that, owing to the authority's known policy of non-prosecution, that a tiny minority of people either already reside here, or may move into the District, who are keeping their identity hidden for civil or criminal reasons. It is suggested that in the first instance, a very limited prosecution policy is considered for addresses where occupants are known to reside there, but have refused to provide their details for two or more years.	<p>Item not included in Scrutiny Work-plan following a vote by the Commission.</p> <p>It is recommended that a Briefing Note be provided to Members to explain the Electoral Registration process. This should include statistics on levels of registration compliance.</p>

4. Title	Scope	Commission Decision
Capital Account Loans	A review of the Council's Capital account and the large number of capital loans that make up the council's borrowings, their amounts, terms and interest rates, and what dates they expire. The review to also include scrutiny of the projected loan situation over the next 5, 10, 15, and 20 years if there are loans currently greater than 15 years in length.	<p>Item not included in Scrutiny Work-plan following a vote by the Commission.</p> <p>Instead training on Local Government Finance should be provided to Members by the Council's Section 151 Officer.</p>

5. Title	Scope	Commission Decision
Investment of surplus funds	A review of how much money the Council had on deposit at every month end during the year 2010-2011 for both General and Capital Funds, and whether any portions of the funds had specific	<p>Item not included in Scrutiny Work-plan following a vote by the Commission.</p> <p>Instead training on Local Government Finance should be provided to</p>

Appendix B

	designated purposes.	Members by the Council's Section 151 Officer.
--	----------------------	---

6. Title	Scope	Commission Decision
Prudential Code and Borrowing Limits	A review of the impact that the Prudential Code and any other borrowing limits has on the Council's maximum borrowing limits, and a review of the total borrowing position as at 31 March 2011 broken down into each individual loan. The review to include an explanation of further borrowings which could technically be made before the Council reached it's upper borrowing limits and could not borrow any more funds.	Item not included in Scrutiny Work-plan following a vote by the Commission. Instead training on Local Government Finance should be provided to Members by the Council's Section 151 Officer.

7. Title	Scope	Commission Decision
Medium Term Financial Strategy - General Fund projected future spend	To review the MTFs and the reasons why the required General Fund spending per year for the next 5 years appears to increase at well over 10% per annum. To identify which Council budget areas have internal rates of inflation of well over 10% and explain to members the reasons why costs force these rates of increase to be over 10%.	Item not included in Scrutiny Work-plan following a vote by the Commission. Instead training on Local Government Finance should be provided to Members by the Council's Section 151 Officer.

8. Title	Scope	Commission Decision
Asset Management Plan	To review the current Asset Management Plan and the individual parts of the Asset Portfolio Plan which have been set in place to meet the requirements of the Asset Management Plan. The review to cover the progress on each part of the Portfolio Plan.	Item not included in Scrutiny Work-plan following a vote by the Commission. Instead training on Local Government Finance should be provided to Members by the Council's Section 151 Officer.

9. Title	Scope	Commission Decision
Automated Telephone, Internet, and other payments	To review the progress to date of the Council's internet and telephone methods of taking automated payments (and any other automated payment methods) from members of the public and other organisations. To examine the overall capital and revenue costs to put in	Item not included in Scrutiny Work-plan following a vote by the Commission.

Appendix B

	place and maintain these systems to enable the methods of payment, and examine the Value For Money of the savings that have been made as a result in staff and other costs.	
--	---	--

10. Title	Scope	Commission Decision
A review of the operation of the new Special Expenses structure following its first year of operation, including:	<p>1) Examining the fairness of the structure of how capital account debt repayments for Market Harborough town infrastructure are funded, and which parts of District pay for them</p> <p>2) The reasons why the costs of running the Market Harborough Settling Rooms and Market Hall were omitted from the new regime and whether the annual running costs should still be subsidised by other District residents</p> <p>3) A comparison of the actual Special Expenses amounts that were paid in the 2010-2011 financial year, compared to the estimates which were used in setting the 2010-2011 Council Tax Special Expenses</p> <p>4) The effect the existence of Special Expenses has on the overall Council Tax calculation each year and how percentage increases flow through onto residents Council Tax bills in all parts of the District</p>	Item should be kept in reserve and brought to the Scrutiny Resources Panel at a future date.

11. Title	Scope	Commission Decision
Membership of Executive Task Panels	<p>It is suggested that all panels, their terms of reference, composition, minutes are made publicly visible and made available to via the Council's intranet.</p> <p>It is suggested that these meetings be audio recorded.</p>	Item not included in Scrutiny Work-plan following a vote by the Commission.

12. Title	Scope	Commission Decision
Representation on Outside Bodies	It is suggested that a register of Council representations be made publically available.	Item not included in Scrutiny Work-plan following a vote by the Commission.

Appendix B

	It is suggested that a regular reviews of Council involvement with outside bodies be undertaken.	
--	--	--

13. Title	Scope	Commission Decision
Social Housing	<p>There is a significant amount of social housing provided within the district which is not ex-Council stock, run by Seven Locks Housing.</p> <p>Since the Council advertises and places people in these houses, a report should be produced for members explaining the distributions and locations of the houses. The report should contain contact details of the management of these facilities.</p>	<p>Item not included in Scrutiny Work-plan following a vote by the Commission.</p> <p>A Briefing Note should be produced and circulated to Members. The Briefing Note should include the distributions and locations of the houses. The report should contain contact details of the management of these facilities.</p> <p>If the Briefing Note does not sufficiently address Members' concerns then a report should be brought before a Scrutiny Panel.</p>