
Work Programme 2012/13

Purpose of the Report

1. To brief Members on the approach to finalising the Committee's work programme for 2012-13.

Background

2. The Constitution states that each Scrutiny Committee will set their own work programme for the forthcoming year (Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7). With the establishment of a new administration the new Committee is 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.
3. This Committee's terms of reference are founded on a corporate policy and performance overview responsibility, which form the basis of its work programme. It has direct responsibility for scrutinising those service areas that together form the support services on which all Council Services are delivered. This means that its responsibilities fall largely within two strands of the organisational structure, the 'Corporate' and 'Shared' service areas.

- **Corporate** - *Finance; Estates & Land Strategy; Legal & Democratic Services; Scrutiny, Performance & Improvement; Commissioning & Procurement.*
- **Shared** - *HR People Services; Internal Services; Customer Services; Central Transport Services and Communications.*

In addition the Committee has responsibility for equalities, which falls within the Partnerships & Citizen Focus team of the 'Communities' service area; and for monitoring the progress of the overall Transformation portfolio of programmes.

4. There will be ten Committee meetings between July 2012 and May 2013. The exact dates of these meetings were confirmed at Full Council on 21st June 2012. All meetings are on Wednesdays at 5.00pm, except for 18th February 2013 (budget scrutiny), where the time of the meeting is to be agreed:

4 July 2012

5 September 2012

3 October 2012

31 October 2012

28 November 2012

16 January 2012

18 February 2013

6 March 2013

17 April 2013

15 May 2013

5. In June 2012 Members attended an early work programming forum to meet service area management teams, and to begin considering options for Committee's work programme. Members' expressions of interest at that forum are currently the subject of further scoping, and Members will have an opportunity to prioritise topics prior to the final draft work programme being presented to Committee for formal approval in September 2012.

Developing a Work Programme

6. Members are reminded that there are many scrutiny approaches open to the Committee when constructing its work programme.

- 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 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; 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 Ins** – 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.
7. These activities enable Scrutiny Committees to have a clear input into the development of the main policies and strategies that form the Council's policy framework, comment on operational and service delivery issues, identify potential improvements and savings, highlight good practice and reflect the voice and concerns of the public.
8. The Committee's 2011/12 Annual Report identified that the Committee had found its time stretched to cover a growing transformational change programme, and the services that fall within two large directorates (Corporate & Shared). There are therefore a number of items commended to the Committee of 2012/13 for

consideration. These include a six-month transformation portfolio overview; the Employee support strategy & plan; an inquiry on Electoral Services; and an update on the Cardiff Academy.

9. In addition, this Committee are tasked with a corporate responsibility for scrutinising the proposed budget 2013/14, the Corporate Plan 2013-16, Corporate Performance, the Wales Audit Office Improvement Assessment and Annual Improvement Report 2013, and a specific responsibility for monitoring the budgets and performance of the Corporate and Shared service areas.

Developing a work programme

10. The work programme is normally constructed at the beginning of the municipal year but can be updated during the year. Given the range of service areas and subjects covered by the Committee, the work programme needs to be carefully constructed to ensure that the time available to the Committee is most effectively used. The Committee is advised to balance time invested against the potential impact of Committee's work.

11. Scrutiny Services have developed various tools to assist Committees with developing a work programme. These include:

- A mechanism to consistently prioritise topics suggested for scrutiny known as **PICK**:
 - P**ublic Interest
 - I**mpact
 - C**ouncil Performance and
 - K**eeping in context.
- **Scoping reports** to define the terms of reference for each agreed scrutiny 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.

Legal Implications

12. 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 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 of 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

13. 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 finalising the Committee's work programme for 2012-13, so that a final version of the programme can be brought back to the Committee's September meeting for formal approval.

MIKE DAVIES

Head of Scrutiny, Performance and Improvement

26 June 2012