

## **Bristol City Council – Overview and Scrutiny**

### **Prioritisation of Scrutiny Activities - a 3 Step Process**

The following procedure has been developed to

- provide transparency to those putting forward suggestions of topics for examination by overview and scrutiny
- provide a mechanism through which scrutiny members can assess the suitability for review of topics
- ensure that scrutiny work remains focussed on appropriate matters over which it has the ability to influence and effect change.

#### **Step 1**

All topics put forward as potential workstreams for scrutiny are to be initially assessed according to the following acceptance criteria. This is the first stage in the prioritisation process.

The purpose of this is to refine the initial longlist to ensure that the items that are finally selected are viable options that will be achievable and lead to good outcomes.

Please note that this is a qualitative assessment to focus on key indicators for each issue, and to assist members to make a decision regarding whether the topic in question merits further consideration.

	<b>Acceptance Criteria</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>1</b>	Can Scrutiny make a difference in terms of shaping and influencing policy and practice?		
<b>2</b>	Would any proposed Scrutiny activity be able to meet any deadlines?		
<b>3</b>	Is there scope to actively involve the public in the scrutiny activity?		
<b>4</b>	Is the issue reflected in the Council's Corporate Strategy and Business Plan?		

## Step 2

Following Step 1, the proposed activities that are deemed to warrant further analysis will then be evaluated and scored using the following tool.

NB:

- Where a category is not applicable, no score will be given.
- Much of the scoring will be a subjective judgement and certain facts, such as the issue already being dealt with by existing work, should preclude it from being included in the Scrutiny work programme.

	Evaluation measure	
1	<b>Public Interest:</b> the concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny (1=low public interest, 2=medium public interest, 3=high public interest)	
2	<b>Opportunity to change:</b> priority should be given to topics that Scrutiny can realistically influence (0=little chance of changing, 2=reasonable chance, 3=good chance)	
3	<b>Performance:</b> priority should be given to areas where the Council and its partners are not performing well (1=good performance, 2=moderate performance, 3=poor performance)	
4	<b>Spread:</b> priority should be given to issues relevant citywide or to large parts of Bristol (1=only one ward, 2=multi-ward issue, 3= citywide)	
5	<b>Duplication:</b> take account of what work is already ongoing or planned in this area to avoid wasted resources (0=already well covered, 2=already partly covered, 3=not already covered)	
6	<b>Achievable:</b> priority should be given to topics where work can be completed within relevant timescales and adequate resources are available to carry it out effectively (both officer and member resources). (0= little/no chance of doing this, 2=reasonable chance, 3= can definitely be done)	

### Step 3

This step may or may not be required depending on the results of Steps 1 and 2.

The following grid has been designed to assess the level of strategic importance of a proposed topic in conjunction with time-criticality, using a scale of 1 to 4.

#### Strategic Significance

- 1 - Some evidence that the topic is linked to Council objectives but only indirectly
- 2 - Good evidence that the topic is linked to Council objectives but not a strategic priority
- 3 - Good evidence that the topic is linked to Council strategic priorities
- 4 - Strong evidence that the topic is linked to the most significant Council priorities

#### Timing

- 1 - The topic is not urgent
- 2 - The topic is not pressing and could be dealt with at a later date (i.e. not in next 12 months)
- 3 - The topic must be addressed within 12 months if the proposed benefits are to be realised.
- 4 - The topic must be addressed imminently if the proposed benefits are to be realised.

TIMING	4	Would need to be done now if desired outcome is to be achieved but not of strategic importance RESERVE	Immediate Strategic Priority SELECT		
	3				
	2	Neither strategically important or urgent REJECT	Strategically Important but not necessary to undertake immediately RESERVE		
	1				
		1	2	3	4
		STRATEGIC SIGNIFICANCE			