

**ENVIRONMENTAL SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – WORK PROGRAMME
PLANNING 2023/24**

Background

1. The Constitution states that each Scrutiny Committee will set their own work programme. This is traditionally undertaken at the beginning of a municipal year and updated as the work progresses. As with other years, the work programme needs to be carefully constructed so that the time available to the Committee is used most effectively.
2. The Environmental Scrutiny Committee's Terms of Reference provide the Committee with the responsibility for the scrutiny of a number of specific service areas. A copy of the terms of reference has been attached to this document as **Appendix A**. This will remind Members of the scope of ideas that could be considered.
3. The Committee is responsible for the scrutiny of a number of policies and strategies that affect the sustainability and environment of Cardiff. It can also undertake investigations into any of these areas.
4. The construction of a work programme involves obtaining information from a range of sources, these may include:
 - Information from the relevant Directorates;
 - Relevant extracts from relevant corporate documents - including Cabinet Forward Plan, Capital Ambition, Corporate Plan, Recovery & Renewal Plans, Directorate Delivery Plans, budgetary information, performance information, risk register and audit reports.
 - Forthcoming UK and Welsh Government legislation and policy changes
 - Suggestions and ideas put forward by the Environmental Scrutiny Committee;
 - Member suggestions and observations;

- Citizen and third party comments and observations;
 - Performance information.
5. The topics gathered from the sources identified above have been recorded in a document titled 'Environmental Scrutiny Committee – Potential Work Programme Items 2022/23'. This document has been provided to Members to help them prioritise items for the Environmental Scrutiny Committee Work Programme and is attached to this report as **Appendix B**.
6. During consideration of **Appendix B**, the Committee will also need to agree the format and type of scrutiny to be undertaken, examples include:
- **Policy Development & Review** – Where the Committee contributes to the Council's policy development processes by considering draft policy documents or existing policies.
 - **Inquiries** – Where the Committee undertakes an examination of a topic over a period of time, via a task & finish group, resulting in a formal report to the Cabinet. These can be short inquiries, such as deep dives, or longer inquiries, as required.
 - **Short Scrutiny Studies** – Where the Committee examines a particular service or issue over one or two committee meetings. Frequently such scrutiny activity results in a letter being sent to the relevant Cabinet Member with recommendations or comments.
 - **Pre Decision** – Where the Committee evaluates and comments on proposals before they go to the Cabinet, giving the Cabinet the opportunity to reflect upon Scrutiny views prior to making their decision.
 - **Monitoring Performance & Progress** – Where the Committee undertakes monitoring of the Council's performance and progress in implementing actions previously agreed.
7. When developing a scrutiny work programme it is important to prioritise where work resources are allocated. This means that items should be prioritised to ensure quality over quantity, achievability, deliverability and impact. In following this approach the work programme should:

- **Focus** – Be based on issues that impact Cardiff citizens.
 - **Add Value** – Where possible enhance the work of the Council in delivering services to our citizens.
 - **Involve** - Involve partners, stakeholders and the public in scrutiny process.
 - **Demonstrate Flexibility** – The work programme should be reviewed regularly to reflect changing priorities.
 - **Agreed by Committee** – Work programme items should be agreed by the whole Committee working as a team.
 - **Thematic** – The Committee should consider wider issues rather than only focusing on Council services.
 - **Balance** – The work programme should be balanced and include items from across the terms of reference.
 - **Teamwork** – In delivering the work programme councillors should leave party politics at the door, work as a team and focus on wider issues that impact on all Cardiff citizens.
8. Once Member priorities are agreed, the Chair will meet with the Principal Scrutiny Officer to review the items and place these into a draft work programme. The ‘Environmental Scrutiny Committee – Draft Work Programme 2021/22’ will be tabled as an item at the Environmental Scrutiny Committee September 2021 meeting. At this point, it is hoped that the Committee will, subject to any potential alterations, formally agree the work programme. The Environmental Scrutiny Committee work programme will be reviewed and updated during the 2021/22 municipal year to reflect resources and changing priorities.
9. In setting their work programme, Members are advised to be mindful of Wales Audit Office advice for scrutiny committees to aim to achieve committee meetings within reasonable timeframes, whilst maintaining robust and appropriate levels of scrutiny across the terms of reference. Ensuring agendas are of a manageable size and that work occurs outside committee meetings. On average, this equates to agendas consisting of no more than two substantial items.

10. This timeframe takes on added significance with meetings held remotely, given advice to keep remote meetings as short as possible. Scrutiny Chairs have discussed the length of meetings and decided to aim to keep meetings to 2.5 hours, where possible.

Way Forward

11. Members should consider the list of potential topics contained in **Appendix B** and agree a number of Work Programme priorities for the Environmental Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2023/24.

Legal Implications

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

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. Consider the contents of this report and its Appendices and;
- ii. Agree a number of priorities for the work programme.

DAVINA FIORE

Director of Governance & Legal Services

30th June 2023