Bolton Council

Report to:	Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee
Date:	28th January 2008
Report of:	Director of Legal and Democratic Services **Report No:**
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Report Title:	**Identification of Issues for Scrutiny / Annual Work Programme**

Confidential / Non Confidential: *(delete as approp)*	(***Non-Confidential***) This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public
Purpose:	The report outlines the Committee's Work Programme for the 2007 / 08 Municipal Year, which is updated on a rolling basis.
Recommendations:	1. To consider the updated Work Programme.
Decision:	
Background Doc(s):	A timetabled list of issues agreed by the Committee as issues they would like to receive reports/investigate over the next twelve months is appended. Some items on this list emanate from Executive decisions made over the last year, along with other matters from performance and external inspection information.

Background Information

1.0 Choosing Issues

Members of the Committee are asked to refer to these issues when considering additional items for consideration during the municipal year.

1.1 Key Factors in Assessing Relevance of Issues for Scrutiny

Relevance
- The Policy highlighted for Scrutiny is under the remit of the Scrutiny Committee.
- That the planned scrutiny has an impact in improving services to better meet the needs and expectations of residents/customers.
- Ensure that the policy, action, or organisation is not being scrutinised elsewhere.

Public Interest

- There is evidence of significant Bolton wide public interest in this topic.
- It is a "high profile" topic for specific Bolton wide communities or interest groups.
- The review would need to give an opportunity for the people of Bolton to have a say.

Impact

- The review will have a significant impact on the "well-being" of the public of Bolton.
- The issue has implications for diversity, equality and social inclusion.
- This could make a big difference to the way services are delivered.
- This could make a big difference to the way resources are used.

Performance

- Is Performance particularly good/bad?

1.2 Identification of Criteria to Evaluate the Appropriateness of Issues for Scrutiny Panels

The review of whether a subject is suitable for scrutiny should seek to address:-

- Relevance

  - Would a review be replicated by any other internal or external review process?

  - Is the service or issue a national government priority?

  - Have there been national changes to policy?

  - Is the issue of significant interest to the Bolton wide public?

  - Would there be a significant impact on a particular community? (both interest and locality)
  - Have there been local changes to policy?

- Is it an area of poor performance?

- Is it an area of outstanding performance?

- Is there a pattern of budgetary overspend in service area?

- Has there been a change to the remit of our arms length bodies?

- Potential Impact of a Review

  - Is it possible for the Scrutiny Panel to make a valuable contribution?

  - Are there sufficient resources both in terms of finance and officer availability to have a tangible impact?

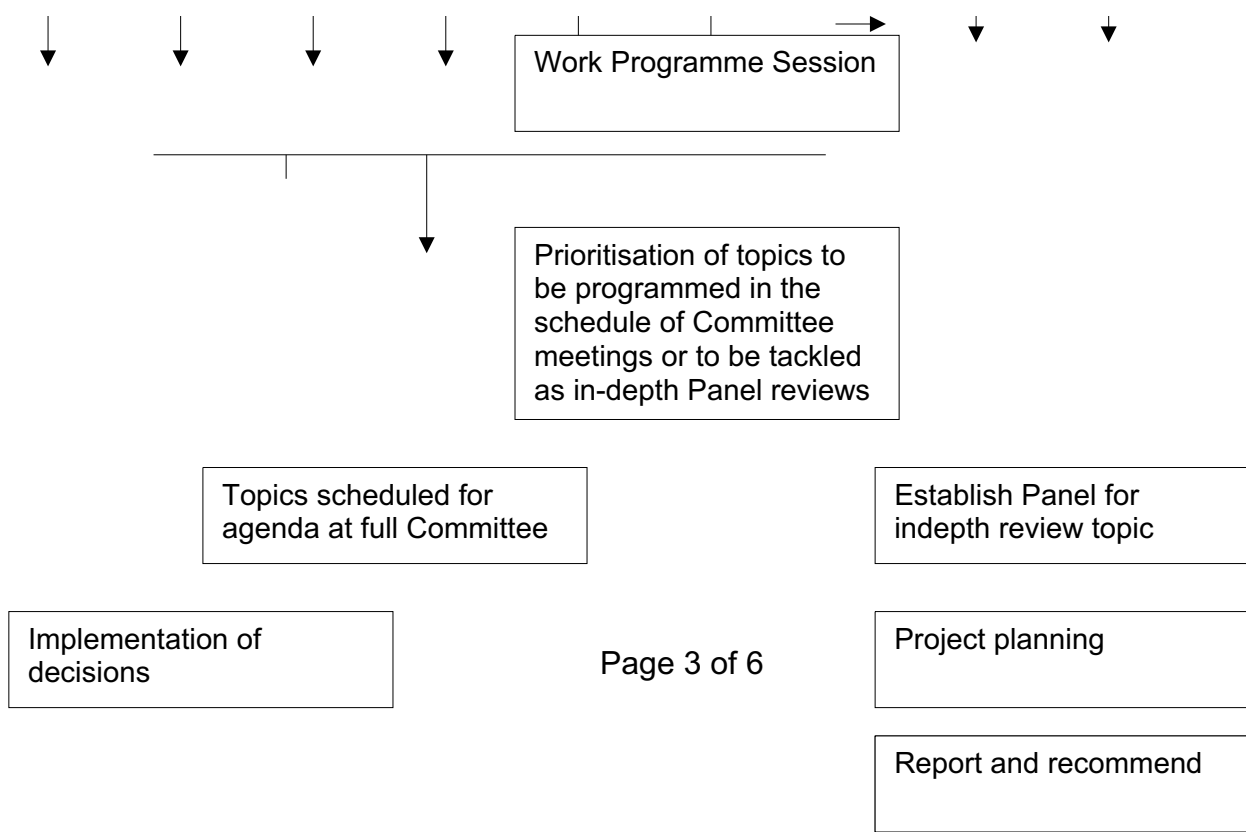1.3   **The Council's Key Aims and Change Programme Themes**

