

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Report
Report of Strategic Services Director
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Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

Recommendation

That the Committee to consider the overview and scrutiny work programme attached at Appendix 1 and determine its work plan.

Reason for Recommendation

To enable the Committee to review and agree its work programme for the coming months.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 As approved by Council, the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) includes the specific responsibility to approve the overview and scrutiny work programme to ensure that the Committee's time is used effectively and efficiently.
- 1.2 A well-planned overview and scrutiny function will help both officers and members plan their workloads as well as providing a clear picture to the public of planned activity. An effective work programme is the foundation for a successful overview and scrutiny function.
- 1.3 This report sets out the overview and scrutiny work programme as developed thus far for the period 2020-21.

2. Work Programme Meetings

- 2.1 In addition, Council has agreed that the OSC is responsible for setting its own work programme in accordance with the following procedure:

The chairmen and vice-chairmen of the OSC and the Executive Advisory Boards and relevant officers shall normally meet at least bi-monthly to exchange, discuss and agree proposed rolling 12-18 month work programmes for submission periodically to the OSC (in respect of the OSC work programme) and to the Executive Advisory Boards (in respect of the EAB work programmes) for approval. The proposed work programme for the OSC will be determined with reference to the P.A.P.E.R. selection tool, attached as Appendix 2 to these procedure rules [and as Appendix 2 to this report].

The chairman and vice-chairman of the OSC will ensure that all councillors are able to submit requests for alterations to the work programme for consideration at each of these work programme meetings.

- 2.2 A work programme meeting of the chairmen and vice-chairmen of the OSC and the EABs was held on 3 February 2020. The next is scheduled for 22 April 2020.
- 2.3 Councillors are encouraged to attend a work programme meeting to explain in more detail their proposal, including how it fulfils the criteria outlined in the mnemonic P.A.P.E.R. (Public interest; Ability to change; Performance; Extent; and Replication).
- 2.4 In addition to the work programme meetings in section 2.2 above, Councillors can discuss and submit proposals to the OSC Chairman and Vice-Chairman. Overview and Scrutiny has monthly work plan meetings; the next is 11 March 2020.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 Public consultation and engagement is central to the role conceived for overview and scrutiny at the Council. While Councillors will identify topics for scrutiny that they believe are important to the communities they represent and to the Council, residents, external organisations, and partners could be invited to suggest issues directly. Indeed, Councillors have indicated some support for such measures, for example, the possible introduction of an online suggestion form for members of the public to put forward issues and topics.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.
- 4.2 The Council's governance arrangements review of 2015 led to the introduction of a discretionary budget for overview and scrutiny, set at £5,000 per annum. It is envisaged that the work programme, as drafted, is achievable within the existing financial resource.

5. Human Resource Implications

- 5.1 There are no specific human resources implications. It is envisaged that the work programme, as drafted, is achievable within the existing resources.
- 5.2 Overview and scrutiny will call on relevant officers during the conduct of its reviews. Individual scoping reports will seek to take additional resource requirements into account when drafted.

6. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 6.1 The Council has a statutory duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which provides that a public authority must, in exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The relevant protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.
- 6.2 This duty has been considered in the context of this report and it has been concluded that there are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report. Future overview and scrutiny reviews will consider equality implications on a case-by-case basis.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no specific legal implications.

8. Conclusion

8.1 Developing a work programme for the overview and scrutiny function is an essential stage in the scrutiny process. An effective overview and scrutiny work programme identifies the key topics to be considered over the coming months. In addition, it is suggested that a well-developed programme ensures that the views of councillors, partners, the public, and external organisations are represented effectively in the process.

8.2 The Committee is requested to consider the overview and scrutiny work programme attached at Appendix 1 and determine its work plan.

9. Background papers

None

10. Appendices

1. Overview and scrutiny work programme
2. P.A.P.E.R. selection tool