

WORK PROGRAMMING

Purpose of the Report

1. To present information that will enable Members to discuss and agree the way forward for constructing and agreeing the work programme for 2017/18.

Background

2. The Constitution states that each Scrutiny Committee will set its own work programme for the forthcoming year (Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7). The 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 that maximise the impact of scrutiny in a timely fashion.
3. This Committee's terms of reference give the Committee responsibility for scrutinising, measuring and actively promoting improvement in the Council's performance in the provision of services and compliance with Council policies, aims and objectives in the area of community and adult services, including:
 - Public and Private Housing
 - Disabled Facilities Grants
 - Community Safety
 - Neighbourhood Renewal and Communities First
 - Advice and Benefits
 - Consumer Protection
 - Older Persons Strategy
 - Adult Social Care
 - Community Care Services
 - Mental Health and Physical Impairment
 - Commissioning Strategy
 - Health Partnership

4. In addition, this Committee is the designated Crime & Disorder Scrutiny Committee for the Council and as such has responsibility for scrutinising the Community Safety Partnership.

Developing a work programme

5. The Committee constructs the work programme at the beginning of the municipal year and it is updated periodically during the year. Over the years, Scrutiny Services has developed various tools that Members can use to assist them to develop and prioritise a work programme.
6. The first stage is to identify potential work programme items for consideration and prioritisation by Committee Members by:
 - i. seeking suggestions from Members and officers;
 - ii. reviewing the items recommended by the previous Committee;
 - iii. reviewing corporate documents, forthcoming legislation, the work programmes of relevant auditors, inspectors and regulators and partnership, consortia and regional documents; and
 - iv. checking other relevant documentation to identify areas within the terms of reference for the Committee.
7. Following the preparation of a list of potential items, Committee Members will need to prioritise the items, given the range of subject areas covered by the Committee and the limited resources available. Normally, Members prioritise items 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. This ensures that the time and resources available to the Committee are most effectively used.
8. In previous years, Members have held a work-programming forum to consider and prioritise items. The forum's proposals are presented to Committee for formal approval of the work programme. Following consultation with Committee Members, it is proposed that this approach be taken this year.

Way Forward

9. During their meeting, Members may wish to discuss and agree the approach to developing the Committee's work programme for 2017-18, so that a final version of the programme is brought back to the Committee in September 2017 for formal approval. Members may also wish to raise particular issues of interest for inclusion in the Committee's work programming forum discussions.

Legal Implications

10. 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

11. 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.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to:

- I. Discuss and agree the approach to developing the Committee's work programme for 2017-18, so that a final version of the programme can be brought back to the Committee in September 2017 for formal approval.

Davina Fiore

Director of Governance & Legal Services and Monitoring Officer

13 July 2017