



Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Thursday 12th March 2020

REPORT TITLE:	Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme Update 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 the remainder of the 2019/20 municipal year.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 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

- 2.1 Not Applicable

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3.1 THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

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 Plan
- 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 and Council Plan Priorities	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 and Council Plan priorities, 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.

The governance arrangements of the Council have recently been reviewed and as of May 2020, the current scrutiny model and committee structure will change. The Chairs of all four current Overview & Scrutiny Committees have worked collaboratively to

address cross-cutting matters and ensure that the necessary prioritisation and scheduling of Committee work programme items has taken place.

4.0 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME ITEMS

4.3 Key Regeneration Project Workshop

In February 2020, the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee undertook a pre-decision scrutiny on key regeneration projects including Birkenhead Market, Birkenhead Commercial District and the Wirral Growth Company Partnership. Due to the cross-cutting nature of this review, Members of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee were invited to attend. A report detailing the recommendations arising from this workshop is due to be presented to the Business Overview & Scrutiny Committee in March 2020.

4.4 Tree Strategy Scrutiny Review

A Task & Finish group was established in 2019 to review the Council's draft Tree Strategy, with Members taking part in a number of evidence sessions in order to understand the challenges around tree management. The Panel's final report can be found elsewhere on this agenda.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no financial implications.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no legal implications.

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 A key risk identified is the implication of failure to deliver the annual work programme before the close of the 2019/20 municipal year. To mitigate this, a robust transitional plan will be arranged to ensure that key work programme items are highlighted and assigned as necessary within the new governance arrangements.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

9.1 Relevant stakeholders are consulted where appropriate as part of delivery of the Committee's annual work programme.

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 The content and/or recommendations contained within this report are expected to have no impact on emissions of greenhouse gases.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Work Programme

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Flood Risk Management Annual Report
Climate Emergency Action Plan
2019/20 Q3 Financial Monitoring Report
2019/20 Q3 Wirral Plan Performance Report
Tree Strategy Scrutiny Review Report

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	2nd July 2019
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	24th September 2019
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	28th November 2019
Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee	30th January 2020