



Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
31st January 2018

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

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 three Overview & Scrutiny Committees, is responsible for proposing and delivering an annual scrutiny 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.

It is envisaged that the work programme will be formed from a combination of scrutiny reviews, standing items on committee agendas and requested officer reports. This report provides the committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Members are requested to:

1. Approve the proposed Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2017/18, making any required amendments.

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

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

Pledge	Strategies
Leisure and cultural opportunities for all	Wirral's Leisure Strategy Wirral's Culture Strategy
Wirral residents live healthier lives	Wirral's Residents Live Healthier Lives Strategy
Community services are joined up and accessible	Wirral Together Strategy
Good quality housing that meets the needs of residents	Housing Strategy
Wirral's neighbourhoods are safe	Ensuring Wirral's Neighbourhoods are Safe Strategy
Attractive local environment for Wirral residents	Managing our Waste Strategy Loving our Environment Strategy

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

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

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

As some of the selected topics may cut across the Wirral Plan themes, it is anticipated they 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 will be explored.

Regular work programme update reports will provide the committee with an opportunity to plan and review its work across the municipal year.

3.4 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME ITEMS

Modern Slavery Scrutiny Review

An evidence session with officers from the Council's Environmental Health and Licencing departments took place in November. Further evidence sessions are planned with other Council departments, partner organisations, local charities and voluntary groups. It is anticipated that the final report will be presented to Committee in March 2018.

Budget Scrutiny 2018 / 19

In line with previous municipal years, workshops were held for members of each of the scrutiny committees to review proposals as the 2018 / 19 budget is being developed. The workshop relating to the remit of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 10th January. A report regarding the outcomes of the workshop is included as a separate item on this Committee agenda.

Notice of Motion on use of Single Use Plastics

At Council on 11th December 2017, Members discussed a Notice of Motion on Reducing Single Use Plastic in Wirral. Council resolved to refer all of the recommendations in this motion to the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee with a view to advising Cabinet how they can most effectively be delivered. Members are requested to consider an appropriate method of progressing with this work item.

3.2 FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

Universal Credit

At a meeting of the Chairs of the four Overview & Scrutiny Committees, it was agreed to undertake further scrutiny of Universal Credit in February 2018 when the implications of implementing Universal Credit may be better known and the relevant data could be made available to Members. Although not formally part of this Committee's work programme, it is anticipated that members of all four scrutiny committees will be invited to participate. The following approach was agreed in principle:

- A workshop style approach to be adopted with dates for a series of workshops to be scheduled for February 2018.
- Workshops to cover the wide ranging themes extending across all four O&S committees, such as IT, housing and homelessness.
- The workshops would be open to all Members who sit on any of the four O&S Committees to ensure inclusivity and to reflect the wider-ranging views and experiences of these Members.
- The Business O&S Committee would 'own' this piece of work to ensure that there is no overlap or duplication. Consideration can be given for these workshops to be chaired by different O&S Chairs relevant to the themes of the workshop.
- A report to be completed and reported to the Business O&S Committee in March 2018 to ensure that the work remains current.

As part of scrutiny work planning sessions for the next municipal year, each committee will be better informed as to where the issues lie in respect to their remit and can then focus further scrutiny activity as appropriate.

This approach ensures inclusivity for all O&S Members as it has an impact for all wards in Wirral. It is also a theme that cuts across the remit of all four O&S Committees due to the wide-ranging impact affecting a number of service delivery areas. It also mitigates the risk of duplication and overlap in scrutiny work if each O&S committee unilaterally agrees to carry out scrutiny of Universal Credit at this time. Further information will be provided to Members when the arrangements have been finalised.

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:

Appendix 1: Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Work programme

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date