

# Scrutiny Sub-Committee Committee for Corporate Management Issues

28 February 2005



Scrutiny Development Session – 11  
January 2005

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## Report of Head of Overview and Scrutiny

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### Purpose of Report

1. To explain the Development Session which took place at the Durham Leadership Centre at Spennymoor on 11 January 2005 and the issues of relevance for this Committee.

### Background

2. Nineteen County Councillors and two co-opted members attended this Development Session. The purpose was to review last year's work and consider the work programme for next year. Northumbria University hosted the event and used the opportunity as part of their evaluation of the Scrutiny function.
3. Northumbria University will be producing an Evaluation Report about last year's performance of the Scrutiny function. This is expected to be available in March.

### Future Work Programme

4. With the assistance of Audience Response Equipment kindly loaned by the Community Safety Unit, the Council's priority improvement areas for each Scrutiny Sub-Committee were considered. The purpose of the exercise was to give guidance to the Sub-Committee about those priority areas which could most beneficially be investigated to assist in improvement.
5. The five priorities for improvement in relation to Corporate Management Issues were ranked using the Audience Response Equipment. Not surprisingly, the budget was seen as the highest priority. The next highest priority was Community Engagement and then Customer Services. The full results are attached as an appendix.
6. The decision about the future work programme will need to be taken by the Sub-Committee following the election in May. This exercise will, however, provide useful guidance about those priorities which were seen to be areas in which the Scrutiny function could provide the most effective contribution to improve services.
7. There is an expectation that the Scrutiny Budget Working Group will continue to monitor budget issues throughout the year. Community Engagement may well be an important factor in future Comprehensive Performance Assessments as part of new criteria to be known as 'Key Lines of Enquiry'.

## **Recommendation**

8. You are asked to note this information which will be given further consideration as part of the determination of the future work programme.

## **Background Papers**

Documentation submitted to the Development Session.

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**Please rank (in order of priority to you)  
up to 4 of the Council's priorities for improvement  
in relation to Corporate Management Issues**

