

Agenda Item 6.

TITLE	Work Programme 2021/22
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 24 May 2021
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) review its Work Programme for 2021/22 (Annex A);
- 2) consider the list of service priorities from the Place & Growth and Resources & Assets Directorates;
- 3) prioritise the items in the work programme and allocate items to forthcoming meetings;
- 4) consider any other potential Scrutiny items for consideration during 2021/22.

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 Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee approves work programmes for itself and the Council's three Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

As this is the Committee's first meeting of the new Municipal Year the work programme is set out at Annex A for Members to consider and to prioritise items for future meetings.

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.

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 the Council’s website and social media are used to publicise the development of the work programme and to invite suggestions for items to be included.

Annex A to the report sets out items to be included in the Committee’s work programme for 2021/22. The Committee is requested to consider the list of items and to discuss its priorities for consideration at meetings in 2021/22.

This year the relevant Directorates have been asked to provide a list of priorities for the year ahead to assist the Committee in scheduling items for Overview and Scrutiny. The priorities for Place & Growth and Resources & Assets will be considered at this meeting, whilst the priorities for Communities, Insight, and Change will be considered at a future meeting of the Committee. Relevant Executive Members will be invited along to provide insight into the Service priorities for the municipal year.

Members may also wish to add further items to the work programme and consider how each item will be addressed, e.g. through reports to the Committee or the establishment of time limited Task and Finish groups.

As part of the work programming process, residents, community groups and Town and parish Councils were invited to identify issues to be considered in 2021/22.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe funding pressures, particularly in the face of the COVID-19 crisis. It is therefore imperative that Council resources are focused on the vulnerable and on its highest priorities.

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

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision
None

List of Background Papers
None

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Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1.	Scrutinising the development of the Council's Budget for 2022/23
2.	Reviewing the work of the Community Safety Partnership, the effectiveness of local policing and fire and rescue services
3.	Exercising the Council's flood risk management responsibilities by monitoring flood risk activities and partnership working with Towns and Parishes
4.	Reviewing the Assets Review Programme and the operation of the Council's Property Portfolio Investment Fund
5.	Reviewing the effectiveness of the Council's partnerships with Town and Parish Councils and the voluntary sector, including WBC's protocol and performance in responding to any issues raised
6.	Reviewing whether Sports & Leisure facilities meet the needs of local residents
7.	Scrutinising burial capacity across the Borough and the Council's plans to ensure adequate future capacity
8.	Reviewing library provision across the Borough including how best practice could be adopted
9.	Scrutinising service and policy developments relating to the Council's public facing services and its in-house support services
10.	Reviewing highways and transport issues including highways contracts, customer service, civil parking enforcement, car parking, parking on blind spots and bends, Bus Strategy and cycling infrastructure
11.	Reviewing the Council's Arts and Culture Strategy as it is implemented
12.	Reviewing what is being done to ensure that every resident had the best access to high speed broadband
13.	Reviewing whether public toilet provision is sufficient and located in the right areas
14.	Scrutinising the Council's Housing Services to ensure that the needs of local residents and communities are being met
15.	Scrutinising the operation and performance of the Council-owned companies and shared service arrangements
16.	Scrutinising how WBC responds to complaints related to overgrown pavements
17.	Reviewing how the Council communicates and engages with residents
18.	Appointing Task and Finish Groups as appropriate

Dates of Future Committee Meetings

- **21 Jun 2021 7.00 pm**

Items scheduled: Community Safety Partnership Update; Updates from Executive Members and Directorates

- **1 Sep 2021 7.00 pm**

- **6 Oct 2021 7.00 pm**

Items scheduled: Medium Term Financial Plan Review

- **24 Nov 2021 7.00 pm**

Items scheduled: Medium Term Financial Plan Review

- **13 Dec 2021 7.00 pm**

Items scheduled: Medium Term Financial Plan Review

- **5 Jan 2022 7.00pm**

Items scheduled: Medium Term Financial Plan Review

- **28 Mar 2022 7.00 pm**

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