

# Report

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Report to:	<b>Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>2 March 2010</b>
Report by:	<b>Chief Executive</b>

Subject:	<b>Member/Officer Task and Finish Groups</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The purpose of the report is to:-

- ◆ advise the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum of suggested topics for consideration by short life member Task and Finish Groups.

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 The Forum is asked to:-

- (1) consider the suitability of the following topics for review by short life member Task and Finish Groups:
  - ◆ School transport
  - ◆ Community councils
  - ◆ Play areas
- (2) agree that detailed terms of reference (Appendix 1) be completed by the Lead Director and the nominated Chair for any recommended review areas which would then be considered at the next meeting of the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum.

## 3. Background

3.1 The Executive Committee at its meeting on 8 July 2009 approved a number of revisions to the Council's Member Scrutiny Forums including revised terms of reference and other associated reporting arrangements.

3.2. In relation to the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum, the Committee approved its continuation with some amendments to the terms of reference. The most significant of these was the ability to create short term member Task and Finish Groups. These groups would have a lead member and officer and would operate for a maximum period of up to six months. All groups would be required to produce a report of their findings for consideration by the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum.

## 4. Membership

4.1 It is proposed that membership of the Task and Finish Groups would comprise seven members drawn proportionately from the Council with the Chair drawn from the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum. Officer representation would be tailored to each group's needs.

4.2. For any areas recommended for progression to a Task and Finish Group, the pro forma template attached as Appendix 1 should be used to identify the terms of reference and anticipated outcomes in order to ensure a degree of consistency in the process.

## **5. Proposed Topics**

5.1 The terms of reference for the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum are based around the responsibility to oversee the Council's strategy and approach for implementation of Best Value, Improvement and Performance Management. Currently, six monthly monitoring reports, which detail the Council's progress on the Council Plan, Connect, are considered by the Forum in addition to regular reporting on other performance related matters including Statutory and Local performance indicators and public performance reporting.

5.2 Task and Finish groups may be established for reasons as considered appropriate by the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum. This may occur where there has been a downturn in performance within a Resource or where there are issues relating to the delivery of a Connect priority. Other reasons may include examination of common issues arising from complaints, declining SPIs or the development of good practice or any other areas of interest to elected members. That said, this approach will be used sparingly however, with the emphasis on resolving any issues clearly remaining with the appropriate Executive Director.

5.3 In order to develop this approach, Executive Directors, in the first instance, were asked to consider any appropriate topics at their meeting on 16 December 2010. Following this, the undernoted areas have been identified by the named Executive Directors as potential areas for review:

### **Community Councils – Robert McIlwain, Executive Director (Corporate Resources)**

There is an expectation that the Council will undertake a full review of our community council arrangements in light of the publication of the Model Scheme for the Establishment of Community Councils, the Model Code for Community Councils and associated supporting information which have been endorsed by COSLA and the Scottish Government. This will involve reviewing the existing Scheme including areas such as the number of community councils, boundaries, naming conventions, amongst others, before developing proposals for the South Lanarkshire area which suit our particular local circumstances. Councillors can provide first hand valuable insight into the operation and effectiveness of community councils and help shape the new arrangements. Any proposals would be subject to consultation.

### **Play areas – Norrie Anderson, Executive Director (Community Resources)**

South Lanarkshire Council is responsible for 380 fixed play areas. The facilities range from large 'honey pot' play areas catering for a wide range of age groups to small sites within residential areas which can offer little play value. The life expectancy, existing play value and compliance with current standards vary throughout the play stock.

A review of play provision is required to establish the current value of provision, ensure the sustainability of the play stock in terms of maintenance, inspection and insurance costs and target provision equally across South Lanarkshire. This will enable a play strategy to be created forming a framework for future investment and targeting of external funding opportunities. A review of play stock would enable maintenance monies to be targeted in terms of play value rather than quantity.

### **School transport – Larry Forde, Executive Director (Education Resources)**

The review would examine the current threshold for provision of Council funded mainstream school transport. The current policy has been in place since before reorganisation in 1996 and, on this basis, a review may be appropriate to both consider changes and to examine the sustainability of current arrangements.

- 5.4. The Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum is asked to consider the above suggestions and recommend whether these should be developed into more detailed terms of reference (Appendix 1) by the Lead Executive Director and Chair (to be nominated from the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum).

### **6. Next Steps**

- 6.1. Assuming the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum approves any of the above topics for further consideration, the next steps are proposed as follows:

- ◆ Chair to be nominated from Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum
- ◆ Lead Director and nominated Chair to complete the attached Appendix 1 for consideration by the Performance and Review Scrutiny forum at its next meeting
- ◆ Nomination of Task and Finish group members (7 including Chair) by the Group Leaders on the following basis (Lab 3, SNP 2, Con 1, Independent/Liberal Democrat 1).
- ◆ Lead Director to nominate lead officer participation as appropriate

- 6.2. It should be noted that groups may wish to invite representation from other areas as considered necessary, eg Trades Union.

- 6.3. As a guide, the Group should aim to complete within six months.

### **7. Employee Implications**

- 7.1. Any required Resource representation on the Task and Finish groups would be agreed via the appropriate Executive Directors. Lead officers may also be drawn from the Council's Leadership Development Group.

### **8. Financial Implications**

- 8.1. None.

### **9. Other Implications**

- 9.1. None.

### **10. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

- 10.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore, no impact assessment is required.

- 10.2. Consultation on appropriate topics will be undertaken through the Performance and Review Scrutiny Forum.

**Archibald Strang**  
**Chief Executive**

17 February 2010

**Link(s) to Council Values and Objectives**

- ◆ Performance Management and Improvement

**Previous References**

- ◆ Executive Committee – 8 July 2009

**List of Background Papers**

- ◆ Report by Executive Director (Corporate Resources) – Review of Member Scrutiny Forums

**Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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### Task and Finish Group - Proposed Task Pro Forma

Title of proposed task project	
Please indicate proposed objectives	
<p>Please highlight potential benefits identifiable at this stage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer advantages</li> <li>• Resource efficiencies &amp; financial savings</li> <li>• Opportunities for cross resource working and sharing of good practice</li> </ul>	
Group representatives (consider trade union representation)	
Proposed timescale for completion and key milestones	

Completed by:

Date: