

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

21 June 2022

2022/23 Work Programming

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	21 June 2022

Will this be a Key Decision?	Not Applicable
Urgency	Not Applicable
Final Decision-Maker	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Lead Head of Service	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Oliviya Parfitt, Democratic Services Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report outlines the process to be taken by the Committee in formulating its work programme for the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to the Committee:

1. Consider the suggested topics set out in Appendix B to the report and determine which, if any, should be included within the Committee's work programme;
2. Determine whether any of the topics arising from agenda Item 15 – Receipt of Suggested Review Topics (if any), should be included within the Committee's work programme; and
3. Indicate the terms of reference for the topics selected, in accordance with point 2.14 of the report.

2022/23 Work Programming

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place <p>Accepting the recommendations could materially improve the Council's ability to achieve all corporate priorities, due to the Committee's role in reviewing and recommending actions on its work programme topics.</p>	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected <p>The report recommendations could support the achievement of the all the Council's cross-cutting objectives due to the Committee's role in reviewing and recommending actions on its work programme topics.</p>	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Risk Management	See Section 5 of the report.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Financial	The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing, with an additional two roles advertised within the Democratic Services Team.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Legal	<p>In accordance with Part 1A of the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) the Council is operating under Executive Arrangements.</p> <p>These arrangements must include provision for the appointment of one or more overview and scrutiny Committees to review and scrutinise executive decisions made, or other action taken – LHA 2000, section 9F.</p>	Interim Team Leader (Contentious and Corporate Governance)
Information Governance	The recommendations do not impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council processes.	Senior Information Governance Officer
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals. (suggested)	[Public Health Officer]
Crime and Disorder	No impacts identified.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Procurement	No impacts identified.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance & Section 151 Officer]
Biodiversity and Climate Change	<p>The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no implications on biodiversity and climate change. 	Biodiversity and Climate Change Officer

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 From its Annual Meeting on 21 May 2022, the Council moved to its new Executive Arrangements as agreed at the full Council meeting held in September 2021.

2.2 Under an Executive system, it is a legislative requirement to have at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC). The terms of reference for this Committee have been attached at Appendix A for information.

2.3 The Committee will not be responsible for pre-decision scrutiny, as this is being undertaken by the Council's four Policy Advisory Committees. This provides an opportunity for a greater variety and scope of issues for policy development and review to be considered by the Committee as part of its annual work programme.

2.4 Virtual training was provided to the Committee's Members and Substitute Members on 9 and 16 June covering:

- Introduction to Overview and Scrutiny
- Questions Skills for Scrutiny

2.5 A workshop was also delivered to the Wider Leadership Team (WLT) on 27 May 2022 that aimed to:

- Reintroduce Overview and Scrutiny to Senior Officers.

Consideration was given to the Committee's specific roles and responsibilities, as outlined in the Constitution; and

- Identify possible review topics for the Committee to consider

The suggested topics are included within Appendix B to the report.

2.6 It is common practice for a Work Programming Event to be facilitated ahead of the first meeting of an OSC. However, due to the high workload of the Democratic Services Team and current vacancies this was not possible. An event could be facilitated ahead of the 2023/24 Municipal Year, although this can be decided at a later date.

Setting the Work Programme

2.7 It is important that the Committee sets its own work programme. Ahead of considering potential topics for inclusion, excerpts from statutory guidance have been included below. (This is available in full by using the link on the next page)

Statutory Guidance:

'Effective scrutiny should have a defined impact on the ground, with the committee making recommendations that will make a tangible difference to the work of the authority. To have this kind of impact, scrutiny committees

*need to plan their work programme, i.e. draw up a long-term agenda and consider making it flexible enough to accommodate any urgent, short-term issues that might arise during the year.*¹

- 2.8 Included within Appendix B are eleven suggested topics for review that have been put forward by the WLT and the Executive.
- 2.9 The Committee is not obliged to include any of the suggestions within its work programme; the suggestions have been included in the interest of promoting a supportive working relationship between the Council's Senior Officers, Executive and the Committee generally.
- 2.10 In order to maximise Member involvement in the work programming process, a proposal form has been attached at Appendix C to the report. All Members will be contacted following this report's publication to highlight the option to propose an item for review. Once elected, the Committee Chairman would accept these under agenda Item 15 – Receipt of Suggested Review Topics (if any), for their consideration alongside this report.
- 2.11 During the 21 June meeting the Committee should select which items to include its work programme for the remainder of the 2022-23 Municipal Year. The Committee will not have the time or resources to review all of the topics identified. The following considerations may assist the Committee in making its decision:
- Does the topic amplify public concerns?
 - Will reviewing the topic drive improvement in public services?
 - Does it relate to the Council's Strategic Priorities or Cross-Cutting Objectives, National or Regional priorities or Executive Priorities?
 - Is an existing service area of the council already working on the issue/has work been conducted recently?
 - Is it a priority to review?
- 2.12 There should be flexibility in the work programme to account for any new and unexpected issues that may arise over the year. The Committee is also responsible for exercising the Council's Crime & Disorder functions and will need to allocate two meetings across the year to fulfil this function.
- 2.13 The work programme can be used to set the timescales for each review by allocating Committee Meetings to the topics.

Scoping the Issues

- 2.14 The issues chosen will be scoped and then presented at the 19 July 2022 meeting. The scoping will be completed by Democratic Services and the relevant officer(s). It would be helpful for the Committee to outline the following:
- The issue's priority
 - Alignment to Priorities

¹ Overview and Scrutiny: Statutory Guidance for Councils and Combined Authorities: [Overview and scrutiny: statutory guidance for councils and combined authorities - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/overview-and-scrutiny-statutory-guidance-for-councils-and-combined-authorities)

- Desired Outcome
- Red lines – what must or must not be included (if anything)
- Approach to be taken (including resources required)

2.15 The timescales and order of the reviews should be formally agreed at the 19 July meeting to enable the review process to begin.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Option 1 – Consider the suggested topics for review attached at Appendix B, alongside any received by Members post-publication including during the item and choose topics for inclusion in the work programme. This is the recommended option
- 3.2 Option 2 – Consider the suggested topics for review and decide to review topics on an ad hoc basis. This is not recommended as it will not provide the opportunity to scope, plan and conduct reviews in a timely and productive manner.
- 3.3 Option 3 – Do nothing. Failing to identify a work programme and items for review is not recommended as this would greatly reduce the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 See point 3.1 above.
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5. RISK

- 5.1 The main risk associated with Work Programming is that the Committee chooses too many review topics and is unable to conduct detailed reviews in a timely and productive manner. This risk can be mitigated by the Committee having this in mind when considering its work programme.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 Previous consultation has taken place with WLT and the Executive. The ideas suggested by have been included within Appendix B.
- 6.2 The Committee should be aware of the likelihood that additional proposals will be submitted by Members following this reports publication, using the form attached at Appendix C.
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7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 Once the Committee has chosen the topics for inclusion within its work programme, these will be scoped with the relevant Officers and re-presented to the committee on 19 July 2022.
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8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: OSC Terms of References (Excerpts from Parts A and B of the Council's Constitution)
 - Appendix B: Suggested topics for Review (Wider Leadership Team and the Executive)
 - Appendix C: Proposal Form
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9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Overview and Scrutiny: Statutory Guidance for Councils and Combined Authorities.