

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Work Programme 2022-23</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 13 June 2022
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>DIRECTOR</b>	Graham Ebers, Deputy Chief Executive

**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 2022/23 (Annex A);
- 2) prioritise items in the work programme and make an initial allocation of items to forthcoming meetings;
- 3) consider any other potential items for inclusion in the work programme for 2022/23;
- 4) note that additional items can be included in the work programme during the year;
- 5) consider and comment on the proposed Scrutiny Member training programme for 2022/23.

**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 Community Vision and Corporate Delivery 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 initial 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 improved monitoring during the year. As this is the Committee's first meeting in the 2022/23 Municipal Year, the list of work programme items is attached for consideration and prioritisation.

The report also provides details of the proposed Scrutiny Member training programme for 2022/23.

## **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.

At its meeting on 16 March 2022 the Committee agreed the list of items to be included in its work programme for 2022/23 (Annex A). It is not intended that every item in Annex A will be scrutinised in detail during the year. Annex A should be seen as a menu of items from which Members can select their priorities. The Committee is requested to prioritise the list of items and make an initial allocation of items to the following meetings:

- 7 July 2022 – items already earmarked: Climate Emergency Action Plan update; Request to establish a Climate Emergency O&S Committee; Waste Strategy; Bus Improvement Enhanced Partnership.
- 8 September 2022 – items already earmarked: Leader and Chief Executive to discuss future priorities; Q1 2022/23 Performance Management report; Report and Recommendations from the Scrutiny Improvement Review.
- 5 October 2022
- 16 November 2022
- 18 January 2023
- 22 February 2023
- 15 March 2023

Each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees is carrying out a similar exercise and is inviting the relevant Executive Members and Directors to attend a meeting to discuss priorities over the year ahead. The Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive have been invited to attend the Management Committee's meeting on 8 September 2022.

At its meeting on 25 May 2022, the Community and Corporate O&S Committee considered its work programme for 2022/23. The Committee agreed that it would like to consider the following items which are currently within the Management Committee's work programme:

- Local Plan Update;
- Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) Progress;
- Bus Strategy.

Community and Corporate O&S also agreed to establish a Task & Finish Group to review the standards set and achieved in Council managed social housing units compared to units managed by registered providers (Housing Associations).

The current, populated work programmes for each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees are set out in the following Agenda item.

Members of the Community and Corporate O&S Committee also asked for clarification about the role of the Management Committee in determining which items to scrutinise itself vis-à-vis the role of the Community and Corporate O&S Committee. The responsibilities of the two Committees are set out in the Council's Constitution which states that the Management Committee will:

- Manage and update the work programmes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- Itself, or through an Overview and Scrutiny Committee, undertake policy development and review;
- Itself, or through an Overview and Scrutiny Committee, investigate matters of concern referred to it by non-Executive Members, Corporate Leadership Team, members of the public or external organisations;
- Itself, or through an Overview and Scrutiny Committee.....consider any matter affecting the Borough or its inhabitants.

A key role of the Management Committee is to set the overall work programmes for itself and the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees. It allocates items to each Committee to ensure a balanced, achievable programme for each one. Each Committee then allocates Scrutiny items for each of its meetings during the Municipal Year, retaining the flexibility to amend the work programme as and when new issues arise.

### **Scrutiny Member Training**

As highlighted in the earlier report on the Agenda, effective Scrutiny is underpinned by training and support for Members. It is important that Scrutiny Members are confident and well-informed about their roles and the role of Scrutiny in the organisation. Each year a number of training sessions are provided for Members. The proposed sessions for this year are:

- Essentials of Scrutiny – introduction and refresher – 7 June;
- Chairing and Leading Scrutiny;
- Budget Scrutiny;
- Scrutiny of Children's Services;
- Scrutiny of Health and Social Care.

Members are asked to comment on the proposed training sessions and identify any other issues which may be addressed through additional sessions. It is likely that the issue of Member training and support will be raised during the two day visit from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny – June 20 and 21.

## 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 focussed 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	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

### Cross-Council Implications

Effective Overview and Scrutiny helps to drive service improvement, policy development and the achievement of value for money for the Borough's residents.

### Public Sector Equality Duty

Due regard has been given to Council's Public Sector Equality Duty. The issues scrutinised during 2022/23 will raise the profile of Overview and Scrutiny for residents across the Borough, including residents with protected characteristics as defined under the Equality Act 2010. The aim is to achieve better/fairer outcomes and increased value for money for residents.

### Climate Emergency – The Council has declared a Climate Emergency and is committed to playing as full a role as possible – leading by example as well as by exhortation – in achieving a carbon neutral Wokingham Borough by 2030

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has acted as a "critical friend" to the Council's Climate Emergency activities through the work of the Climate Emergency Task & Finish Group. The Task & Finish Group has submitted two detailed reports to the Executive with a number of recommendations for improvement relating to the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

### List of Background Papers

None

<b>Contact</b> Neil Carr	<b>Service</b> Resources and Assets
<b>Telephone No</b> 0118 974 6000	<b>Email</b> neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk
<b>Date</b> 1 June 2022	<b>Version No.</b> 1.0

**O&S Management Committee – Work Programme 2022/23**

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 and Chief Executive to identify future priorities and monitor performance against priorities and targets
3.	Scrutinising WBC's response to the Covid-19 pandemic – including the Council's Recovery Strategy, Green Recovery and the Anti-Poverty Strategy
4.	Scrutinising the underpinning priorities and KPIs for the Corporate Delivery Plan 2020/24 and the Quarterly Performance Management Reports
5.	Scrutinising the Council's Continuous Improvement Programme
6.	Scrutinising the Climate Emergency Action Plan and progress against the recommendations of the Climate Emergency Task & Finish Group – including Active Travel and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on public transport
7.	Scrutinising the Tree Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan Update and progress against the Tree Protection and Biodiversity Task & Finish Group's recommendations
8.	Scrutinising progress on the Local Plan Update and development of the Council's Five Year Land Supply
9.	Scrutinising the Council's Economic Development Strategy and the impact of the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership
10.	Scrutinising the Council's Equality Plan and the Council's compliance with its statutory duties under the Equality Act 2010
11.	Scrutinising the increasing level of homelessness in the Borough and the impact of the cost of living crisis
12.	Scrutinising the emerging Waste Strategy – including public access to the waste and recycling centres post Covid-19
13.	Scrutinising the Council's policies and procedures relating to Unauthorised Traveller Encampments
14.	Scrutinising the Council's Customer Excellence Programme and the improvement plans for the WBC website
15.	Scrutinising the process for the adoption of estate infrastructure following new housing developments – including litter clearance
16.	Scrutinising progress against the Air Quality improvement targets agreed by the Council
17.	Scrutinising the Council's public complaints procedure to align it with best practice across the country

18.	Scrutinising the strategy aimed at lowering transport emissions in order to reduce the impact on health, climate change and the local environment
19.	Scrutinising the impact on the Borough and Council services from incoming refugees/asylum seekers, e.g. from Afghanistan and Ukraine
20.	Scrutinising progress against Motions agreed by full Council
21.	Approving the annual Overview and Scrutiny reports to Council
22.	Undertaking Call-In reviews of Executive decisions as necessary
23.	Appointing Task and Finish Groups as appropriate
24.	Reviewing the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny function and the underpinning support and training provided for Officers and Members – considering the recommendations from the 2022 Scrutiny Improvement Review