

Agenda Item 6.

TITLE	Consideration of Requests for Overview and Scrutiny Reviews 2015/2016 and Committees Work Programmes 2015/2016
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 1 June 2015
WARD	None Specific
DIRECTOR	Andrew Moulton, Head of Governance and Improvement Services

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

That a programme of reviews for the forthcoming year is developed. By focusing on appropriate topics the Committee can help improve future policy and provide assurance to residents around the delivery of Council and other local public services.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) That the current Work Programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees as set out in Appendix A be noted;
- 2) That the Committee considers the list of suggested scrutiny review suggestions in Appendix B and decides which suggestions should be added to the Work Programme of the Committee or Overview and Scrutiny Committees taking into the account the Council's Values and Priorities as set out in Appendix C and available resources.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report sets out the on-going work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committees together with a list of new ideas submitted as potential scrutiny review items for the 2015/2016 municipal year. It suggests possible criteria for the Committee to come to a view on which topics to proceed with.

Background

Under the Council's Constitution, scrutiny review suggestions can be submitted at any time throughout the year by Members, Officers or members of the public. This process involves the allocation of topics to the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees or to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee itself.

Analysis of Issues

1) The ongoing work programmes of the Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committees is set out in Appendix A and the Committee should bear these existing commitments in mind when deciding whether to add a review to the programme.

2) The Committee is also asked to note the following scrutiny reviews which are already in progress or due to start in the current municipal year.

- Commuter Parking at or near railways stations, (Corporate Services O & S Committee due to start 30 June);
- Future Services Task and Finish Group, Children's Services O & S Committee;
- Outside Bodies Review, (Community Partnerships Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

New Scrutiny Review Suggestions

3) Five new scrutiny review suggestions have been received to date, as set out in Appendix B.

4) In assessing the new scrutiny review suggestions, the Committee is invited to:

- use the Overview and Scrutiny Review Scoring Chart, (Appendix D) to help assess each suggestion;
- take into account the review selection criteria as previously adopted by the Committee:
 - 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 the Committee;
 - 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, delegated to an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or a Task and Finish Group created to undertake the review?

Format of the Meeting

5) There will be an opportunity for individuals who have submitted a suggestion to briefly introduce it to the Committee for approximately two minutes per suggestion followed by questions from the Committee. It is intended that all the suggestions will be

presented prior to a decision being taken on whether to progress individual suggestions.

Terms of Reference

6) If a review is approved detailed terms of reference will then be drafted by Officers in consultation with the appropriate Director and agreed by the Committee or Task and Finish Group as appropriate.

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)	Undertaking Reviews will involve Officer time from Democratic Services and/or Service Departments.	Yes	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	n/a		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	n/a		

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None

List of Background Papers

None

Contact Kevin Jacob	Service Governance and Improvement Services
Telephone No 0118 974 6058	Email kevin.jacob@wokingham.gov.uk
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