



**ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**THURSDAY 18<sup>TH</sup> July 2016**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	<b>SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME REPORT</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>THE CHAIR OF THE COMMITTEE</b>

**REPORT SUMMARY**

This report explains the concept of developing a scrutiny work programme for the new municipal year. The Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in cooperation with the other two Overview & Scrutiny Committees, is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual work programme. This work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the delivery of the Wirral Plan pledges which are within the remit of the Committee.

The report describes the process to enable members to deliver and manage the work programme for the municipal year.

**RECOMMENDATION/S**

1. Committee is requested to suggest any topics for inclusion on the Environment Overview & Scrutiny work programme for the 2016/17 municipal year.
2. Committee is requested to support a proposal to convene a dedicated work programme planning session, open to all Members of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The purpose of the session is to give further detailed consideration to the Committee's work programme prior to the next scheduled Committee meeting in September.

## **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

### **1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S**

To ensure members of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee have the opportunity to contribute to the delivery of the annual work programme.

### **2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

Not Applicable

### **3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

#### **3.1 THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND THE WIRRAL PLAN**

The work programme should align with the priorities of the Council and its partners. The programme will be informed by:

- The Wirral Plan pledges
- The Council's transformation programme
- The Council's Forward Plan
- Service performance information
- Risk management information
- Public or service user feedback
- Referrals from Cabinet / Council

To maximise impact, scrutiny should ensure that topics of significance are prioritised in the work programme. During the next five years, the delivery of the Wirral Plan will form the highest priority for the Council and its partners. The scrutiny committee model has been modified to reflect the changes in Council priorities towards delivering improved outcomes for residents. Therefore, it is important for scrutiny to maximise the opportunity for non-executive members to play a constructive role in supporting the effective delivery of the Wirral Plan and the Council's Transformation Programme, whilst ensuring decision-makers are held to account.

It is proposed that the scrutiny work programme will focus on the Wirral Plan and will be owned by the three Overview & Scrutiny Committees. The priorities identified by members of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee will form a key element of the overall work programme. This approach will ensure the most effective use of scrutiny's resources.

The Wirral Plan pledges and associated strategies of particular relevance to the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee are:

Pledge	Strategies
Leisure and cultural opportunities for all	<a href="#">Wirral's Leisure Strategy</a> <a href="#">Wirral's Culture Strategy</a>
Wirral residents live healthier lives	<a href="#">Wirral Residents Live Healthier Lives Strategy</a>
Community services are joined up and accessible	Third Sector Strategy (in development) Volunteering Strategy (in development)
Good quality housing that meets the needs of residents	Housing Strategy (in development – due July 2016)
Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe	<a href="#">Ensuring Wirral's Neighbourhoods are Safe Strategy</a>
Attractive local environment for Wirral residents	<a href="#">Loving Our Environment Strategy</a> <a href="#">Managing Our Waste Strategy 2015 - 2020</a>

Given the scope of the pledges and supporting strategies, it will be necessary for members to identify specific aspects of pledge delivery upon which to focus. As a starting point for discussion, members may want to consider the following:

- The viability of the partnership arrangements to deliver the pledge
- Specific service areas related to a pledge / strategy
- The delivery of specific actions listed in the Action Plan for each strategy
- Specific issues highlighted in the regular performance monitoring reports
- The impact of the delivery of an aspect of a pledge on outcomes for residents.

In addition, members of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee will also want to consider how best to undertake their statutory scrutiny functions in relation to:

- The review and scrutiny of flood and coastal erosion risk management.
- The review and scrutiny of the decisions made or actions taken by the Wirral Community Safety Partnership.

### 3.2 PRINCIPLES FOR PRIORITISATION

The annual work programme should align with the corporate priorities of the Council, in particular the Wirral Plan pledges. Good practice suggests that, in order to maximise the impact of scrutiny, it is necessary to prioritise proposed topics within the work programme. Members may find the following criteria helpful in providing a guideline towards ensuring that the most significant topics are prioritised:

<b>Principles for Prioritisation</b>	
Wirral Plan	Does the topic have a direct link with one of the 2020 pledges?
	Will the review lead to improved outcomes for Wirral residents?
Public Interest	Does the topic have particular importance for Wirral Residents?
Transformation	Will the review support the transformation of the Council?
Financial Significance	Is the subject matter an area of significant spend or potential saving?
	Will the review support the Council in achieving its savings targets?
Timeliness / Effectiveness	Is this the most appropriate time for this topic to be scrutinised?
	Will the review be a good use of Council resources?

By assessing prospective topics using these criteria, the Committees can prioritise an effective work programme that ensures relevance and the highest potential to enhance outcomes for residents.

### 3.3 DELIVERING THE WORK PROGRAMME

It is proposed that the work programme will consist of a combination of scrutiny reviews, standing items and requested officer reports. Regular work programme update reports will provide the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

It is anticipated that the work programme will be delivered through a combination of:

- Scrutiny reviews undertaken by task & finish groups
- Standing panels, such as the Health & Care Performance Panel
- Evidence days and workshops
- Committee reports provided by officers
- Standing committee agenda items, for example, performance monitoring and financial monitoring
- Spotlight sessions

As some of the selected topics may well cut across the Wirral Plan themes, it is anticipated that some of the scrutiny topics may be of interest to members of more than one committee. In these circumstances, opportunities for members of more than one committee to work jointly on an item of scrutiny work will be explored.

During the municipal year, it is proposed that regular work programme review sessions will be held between the Chairs and Spokespersons of the Committee in order to effectively manage the work programme. This would help to ensure that higher priority topics are given greatest prominence on the work programme as it progresses and is modified during the year.

### **3.4 TRANSFER OF SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME ITEMS**

Members will be aware that the Cabinet report relating to future scrutiny arrangements (6<sup>th</sup> June 2016) set out a proposal to describe how existing pieces of work being carried forward from 2015/16 would transfer into the new scrutiny committee model. The items relevant to the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee are set out below:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Former Committee</b>	<b>Timescale</b>
Coastal Strategy Scrutiny Review	Regeneration & Environment	Reporting to July Committee
Libraries Scrutiny Review	Transformation & Resources	Review on hold pending internal review work.
Review of Councillors	Coordinating Committee	To be considered as part of work programming

### **3.5 FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

In line with the new remit of the Committee and the principles for prioritisation, as described above, Members are requested to suggest possible topics for inclusion in the work programme. Committee Members should also consider how best to further develop the work programme in advance of the next scheduled Committee meeting in September. This could be achieved by Committee providing delegated authority to the Chair, Vice Chair and Spokespersons to provide further detailed input to the work programme's development.

**4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not Applicable

**5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Not Applicable

**6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS**

The delivery of the scrutiny work programme will be met from within existing resources.

**7.0 RELEVANT RISKS**

Not Applicable

**8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION**

Not Applicable

**9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

This report is for information to Members and there are no direct equality implications.

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**APPENDICES:** None

**REFERENCE MATERIAL**

**SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)**

Council Meeting	Date