

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

To: Members of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority Scrutiny Panel

Meeting: 29 October 2014

Authority/Authorities Affected: All

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: No

REPORT OF THE LEAD OFFICER – SCRUTINY

DEVELOPMENT OF A WORK PROGRAMME

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Scrutiny Panel Members' views as to how they may wish to develop a work programme for the Scrutiny Panel.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that:

- (i) the consultation process outlined in this report be followed; and
- (ii) a further report be made to the Panel when that process has reported back.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Combined Authority's Constitution outlines the role of Scrutiny as follows:

- To provide a 'critical friend' to policy and scrutiny development.
- To undertake scrutiny reviews into areas of strategic importance for the people of the City Region.
- To monitor the delivery of the Authority's Strategic Plan.

- 3.2 The Constitution goes on to say that there are two potential sources for identifying in-depth studies to be carried out by Scrutiny; the Scrutiny Panel itself and the Authority. The Authority may require scrutiny of a particular policy before agreeing a policy or taking a decision.

- 3.3 Given that the Combined Authority itself is in its formative stages, the development of that iterative process between scrutiny and the authority will take some time to develop. In addition, and again due to the Combined Authority only being in existence since 1 April 2014, the range of activities to be 'reviewed' is still fairly limited. At their Development Day on 26 September 2014, the Scrutiny Panel

Members present identified a shortlist of four areas which they felt would warrant further scrutiny activity.

They were:

- European Funding
- Skills and Learning/Apprenticeships
- Housing
- Affordable Transport Links

Members recognised that more work would be required to fine tune this list into an actual programme. A number of other key considerations were identified as important in developing a programme. Those were:

- The need to consult other interested parties.
- Consulting the constituent authorities to establish if similar work has already been undertaken
- The need to avoid duplication with other pieces of work being undertaken.
- The resource available to carry out effective scrutiny.

3.4 It was also suggested at the Development Day that it might be sensible to commence with a 'pilot' piece of scrutiny work to test an agreed methodology with a relatively straightforward project. This would help develop a 'Scrutiny Team' at the City region Level.

3.5 In order to take issues forward it is suggested that the following organisations be formally consulted by the Scrutiny Panel to help identify where the effort should be focused, bearing in mind the issues highlighted at the Development Day:

- The Local Enterprise Partnership.
- The Combined Authority.
- The Constituent Councils.

3.6 The question those and any other organisations the Panel may wish to identify, would be set is, "given the strategic objectives of the Combined Authority – where do they feel the efforts of scrutiny should be directed to maximum effect?" The results from that exercise would be brought back to the next meeting of the Panel and this would be used, together with the Panel's own view, to develop a work programme.

However, if there is a burning issue that Members wish to make an immediate start on then that is a matter that the Panel could identify now and work could commence immediately. On balance, it is felt that a period of consultation would allow a more focused approach to be developed, having listened to the various stakeholders. Ultimately it is for the Panel Members to decide.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

Any support required to scrutiny review work will have to be identified from the

existing resources of the constituent authorities. All authorities have made a commitment to support the Combined Authority from within existing resources.

4.2 Human Resources

There are no issues associated with this report.

4.3 Physical Assets

There are no issues associated with this report.

4.4 Information Technology

There are no issues associated with this report.

5. RISKS AND MITIGATION

- 5.1 There is a risk that effective scrutiny will not take place if sufficient resources are not identified to support it. It will be a matter for the constituent authorities collectively to ensure this does not happen.

6. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no issues associated with this report.

7. COMMUNICATION ISSUES

- 7.1 It is suggested that a period of consultation takes place with key stakeholders to help inform the development of a work programme for the Panel.

8. CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The Panel are required to agree a process to help identify a future work programme.

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Appendices:

None.

Background Documents:
None.