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| <b>TITLE</b>                | <b>Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes 2018-19</b>           |
| <b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b> | Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 21 February 2018 |
| <b>WARD</b>                 | None Specific  |
| <b>LEAD OFFICER</b>         | Andrew Moulton, Head of Governance and Improvement Services    |

## **OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY**

Effective Overview and Scrutiny helps to improve services, holds decision makers to account and engages with local communities. In so doing it helps to demonstrate that the Council and other public service providers are open and transparent and are delivering high quality, value for money services.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee is requested to:

- 1) consider the proposals in the report and agree the draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes and timetable for 2018/19;
- 2) agree the process for public consultation on the draft work programmes;
- 3) agree to finalise the work programmes at its meeting on 26 March 2017.

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

Effective work programming is a Member-led process aimed at shortlisting and prioritising issues of community concern together with issues arising out of the Council Plan and major policy or service changes. It aims to:

- reflect local needs and concerns;
- prioritise topics for scrutiny which have the most impact or benefit;
- involve local residents and stakeholders;
- be flexible enough to respond to new or urgent issues.

Each year the Committee approves work programmes for itself and the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Recent discussions have indicated the need for the work programming process to be more robust and for greater engagement between Overview and Scrutiny and the Executive.

The report sets out a draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2018/19. It also considers proposals to consult on the draft programme and to clarify and strengthen the involvement of Overview and Scrutiny in policy development across the Council.

## **Background**

An effective Overview and Scrutiny function is underpinned by robust work programming. Effective work programming lays the foundations for targeted scrutiny of issues of local importance. It helps to ensure that Overview and Scrutiny adds value and makes a difference. Effective work programming helps to:

- prioritise issues for in-depth work where Overview and Scrutiny can make an impact and add value;
- reduce the need for “information only” reports;
- achieve a balance between pre-decision scrutiny, policy development and performance/budget monitoring;
- contribute at an earlier stage in the decision making process;
- increase public and stakeholder involvement in Overview and Scrutiny;
- retain flexibility in order to respond to urgent issues arising during the year.

At previous meetings the Committee has considered different approaches to work programming adopted by a range of Councils across the country. These include:

- seeking ideas from Members, Officers, Parish and Town Councils and partner organisations;
- engaging with community groups and special interest groups;
- encouraging public views via social media and the Council website;
- carrying out public surveys or use of Citizens’ Panels and focus groups;
- analysing corporate complaints and customer feedback;
- reviewing key corporate documents such as the Council Plan, peer reviews and major service inspection reports.

Once a longlist of potential items is compiled, Councils then carry out a sifting process through initiatives such as awayday sessions with Members and partners or a Scrutiny Cafe which brings stakeholders together for a facilitated session aimed at producing a list of key items for review. The Centre for Public Scrutiny has produced a template for developing an annual Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme. The key elements and suggested timetable are:

- January/February – initial consultation with Overview and Scrutiny Members, Executive Members, senior Officers and partner organisations. Public engagement with residents, community groups and partners via the Council’s website and social media.
- March – Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee to finalise the work programmes.
- April – publication and implementation of the work programmes.
- November – mid-year review of the work programmes by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

## **Policy Development and Pre-Decision Scrutiny**

Effective Overview and Scrutiny can assist in the development of new policies in support of the Council’s priorities. During 2017/18 the Leader of the Council and Executive Members attended the Committee’s meetings to discuss priorities for the year ahead and

to identify issues which could benefit from input from Overview and Scrutiny. The discussions indicated a consensus that Overview and Scrutiny could play a larger role in policy development. This could be via pre-decision scrutiny of new policies or in depth reviews of specific issues which could lead to new policy development. Executive Members have been asked to suggest issues for inclusion in the 2018/19 work programmes along with the other stakeholders identified above.

### **In Depth Scrutiny Reviews**

An important strength of Overview and Scrutiny is the capacity to carry out in depth reviews of policies or services provided by the Council or its partners. In depth reviews allow Members to drill down into a particular issue and consider evidence from service users, community groups, experts and other stakeholders. They also enable Members to carry out research and broaden their knowledge of best practice in the public and private sectors. It is suggested that each Overview and Scrutiny Committee identifies one or more topics for in depth review during 2018/19, the reviews to be carried out by the Committees themselves or by Task and Finish Groups.

### **Scrutiny Review Issues**

The issues identified for consideration by Overview and Scrutiny should be of interest or concern for local residents and generate public interest and involvement in the Overview and Scrutiny process.

In order to generate ideas and involvement from local residents, community groups and stakeholders, it is suggested that the Council's website and social media be used to publicise the development of the work programme and to invite suggestions inclusion.

In considering potential issues for review, Members should take into account the previously agreed selection criteria:

- Whether the issue is of local, and preferably current, concern;
- Whether the undertaking of the review can be linked to the Council's Vision, priorities and underpinning principles or would help achieve these;
- Whether the topic is already being reviewed elsewhere within the Council (e.g. as part of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Council programme);
- Is the topic one that is capable of being influenced by one of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- Is the topic of manageable scope – not too wide-ranging and yet of sufficient size to warrant a scrutiny review;
- Whether sufficient resources are available to support the scrutiny review; If a review is warranted, should it have a high, medium or low priority?
- Whether the review should be undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee itself or be delegated to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or a Task and Finish Group.

