



Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday 29th November 2019

REPORT TITLE:	ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - WORK PROGRAMME REPORT
REPORT OF:	HEAD OF INTELLIGENCE (STATUTORY SCRUTINY OFFICER)

REPORT SUMMARY

The Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee, in co-operation 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 and requested officer reports. This report provides the Committee with an opportunity to plan and regularly review its work across the municipal year. The work programme for the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

Members are requested to approve the proposed Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee work programme for 2019/20, 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 specific Wirral Plan pledges and associated 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 (in development)
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
- Standing panels (where deemed necessary)

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.

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

4.0 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME ITEMS

4.1 Tree Policy Task & Finish Scrutiny Review

Since the last meeting of the Committee, a Task & Finish group has been established in order to review the strategic guidance within the Council's draft Tree Policy and to ensure that a robust tree risk management plan is put in place. The review group held a scoping meeting to discuss the review in detail, with a subsequent evidence session held on 30th October 2019. Members embarked on a site visit to Arrowe Park to gain an understanding of challenges and issues currently faced with tree management in the Borough, before then taking the opportunity to meet with senior officers and technical staff to seek assurances on current practices and future plans. It is proposed that the Task & Finish panel convene again for a further focus group, this time with the inclusion of planning officers, to discuss the links between the Tree Policy and the Local Plan. Further updates on this review will be brought before future meetings of this Committee.

4.2 Garden Waste Subscription Update

At the last meeting of the Committee in September, Members expressed concern that there has been slower than anticipated take up of the Garden Waste Subscription service. As a result, further detail was requested on the current performance and promotion of the scheme. A briefing note was circulated to Members outside of Committee for information.

4.3 2020/21 Budget Scrutiny

In line with previous municipal years, Members will be invited to review budget proposals and savings plans for 2020/21 within the remit of the Committee. The budget scrutiny process is currently under review and will be agreed by the Chairs of all Overview & Scrutiny Committees.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Not Applicable

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Not Applicable

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

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

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

8.1 Not Applicable

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

9.1 Not Applicable

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

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

11.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Not Applicable

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Work programme

BACKGROUND PAPERS

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	2nd July 2019
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	24th September 2019