



Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee 30 November 2016

REPORT TITLE:	Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Work Programme Update
REPORT OF:	The Chair of the Committee

REPORT SUMMARY

This report explains the process of developing and managing the scrutiny work programme for the 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 provides an update regarding progress made since the last Committee meeting held on 21st September. The current work programme is made up of a combination of scrutiny reviews, standing items and requested officer reports. This provides the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

RECOMMENDATION/S

1. Members are requested to approve the proposed Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2016/17, making any required amendments, including suggestions for additional items.
2. Members are requested to establish a Review Panel for the Modern Slavery Task and Finish Scrutiny Review.

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

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

3.2 PRINCIPLES FOR PRIORITISATION

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:

Principles for Prioritisation	
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 Committee can prioritise an effective work programme that ensures relevance and the highest potential to enhance outcomes for residents.

3.3 DELIVERING THE WORK PROGRAMME

The work programme consists 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.

The work programme will be delivered through a combination of:

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

During the municipal year, 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 will 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 UPDATE ON CURRENT SCRUTINY ACTIVITY

3.4.1 The Number of Councillors Scrutiny Review

A scrutiny review panel comprising Cllrs Brightmore, Foulkes, Sykes, Carubia and McLaughlin was formed following the September Committee and a scoping meeting took place during October. A number of evidence sessions have been scheduled for November. The Panel intends to present a final report to this Committee meeting for consideration of its findings and recommendations.

3.4.2 Transforming Wirral Business Cases – Community Safety

Committee Members will be aware that a workshop was held on 1st September 2016 to review an outline business case relating Community Safety as part of the Council Transformation Programme. A report summarising Members' comments was presented to Environment Committee on 21st September. A further report will be taken to the next available Cabinet meeting requesting Cabinet to review the comments of Committee Members and to include these as part of its considerations when the full Community Safety Business Case is presented to Cabinet.

3.4.3 Budget Scrutiny 2017/18

It is proposed that the scrutiny process for budget proposals will follow a similar approach this year to that adopted for the 2016/17 budget process. It is expected that separate workshops will be held for each of the three scrutiny committees (Business, Environment and People). It is anticipated that the Environment workshops will be held during December or January with a report containing Members' feedback being prepared for the next Environment Overview & Scrutiny meeting on 31st January.

In order to plan for the workshops, as with last year's process, it is proposed that the full list of budget proposals will be reviewed by the Chairs and Spokespersons once they become available. The options falling within the committee's remit will be prioritised for further scrutiny at the workshops. Relevant officers will be invited to the workshops to provide an overview and answer questions for the proposals selected.

3.4.4 Flood Risk Standing Panel

At the July meeting of Committee it was resolved that a Standing Panel be formed, enabling the Environment Committee to perform the Council's statutory responsibilities to undertake scrutiny of local flood and coastal erosion risk management functions under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. An initial meeting between the Chair and the Head of Community Safety has taken place and a further scoping meeting will be scheduled with the Chair and Party Spokespersons. It is intended that the Flood Risk Standing Panel will meet for the first time early in 2017.

3.4.5 Modern Slavery Act Scrutiny Review

It is proposed that this task & finish review will commence in January 2017. Committee is requested to appoint a Review Panel to allow a scoping meeting to be scheduled.

3.5 **FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME ITEMS**

The following items for the 2016/17 Committee work programme have been identified and will be scheduled for future Committee meetings:

Item	Format	Approximate timescale
Presentation from Partner Housing Association on Impact of Welfare Reforms (TBC)	Presentation	January 2017
Housing Strategy	Committee Report / Presentation	January 2017
Homelessness Update Report	Officer Report	January 2017
Budget Scrutiny	Scrutiny Workshops (to be confirmed)	December 2016 / January 2017 TBC

Wirral's Residents Live Healthier Lives Strategy	Committee Report / Presentation	TBC
Wirral's Neighbourhoods are Safe Strategy	Committee Report / Presentation	TBC
Wirral's Waste Management Strategy	Committee Report / Presentation	TBC
Wirral's Loving our Environment Strategy	Committee Report / Presentation	TBC
Third Sector Strategy	Committee Report / Presentation	TBC
Volunteering Strategy	Committee Report / Presentation	TBC
Coastal Strategy Scrutiny Review follow-up report	Officer Report	TBC
Transforming Wirral – further business cases	Workshops	TBC
Welfare Reforms (including Welfare Assistance Scheme)	To be confirmed	TBC

Further items will be identified as the municipal year progresses. In addition, standing items such as performance monitoring reports and policy inform briefings will be included on meeting agendas.

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.

REPORT AUTHOR: Patrick Torpey
Scrutiny Support
0151 691 8381
email: patricktorpey@wirral.gov.uk

APPENDICES

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date