### **Analysis of Issues**

The Annex to the report sets out a draft work programme for each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees with a list of issues to be considered. The work programmes allow flexibility for the consideration of urgent issues and the call-in of decisions made by the

Executive. Once approved, the work programme issues will be timetabled into the programme of Overview and Scrutiny meetings during the year.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

**The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.**

|                                   | How much will it Cost/ (Save) | Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall | Revenue or Capital? |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| Current Financial Year (Year 1)   | 0                             | NA  | NA                  |
| Next Financial Year (Year 2)      | 0                             |   |                     |
| Following Financial Year (Year 3) | 0                             |   |                     |

### Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None

### List of Background Papers

None

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|-----------------------------------|---|
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| <b>Date</b> 12 February 2018      | <b>Version No.</b> 1.0                  |

## Draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2018/19

### 1. Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

|     |   |
|-----|---|
| 1.  | Development of the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes and coordination of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees             |
| 2.  | Discussion with the Leader, Executive Members and appropriate Officers to identify priorities and monitor performance against key targets |
| 3.  | Monitoring of the Council Plan and the Corporate Peer Review Action Plan  |
| 4.  | Input into new policies through pre-decision scrutiny of draft proposals  |
| 5.  | Monitoring the quarterly Council Plan Performance Management report   |
| 6.  | Reviewing implementation of the Council's 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Council programme  |
| 7.  | Monitoring Strategic Development Location (SDL) delivery and progress relating to the Local Plan Update                                   |
| 8.  | Reviewing the Council's annual Budget Engagement exercise   |
| 9.  | Monitoring the operation and performance of Council-owned companies   |
| 10. | Reviewing the Assets Review Programme and the operation of the Council's Property Portfolio Investment Fund                               |
| 11. | Monitoring the outcomes delivered by the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership   |
| 12. | Reviewing the effectiveness of Planning processes relating to the implementation of planning conditions and tree preservation orders      |
| 11. | Monitoring the Council's compliance with the Equality Act 2010  |
| 12. | Approval of the annual Overview and Scrutiny report to Council  |
| 13. | Call-In review of Executive decisions   |
| 14. | Appointing Task and Finish Groups to investigate issues of local interest   |
| 15. | Reviewing the effectiveness of Overview and Scrutiny and the underpinning support and training provided for Members                       |

## 2. Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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| 1.  | Monitoring the effective delivery of safeguarding services, including social worker recruitment, retention and training                 |
| 2.  | Reviewing services that contribute to the achievement of the Council's Vision and priorities for children and young people              |
| 3.  | Reviewing progress in relation to narrowing the gap in educational attainment for children from disadvantaged backgrounds               |
| 4.  | Reviewing key Children's Services performance indicators and major projects   |
| 5.  | Reviewing school performance indicators and Ofsted reports  |
| 6.  | Monitoring the performance of any schools causing concern   |
| 7.  | Monitoring the impact of the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Council change programme on Children's Services                                   |
| 8.  | Monitoring key strategic initiatives such as the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub and the development of the Wokingham Multi Academy Trust |
| 9.  | Considering the annual report of the Corporate Parenting Board  |
| 10. | Input into new policies through pre-decision scrutiny of draft proposals relating to Children's Services                                |
| 11. | Call-In of Executive decisions relating to Children's Services  |
| 12. | Appointing Task and Finish Groups as appropriate  |

### 3. Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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| 1.  | Reviewing the work of the Community Safety Partnership and the effectiveness of local policing  |
| 2.  | Exercising the Council's flood risk management responsibilities by monitoring flood risk activities and partnership working with towns and parishes |
| 3.  | Monitoring the Council's Capital and Revenue expenditure  |
| 4.  | Monitoring the Wokingham Town Centre regeneration project including an evidence session with the Federation of Small Businesses                     |
| 5.  | Reviewing the Council's partnerships with Town and Parish Councils and the voluntary sector   |
| 6.  | Reviewing highways and transport issues including customer service, car parking and improvements to cycling facilities                              |
| 7.  | Reviewing the proposed development of the Coppid Beech Park and Ride site   |
| 8.  | Monitoring the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement  |
| 9.  | Reviewing the process for setting fees and charges in the Public Protection service   |
| 10. | Input into new policies through pre-decision scrutiny of draft proposals  |
| 11. | Appointing Task and Finish Groups as appropriate  |

#### 4. Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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| 1.  | Monitoring health and social care outcomes and the performance of the local NHS Foundation Trusts   |
| 2.  | Reviewing progress on the integration of health and social care services  |
| 3.  | Monitoring progress relating to the development of community hubs   |
| 4.  | Considering reports and updates from Wokingham Healthwatch  |
| 5.  | Reviewing the provision of community mental health services   |
| 6.  | Considering updates on the work of the Wokingham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)   |
| 7.  | Reviewing access to primary care services within the Strategic Development Locations  |
| 8.  | Joining West Berkshire, Reading, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Councils in joint scrutiny of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Sustainability and Transformation Plan |
| 9.  | Call-In of Executive decisions relating to adult social care  |
| 10. | Input into new policies through pre-decision scrutiny of draft proposals relating to adult social care  |
| 11. | Appointing Task and Finish Groups as appropriate  |