

**Meeting** OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

**Portfolio Area**

**Date** 16 MARCH 2020



## OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2020-21

**Authors** Stephen Weaver | 2332

**Contributor**

**Lead Officers** Tom Pike

**Contact Officer** Stephen Weaver | 2332

### 1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To agree the Scrutiny Work Programme for the Committee for the new Municipal Year.

### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That having considered ideas put forward by individual Members, (see section 5), the Committee determines the subject matters to be added to a 'long list' work programme of potential Scrutiny reviews items for 2020/2021.
- 2.2 That consideration is given to including in the work programme, specific monitoring or review of recommendations from previous studies (see section 6.2).
- 2.3 That the Portfolio Holder Advisory Group meetings to carry out policy development work identified so far for the Committee (see section 7.1) be noted.

### **3 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Scrutiny Committees are asked to draft their work programme ahead of the new Municipal year in order that work may begin as soon as the Committees are appointed at Annual Council. Any outstanding and unfinished studies, where applicable, will also need to be included. Such cases are detailed at item 5.2.1 to 5.2.4
- 3.2 During February 2020 Members provided ideas for the Work Programme for the 2020/2021 Municipal Year.
- 3.3 When considering what work to undertake in the coming year, Members may wish to consider if the matter in question is of a cross-cutting nature and might lend itself to being considered jointly with another Select Committee.
- 3.4 Officers have also been requested to bring to the Committee's attention, likely Portfolio Holder Advisory Group (PHAG) policy development items that the Select Committee might be requested to consider and comment on before reports there are submitted to the Executive.
- 3.5 The Committee may also consider whether specific time should be allocated for monitoring or review of recommendations of previous studies. It is recognised that there is a limited dedicated officer resource for the scrutiny work of three Scrutiny Committees and therefore it is important to ensure that work plans are in place in order that the call on those resources and on each Committee's time on all its activities are prioritised and evenly spread across the year.
- 3.6 Budget & Policy Framework Items
  - 3.6.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has responsibility to scrutinise Budget and Policy Framework items. The following matters have been identified for scrutiny by the Committee as Budget & Policy Framework items -
    - The HRA and Rent Setting
    - General Fund Budget and Council Tax Setting
    - Savings and Growth Proposals
    - Council Tax Support Scheme
  - 3.6.2 The Committee may be required to scrutinise any further Budget and Policy Framework items as and when required in accordance with the Council's Constitution, Article 4 and Section 4 Rules of Procedure.

### **4 MEMBERS' IDEAS FOR IMPROVING SCRUTINY**

- 4.1 Previously as part of the annual survey of Scrutiny Members, Members were invited to provide feedback on their ideas to improve scrutiny. It was agreed with the Chair that this area has been covered as part of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's review of the Council's scrutiny arrangements and as such will be addressed in the O&S Committee's recommendations.

### **5 MEMBERS' IDEAS FOR FUTURE SCRUTINY REVIEWS**

## 5.1 **Scrutiny Members' Suggestions for Future Scrutiny Review Items**

5.1.1 The following issues have been raised by Members as potential Scrutiny review items:

5.1.2 **Procurement & General Robustness of our IT structures** **Officer Comment:** The ICT Joint strategy was considered at a Portfolio Holder Advisory Group in August 2019 and then the Executive and subsequently at the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in October 2019. The strategy included a delivery plan to enhance the Council's IT service provision and prepare it for the future. The Audit Committee will regularly be monitoring the delivery of the ICT Strategy.

