

For publication

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/21

Meeting: Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum

Date: 17 September, 2020

Report by: Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer

For publication

1.0 Purpose of report

1.1 To provide the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum with the proposed overview and scrutiny committees' (OSC) work programme 2020/21 for approval.

2.0 Recommendations

2.1 To consider and approve the overall overview and scrutiny work programme 2020/21 for recommendation to the council's OSCs.

3.0 Background

3.1 The overall purpose of the overview and scrutiny function is to help the council achieve the best it can for its communities through ensuring robust decision making. Alignment of overview and scrutiny work with council priorities and resource allocations whenever possible will enable the best

opportunity for the overview and scrutiny function to add value to those decisions and be more effective in its work.

- 3.2 The overview and scrutiny work programme will facilitate advanced planning, resource allocation and pro-active working with members, officers and other stakeholders to support the council in its decision making. The programme of work also makes transparent to all stakeholders, internal and external, what the forward planned work of OSCs will be.

4.0 **Work programming process**

- 4.1 Over the past four years, scrutiny has been using a work programming format that engages all scrutiny, backbench and Cabinet members in the process by holding interactive workshops. Unfortunately, we were not able to continue with this format in 2020 as the Government restrictions that were put in place in response to the coronavirus outbreak meant that physical meetings were not possible.
- 4.2 A report was submitted to the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum in June, 2020 which explained the alternative arrangements for setting the work programme this year. In summary, a short survey was carried out to gather information from members to produce a long list of topics that could be prioritised to form the work programme for 2020/21. Following this, the Chairs and Vice-Chairs met with the Democratic and Scrutiny Officers in May to discuss the outcomes of the scrutiny survey and to plan for the restart of scrutiny following the brief pause in meetings during April.
- 4.3 It was agreed that the first meetings of each committee in June and July would include a presentation on the overview of the impact of Covid in relation to the services which fell under the remit of each committee. In addition, one or two further topics were chosen for each committee based on the number of

members who had put them forward and prioritised depending on impact on the public and recovery post Covid.

4.4 The Chairs and Vice-Chairs met again in the summer to carry out prioritisation of the remaining topics using a scoring system based on the TOPIC methodology. Full details of the long list of items from the survey and TOPIC methodology can be found in the [report to the Forum on 25 June, 2020](#). From this, five or six topics were chosen for inclusion on the work programme of each committee.

5.0 **Work Programme 2020/21**

5.1 The proposed work programme is attached at Appendix A and was circulated to scrutiny members for comment on 28 August, 2020. The overall programme, once approved, will be recommended to the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee and Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee for adoption. The work programme documents can then be developed for each of these OSCs to provide more detail needed for each committee's work.

5.2 The attached work programme includes business items identified for scrutiny project group work and items for reports to OSC meetings.

5.3 Also included in the work programme are standing items carried forward:

- i. statutory Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee meetings;
- ii. important routine items including reports on the budget, Council Plan and corporate performance;
- iii. any items on the OSC monitoring schedule;
- iv. routine scrutiny management reports.

5.4 Members and officers should also be aware that there may be business items arising during the year that require expedient scheduling within the work programme. For example, these may include any 'call-in' or petition received requiring OSC attention. Cabinet members and managers may also request to bring further reports on business, not included in the work programme and OSCs need to remain responsive to important issues if they arise. Such matters may need to be accommodated which could mean some displacement of other, less urgent work programmed business.

6.0 **Recommendations**

6.1 To consider and approve the overall overview and scrutiny work programme 2020/21 for recommendation to the council's OSCs.

7.0 **Reason for recommendations**

7.1 To enable effective planning of the work of the overview and scrutiny function and thereby its contribution to the work of the council.

Glossary of Terms	
OSC	<i>Overview and Scrutiny Committees</i>

Document information

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Background documents	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
<i>This must be made available to the public for up to 4 years.</i>	
Appendices to the report	
Appendix A	OSC Work Programme 2020/21