

Agenda Item 97.

TITLE	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes 2019/20
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 20 March 2019
WARD	None Specific
LEAD OFFICER	Andrew Moulton, Assistant Director, Governance

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) agree the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes for 2019/20 (Annex A);
- 2) consider the additional Scrutiny requests set out in Annex B;
- 3) consider any other potential Scrutiny items;
- 4) note that additional Scrutiny items can be included in the work programmes during the year;
- 5) confirm that each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees will undertake a detailed Scrutiny review during 2019/20.

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. Draft work programmes are appended to the report for Member consideration and approval. Following public consultation a number of additional Scrutiny requests have been received. These requests are also included in the report for Member consideration.

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.

Scrutiny Review Criteria

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 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;
- 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;
- 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.

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.

In 2018 the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee carried out an in-depth Scrutiny review of the Council’s Grounds Maintenance service, resulting in the submission of detailed recommendations to the Council’s Executive in January 2019.

Building on the successful outcome of the review of the grounds maintenance service, it is suggested that each Overview and Scrutiny Committee identifies one or more topics

for in depth review during 2019/20, the reviews to be carried out by the Committees themselves or by Task and Finish Groups.

Scrutiny Issues for 2019/20

Annex A to the report sets out a proposed draft work programme for each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees for 2019/20. 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. Implementation of the programmes will then be monitored during the year.

In addition, Annex B sets out a number of potential Scrutiny issues suggested by residents following the Committee's public consultation exercise. Members are requested to consider the suggestions against the criteria set out above and determine whether they should be included in the work programmes.

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	NA	NA
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	0	NA	NA

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
None

List of Background Papers
None

Contact Neil Carr	Service Corporate Services
Telephone No 0118 974 6058	Email neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk
Date 8 March 2019	Version No. 1.0

1. Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee Work Programme 2019/20

1.	Development of the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes and coordination of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees
2.	Discussions with the Leader, Executive Members and Chief Executive to identify future priorities and monitor performance against key targets
3.	Scrutinising the development of the new Borough Plan together with the underpinning priorities and the Quarterly Performance Management Report
4.	Reviewing implementation of the Council's 21 st Century Council programme and the successor Continuous Improvement Programme
5.	Scrutinising the impact of Brexit on the Borough;
6.	Scrutinising the delivery of the Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) and progress relating to the Local Plan Update and the 5 year land supply
7.	Reviewing the Assets Review Programme and the operation of the Council's Property Portfolio Investment Fund
8.	Reviewing progress of the council's Grounds Maintenance service following the Committee's Scrutiny review in 2018;
9.	Scrutinising the Council's Housing services to ensure that the needs of local residents are being met
10.	Monitoring the operation and performance of the Council-owned companies and the Council's Shared Service arrangements
11.	Scrutinising the Council's Economic Development Strategy and the impact of the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership
12.	Reviewing the Government's updated Statutory Guidance on the operation of Overview and Scrutiny and considering the implications for WBC;
13.	Scrutinising the Council's approach to public consultation and compliance with its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010
14.	Approving of the annual Overview and Scrutiny report to Council
15.	Undertaking Call-In reviews of Executive decisions
15.	Appointing Task and Finish Groups as appropriate
16.	Reviewing the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny function and the underpinning support and training provided for Officers and Members

**2. Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme
2019/20**

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.	Scrutinising the performance of any schools causing concern
7.	Reviewing the allocation of school places across the Borough
8.	Monitoring the impact of the 21 st Century Council change programme and the successor Continuous Improvement Programme on Children's Services
9.	Scrutinising progress of key strategic initiatives such as the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)
10.	Considering the annual report of the Corporate Parenting Board
11.	Reviewing the Education Vision Strategy
12.	Reviewing the Strategy for children with special educational needs and disabilities
13.	Input into new policies through pre-decision scrutiny of draft proposals relating to Children's Services
14.	Call-In of Executive decisions relating to Children's Services
15.	Appointing Task and Finish Groups as appropriate

3. Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2019/20

1.	Reviewing the work of the Community Safety Partnership and the effectiveness of local policing and fire and rescue services
2.	Exercising the Council's flood risk management responsibilities by monitoring flood risk activities and partnership working with Towns and Parishes
3.	Scrutinising the Council's Budget development process and the draft Budget for 2020/21
4.	Scrutinising the Wokingham Town Centre regeneration programme, including the Safety and Financial Audits relating to the Market Place highways project
5.	Reviewing the effectiveness of the Council's partnerships with Town and Parish Councils and the voluntary sector
6.	Scrutinising service and policy developments relating to the Council's public facing services and its in-house support services
7.	Reviewing highways and transport issues including the new highways contracts, customer service, car parking and cycling facilities
8.	Reviewing the Business Case supporting the development of the Coppid Beech Park and Ride site
9.	Scrutinising the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement across the Borough
10.	Reviewing the plans to update the Borough Design Guide
11.	Scrutinising the implementation of the new food waste collection service
12.	Scrutinising burial capacity across the Borough and the Council's plans to ensure future capacity
13.	Input into new policies through pre-decision scrutiny of draft proposals
14.	Appointing Task and Finish Groups as appropriate

4. Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2019/20

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

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes 2019/20

Scrutiny Suggestions from Residents

1.	<p>There is no safe (and by safe I mean suitable for a child) cycle route from Finchampstead to Wokingham. You can get from Finchampstead to the Ford garage (Barkham Ride to the Ford garage roundabout) but then the cycle lane stops.</p> <p>Given the huge volumes of traffic which sit on this road, much of which is presumably school traffic, this seems like a really important corridor to build to encourage more people to cycle and get cars off the road.</p> <p>The inspiration can be taken from the fantastic new greenway from FBC to Arborfield - a fully segregated safe place for anyone to cycle.</p>
2.	<p>Disabled parking spaces in the Market Place - Wokingham</p> <p>The signing on the Denmark Street side outside W H Smiths and other shops etc. is signed for disabled and also unloading of goods vehicles plus similar signing for vehicles leading towards Broad Street.</p> <p>There are no other markings on those areas to indicate where each type of parking starts and ends although the relevant legislation does designate the restriction. The effect of the lack of such marking renders the traffic orders unenforceable.</p>
3.	<p>Cycle lanes in the A329 Reading Road</p> <p>The new cycle lane scheme recently introduced along parts of the Reading Road raises some concerns. The original shared cycle/footway facility remains for a substantial length of the route and is signed as such. The new facility takes the cycle route off the shared facility in some lengths but then back onto the shared facility in some places thus introducing some degree of inconsistency and potentially increasing the risk to both cyclists and pedestrians.</p> <p>A further point is that whilst some suitable signing has been erected some of the shared facility sign remains in place which is likely to cause some confusion and risk to users.</p>
4.	<p>Old Woosehill Lane footway widening</p> <p>Some years ago the footway on Woosehill Lane from the junction with Reading Road to Chestnut Avenue was widened resulting in a much narrower carriageway width which had an adverse effect for moving vehicles entering from Chestnut Avenue and especially when vehicles are parked along Woosehill Lane.</p>

	<p>I raised this at the time and a member of the Traffic Management team advised me that the widened footway was to be considered for converting into a shared footway/cycleway. This has not happened.</p> <p>Parking along the affected length has increased over the years but the main problem is that the footway close to the exit from the petrol filling station is used as a parking area to such an extent on occasions that two cars are parked side by side rendering it almost impossible for a pushchair or wheelchair to pass. This practice is totally unsafe but even a single vehicle parked on the footway is unacceptable I would suggest.</p>
5.	<p>Twyford Road speed limit signing</p> <p>Housing developments are taking place between the A329 and the A329M with some existing roads passing through the area of the developments.</p> <p>Some of the existing roads had an existing speed limit with appropriate signing in place. It became apparent that the restrictions had been extended in places and/or the speed limit signed differently to the speed limit order in place and repeater signs had not been erected in places where they should be in accordance with the relevant speed limit regulations.</p> <p>When I raised this matter I was advised that this was a matter being dealt with by the developer(s). As far as I am aware, the highway authority has the overall responsibility for maintaining the appropriate signing and to ensure this is done irrespective of the developer's actions.</p> <p>In relation to items 2 to 5 above - these items raise a question in my mind as to whether the required Safety Audits have been carried out at the various stages and if so why these items have not been resolved during the stages of audits.</p> <p>I also query as to whether the auditors, if any, are completely independent of the designers and Traffic Management Department of Wokingham Council.</p>

This page is intentionally left blank