5.1.3 **Scrutiny of the LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership)** - *(This issue has also been raised at the Environment & Economy Select Committee as a possible work programme item so coordination would be required if agreed to scrutinise)* - **Officer comment:** As well as being raised by Members there has been an offer from the LEP Chairman to provide and update on the work of the LEP at a local and County level and update on its future plans. (Lead AD Planning & Regulatory, Regeneration)

5.1.4 **CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy)** Transparency of project allocation - *(This issue has also been raised at the Environment & Economy Select Committee as a possible work programme item so coordination would be required if agreed to scrutinise)* **Officer comment:** CIL will be adopted on 1 April 2020. The Council is committed to reviewing the rates of CIL after 1 year and to produce updates on income and expenditure of S106/ CIL. Officers are targeting that for May /June 2021 and Jan 2021 respectively. It would seem logical to have the E&E or O&S review as part of this in either Feb/March or April 2021. (Lead AD Planning & Regulatory)

5.1.5 **Progress with the Town Centre Regeneration/Progress of the SG1 project** - *(This issue has also been raised at the Environment & Economy Select Committee as a possible work programme item so coordination would be required if agreed to scrutinise)* **Officer comment:** A review of the overall regeneration programme and SG1 scheme in particular can be provided, though the choice of timing may need to be carefully considered for example in relation to the Planning elements of the regeneration programme. This topic may suit an All Member Briefing which would cover of any potential conflict of interest with Planning Members linked to the timing of related planning matters. (Lead AD – Regeneration)

5.1.6 **Update on the Climate Emergency** - *(This issue has also been raised at the Environment & Economy Select Committee as a possible work programme item so coordination would be required if agreed to scrutinise)* **Officer comment:** As part of last year's work programming it was agreed that a regular item updating Members on progress with individual Executive Portfolio areas and related service departments and selected partners could be provided to the Committee starting in 2020-21. This would provide an opportunity to hold to account the ongoing Climate Change and Engagement process with a series of interviews with officers/Executive Members and Partners. (Lead AD Planning & Regulatory and all Assistant Directors)

- 5.2 **Items that are on the existing work programme, which in some cases may have started but have not been completed and others which are yet to start are rolled over for completion or start in 2020-21:**
- 5.2.1 **Scrutiny of the way that we do Scrutiny** **Officer Comment:** Members review of the current scrutiny arrangements is almost complete and will be making its final report and recommendations in due course. The resulting actions, such as arranging an action tracker for all scrutiny review recommendations and review of the wording for call-in arrangements which will be addressed as part of the review of the Constitution could take some time to implement and Members will be kept informed of progress through the Municipal Year.
- 5.2.2 **Complaints handling** from the public or from members. **Officer Comment:** This review was started in 2017, was due to continue in 2018 but was replaced by the committees work on Sickness Management and then in 2019/20 by the review of the scrutiny arrangements. It is possible to recommence this review if the Committee would like to prioritise this in 2020-21.
- 5.3 Members are asked to consider, which of the above items they wish to include in their work programme and which approach they favour to review the items, based on those suggested at paragraphs 5.1.2 to 5.2.2, namely a more in-depth review or a one-off discussion item?
- 5.4 Members should note that whatever issues they agree to be scrutinised as a main review item would be subject to a full scoping process and subsequently a scoping document would need to be agreed by the Committee at a future meeting. Other items, which can be addressed by a briefing and discussion item, may not require a full scoping document.
- 5.5 **Work Programme Schedule for 2020/21**
- 5.5.1 When the Scrutiny Work Programme is agreed by the Select Committee, the Scrutiny Officer will, using the agreed dates for generic Select Committee meetings in the Calendar of Meetings, draw together a work programme schedule for the 2020/21 Municipal Year, including scrutiny review meetings, monitoring of previous reviews selected by Members and policy development meetings, which will be circulated to Members, and electronic diary invites will be sent to all Community Select Committee Members.
- 5.6 **Alignment of Scrutiny with the Strategic Leadership Team**
- 5.6.1 It is important that the three Scrutiny Committees (Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Community Select Committee and the Environment and Economy Select Committee) are aligned to the Strategic Leadership Team (SLT). As such, the following Scrutiny Committees are covered by the relevant nine Assistant Directors and SLT areas:
- 5.6.2 **Customer** – Community Select Committee:  
Assistant Director for Housing and Investment (Jaine Cresser) and the Assistant Director for Communities and Neighbourhoods (Rob Gregory)
- 5.6.3 **Place** – Environment and Economy Select Committee:

