

**CITY & COUNTY OF CARDIFF COUNCIL
DINAS A SIR CAERDYDD**

**POLICY REVIEW & PERFORMANCE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

2 June 2015

WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Purpose of Report

1. The Council's Constitution states that each Scrutiny Committee will set its own work programme for the forthcoming year (Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7). The Committee is now tasked with constructing a work programme for the year ahead that ensures the time available to the Committee is used most effectively, by considering items in a timely fashion that maximise the impact of scrutiny.
2. The purpose of this report is to invite Members to consider the approach they would like to take to setting the work programme for the municipal year 2015-16.

Background

3. This Committee's terms of reference give the Committee a corporate policy and performance overview responsibility. In its examination of service performance and policy development across a range of corporate services, it forms a central part of the Council's governance arrangements. The Committee's terms of reference are:
 - To scrutinise, monitor and review the overall operation of the Cardiff Programme for Improvement and the effectiveness of the general implementation of the Council's policies, aims and objectives:
 - To scrutinise, monitor and review the effectiveness of the Council's systems of financial control and administration and use of human resources;

- To report to an appropriate Cabinet or Council meeting on its findings and to make recommendations on measures, which may enhance Council performance in this area.
4. The Terms of Reference also allow for the Committee to consider certain specific areas of the organisation's current structure in depth. These include: Finance; Corporate Performance; HR People Services; Legal and Democratic Services; Estates and Land Strategy; Information Governance; Commissioning & Procurement; Customer Services; Communications; and Central Transport Services.
 5. The Committee's Terms of Reference also empower it to consider other areas including relations with the voluntary sector, equalities and citizen engagement.
 6. It is anticipated that the exact dates of Committee meetings will be confirmed at Full Council on 18 June 2015. Normally, Committee meetings are scheduled for each month, apart from August, meaning that there are eleven scheduled meetings. The holding of the National Assembly elections in May 2016 will mean that most Council meetings in April will be suspended. This Committee's April 2016 meeting is likely to be pencilled in, but will only be held if urgent Committee business needs to be transacted at that time.
 7. Members may also decide to hold task group meetings, where several Committee Members take on the work of scrutinising a specific area in-depth, on behalf of the whole Committee, with their report then considered by the whole Committee prior to approval.

Developing a work programme

8. The work programme is normally constructed at the beginning of the municipal year but can be updated during the year. There are many scrutiny approaches open to the Committee when constructing its work programme, including:

- a. **Policy Review & Development** – where the Committee contributes to the development of policy by scrutinising and making recommendations on proposals.
 - b. **Pre decision** - Where the Committee has evaluated and commented on proposals before they go to the Cabinet, giving the Cabinet the opportunity to know Scrutiny Members' views prior to making their decision.
 - c. **Inquiries** – where the Committee examines a clearly defined topic using a planned task group approach over a set period of time, resulting in a clear set of key findings and recommendations.
 - d. **Performance Review** – where the Committee regularly analyses key performance data from the service areas within its' remit in order to: highlight good performance; identify poor performance; examine trends over time; benchmark against other authorities; investigate management actions and examine the impact that initiatives and changes in resources have on performance and service delivery.
 - e. **Monitoring Reports** - Where the Committee undertakes monitoring of the Council's performance and progress in implementing actions previously agreed.
 - f. **Call In** – the Council's constitution allows for any Member to call-in a Cabinet decision prior to implementation. The Call-In period is set at seven working days after the publication of the decision on the Council's intranet site. For a decision to be valid for Call-In it has to comply with criteria and parameters set out in the constitution. A Scrutiny Committee may recommend that a decision be reconsidered.
9. Within the above approaches, Members can choose various methods of scrutiny and evidence gathering. Members can hear from relevant Cabinet Members and internal officers as well as external witnesses such as external inspectors, statutory partners, third sector organisations, service user representatives, and other relevant stakeholders. Members can choose to hear items at Committee, where all Committee Members have the opportunity to scrutinise the issues, and this can either be as a one-off item or as a series of items over time, focusing on the same topic, for example scrutinising policy development, undertaking pre-decision scrutiny of the proposed policy and scrutinising the impact of the

implementation of the policy. Members can also choose to consider items via short or long term task group inquiries.

10. Scrutiny Committees therefore have the opportunity to input into the development of policies and strategies, comment on operational and service delivery issues, identify potential improvements and savings, highlight good practice and reflect the voice and concerns of the public. However, given the range of subject areas covered by each Committee, Committee Members have to prioritise items. Normally, Members prioritise items where scrutiny can have most impact, so that the time and resources available to the Committee are most effectively used.

11. Over the years, Scrutiny Services has developed various tools that Members can use to assist them to develop and prioritise a work programme. The first stage is to identify potential work programme items for consideration and prioritisation by Committee Members by: seeking suggestions from Members and stakeholders; reviewing the items recommended by the previous Committee; reviewing corporate documents, forthcoming legislation, the work programmes of relevant auditors, inspectors and regulators and partnership, consortia and regional documents; and checking other relevant documentation to identify areas within the terms of reference for the Committee.

12. Following the preparation of a list of potential items, Committee Members will need to prioritise the items. A mechanism that has consistently been used by Cardiff Council Scrutiny Committees is known as PICK, which stands for:

- Public Interest
- Impact
- Council Performance and
- Keeping in context.

13. By using the PICK mechanism, Committee Members can be assured that they prioritise areas where Scrutiny can have most impact, that are of importance to the public, that will help to deliver improved performance and that are not being investigated by other routes.

14. When Committee Members decide to prioritise an area of task group inquiry, Scrutiny Services will work with them and other stakeholders to complete a scoping report that defines: the terms of reference for the inquiry; proposed timescales; involvement of other agencies; major constraints and resource issues; and the critical success factors that can be used to judge the success of the scrutiny exercise. This report is then brought to the whole Committee to discuss, amend as necessary and approve.

Way Forward

15. Members may wish to explore the best approach to developing the 2015/16 work programme, including agreeing the approach to take to generate the initial list of items and to prioritise items. In previous years Members have held a work programming forum to consider options for the work programme and prioritise topics for consideration. The forum's proposals are then presented to Committee for formal approval of the work programme.

16. Members may wish to raise particular issues of interest for inclusion in the Committee's work programming forum discussions.

Legal Implications

17. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken

having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

18. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme. However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is recommended to:

- i. Discuss and agree the approach to developing the Committee's work programme for 2015-16, so that a final version of the programme can be brought back to the Committee for formal approval.

MARIE ROSENTHAL

County Clerk and Monitoring Officer

26 May 2015