It is also worth keeping in mind the Council's Key Aims and Change Programme Themes when considering Committee Work Programmes :-

Key Aims – Strong and Confident Bolton, Safe Bolton, Achieving Bolton, Prosperous Bolton, Clean and Green Bolton, Healthy Bolton, Transforming our Services.

Change Programme Themes – Customer Access, Local Delivery, Seamless Service, Shared Services and Resources.

Attached at **Appendix One** is a schedule which Members can use as an aid to the identification of items for consideration by the Committee.

1.4   **Planning and Managing the Committee Workload**

Work Programme Session

Prioritisation of topics to be programmed in the schedule of Committee meetings or to be tackled as in-depth Panel reviews

Topics scheduled for agenda at full Committee

Establish Panel for indepth review topic

Implementation of decisions

Project planning

Report and recommend

Monitor implementation of decisions
(Schedule at each Committee meeting)

Monitor implementation of recommendations
(Schedule at each Committee meeting)

1.5   Evaluating the Work of Scrutiny Panels

Evaluating the work of Scrutiny Panels will become increasingly important to aid the Council in determining what works well and in terms of Government expectations, as anticipated in the forthcoming White Paper.

Proposed process for evaluating the Panel and monitoring implementation:-

1.   At their last meeting, all panels include an item in which they look back on the panel's work and evaluate its effectiveness. Panel members' views of what has and has not been effective is noted so that it can be taken on board for future panels.

2.   Once the report has been received by the Executive or Executive Member it is sent out to all those who contributed to the panel's work along with a short evaluation form asking contributors about their experience of the scrutiny panel, from the adequacy of administrative arrangements to the standard of interaction with the panel and their views on the final report. The published report is put on the web site and also sent to all libraries and is provided on request to anyone who wants a copy.

3.   Ultimately the real effectiveness of the panel must be measured by the difference it makes to outcomes. This remains extremely hard to evaluate given that there may be many changes occurring within a particular service area at any one time due to any number of reasons and these can all have an impact on residents' lives. Singling out the effect of the implementation of scrutiny panel recommendations is therefore very difficult.

4.   However, care should be taken to ensure that those recommendations that are agreed by the Executive are implemented.

      This should be done via a standard Decision Monitoring Schedule which will be implemented this municipal year.

      In certain circumstances it may though be necessary to write off some outstanding recommendations. This may be because implementation was initially agreed in principle, subject to funding being approved but despite attempts to locate sources there is no reason to think that funding will be available in the near future. It could also be because legislation or internal changes had altered the shape of a service to such an extent that some recommendations had become obsolete.

Development and Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

2 July 2007	1. Agreement of Work Programme 2007/2008. 2. Budget outturn and performance report, 2006/2007. 3. Sustainable Development Scrutiny Panel
13 August 2007	1. Cycle Forum Annual Report 2. Bolton 2011 – 1st Year Tourism Implementation Plan Research Strategy – Evidence Base. 3. Affordable Warmth Strategy Update. 4. Annual Employment Land Resource 5. Housing Land Availability
8 October 2007	1. Priority of Council House Repairs - Presentation 2. Budget, Efficiency and Performance Monitor – Quarter 1 3. Performance Dashboard – Quarter 1
26 November 2007	1. Budget, Efficiency and Performance Monitor/Dashboard – Quarter 2. 2. Report on the Workshop Unit on Newport Street
28 January 2008	1. Town Centre Development – Update 2. Retail Vitality and Viability Research Strategy – Evidence Base
7 April 2008	1. Bolton Mills Action Framework – update