Assistant Director for Direct Services (Dave Brown/Steve Dupoy), Assistant Director for Regeneration (Interim Chris Barnes), Assistant Director for Housing Development (Ash Ahmed) and Assistant Director for Planning and Regulatory (Zayd Al-Jawad)

5.6.4 Transformation and Support – Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Assistant Director for Corporate Services and Transformation (Vacant), Assistant Director for Finance and Estates (Vacant) and Digital & Transformation (Ruth Luscombe)

5.6.5 Role of the Assistant Directors and Scrutiny

5.6.6 The Assistant Directors will take a leadership role in assisting and supporting the relevant Scrutiny Committees and specific reviews that align to their area of expertise. The Assistant Directors will support each review through its various stages, from scoping of reviews, attending Chair and Vice-Chair briefings and offering support to the Scrutiny Officer in providing written and oral evidence for reviews as well as identifying 'Critical Friends' and other review witnesses. The Assistant Directors will liaise with the relevant Executive Portfolio Holder(s) and the Senior Leadership Team (CE and Assistant CE's).

5.6.7 Strategic Director, Tom Pike from the Senior Leadership Team has overall responsibility for the Scrutiny function, deputised by Strategic Director Richard Protheroe.

## **6 MONITORING REVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS**

6.1 The Committee may consider there is a need to undertake some follow-up work on recommendations arising from previous studies. It may be considered sufficient to simply request update briefings from the relevant Heads of Service to be circulated to Members at appropriate intervals. However, if the Committee requires more detailed consideration or examination of the progress of previous recommendations, this should be factored into its work programme.

6.2 Reports within the remit of this Committee that have been issued over the last five years or have been revisited within the last five years are as follows:

- Section 106 Agreements 2014-15
- Members' Expenses and Hospitality 2013-14
- Council Tax Support Scheme since 2012-13
- Media & Communications 2015 & 2018
- Complaints – Feedback Handling - (Incomplete review started in 2017-18)
- Sickness Management – Completed 2019

## **7 PORTFOLIO HOLDER ADVISORY GROUP - POLICY DEVELOPMENT WORK FOR 2020/2021**

7.1 Following consultation with the Assistant Directors for Corporate Services & Transformation, Finance & Estates & Corp Projects and Customer Service & Technology the following matters have been identified for potential Policy Development at a Portfolio Holder Advisory Group (PHAG) meeting to be undertaken with the relevant Portfolio Holders during the Municipal Year for 2020/2021:

- Local Asset Reviews
- Commercial Insourcing Strategy
- Customer Channel Shift Strategy / Transformation Programme / Digital Strategy

7.2 In line with organising meeting dates to deliver the Committee's work programme, as detailed at Section 5.3, dates for Portfolio Holder Advisory Group meetings will be scheduled into Members' diaries once the relevant Assistant Directors confirm when Scrutiny Members can undertake this work, ahead of consideration by the Executive. If any further matters are identified by officers, Members will be notified and a meeting invitation sent to Members in due course.

7.3 These meetings will continue to be clerked by Constitutional Services but are private informal meetings Chaired by the relevant Executive Portfolio Holder and supported by the relevant Assistant Director.

### **Financial Implications**

8.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

8.1.2 A small budget of £1000 is held to support the work of the Select Committees in their research and study.

### **Legal Implications**

8.2. The role of Overview and Scrutiny Committees is set out in the Local Government Act 2000. The recommendations made in this report are to facilitate the Committees to fully undertake this role.

### **Equalities and Diversity Implications**

8.3. There are no direct Equalities and Diversity implications arising from the recommendations in this report. Specific equalities and diversity implications are considered during each scrutiny review.

## **BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

**All documents that have been used in compiling this report, that may be available to the public, i.e. they do not contain exempt information, should be listed here:**

BD1 Submissions from Councillors.