

TITLE	Work Programme 2022-23
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee on 7 July 2022
WARD	None Specific
DIRECTOR	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. A key element of effective Scrutiny is the establishment of a clear, focussed work programme.

RECOMMENDATION

The Committee is requested to:

- 1) consider the Member “top 3” priorities set out in the report and review its draft work programme for 2022/23 (Annex A);
- 2) allocate items to upcoming meetings of the Committee in 2022/23;
- 3) note that the work programme is a “living document” with additional items and priorities to be considered during the year;
- 4) consider the establishment of a Task and Finish Group 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. At its meeting on 13 June 2022 Members were requested to highlight their top 3 work programme priorities for further discussion at the July 2022 meeting.

The report highlights Member priorities and recommends that these items are used to populate the work programme for the remaining meetings in 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 13 June 2022 the Committee agreed the list of items to be included in its work programme for 2022/23 (Annex A). From the list of items in Annex A Members were requested to highlight their “top 3” priorities for consideration at the July meeting. The priority items highlighted by Members, to date, were:

- The emerging Waste Strategy – 2 votes.
- Discussions with the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive – 2 votes.
- Impact of increasing levels of homelessness across the Borough, the cost of living crisis and the Anti-Poverty Strategy.
- The Council’s Continuous Improvement Programme.
- Progress against Motions agreed by Council.
- Emissions and Air Quality.
- Adoption of estate infrastructure following new housing development – including litter clearance.

Some Members also highlighted the Local Plan Update and Five Year Land Supply. It should be noted that, at the previous meeting, it was confirmed that the Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny would scrutinise the Local Plan Update (with associated issues).

The Committee is requested to prioritise the list of Member priorities and the longer list of items (Annex A) and allocate items to the following meetings:

- 8 September 2022 – items already earmarked: Q1 2022/23 Performance Management report; Waste Strategy; Report and Recommendations from the Scrutiny Improvement Review; Impact on the Borough of refugees/asylum seekers.
- 5 October 2022
- 16 November 2022 – Review of Council Motions.
- 18 January 2023 – Consultation on the O&S work programmes for 2023/24.
- 22 February 2023
- 15 March 2023

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

to give consideration to the establishment of a Task and Finish Group to provide detailed Scrutiny to one or more items on the work programme during 2022/23.

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 submitted two detailed reports to the Executive (2020 & 2021) with a number of recommendations for improvement relating to the Climate Emergency Action Plan. The Management Committee is due to consider a request to establish a Climate Emergency Overview and Scrutiny Committee

List of Background Papers

Report to the June 2022 meeting

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Date 28 June 2022	Version No. 1.0

O&S Management Committee – Draft Work Programme Items 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

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