

Report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Subject: Scrutiny Work Programme

Date: 5 July 2021

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1 Purpose of the Report

To provide an update on the scrutiny work programme.

Recommendation(s)

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- 1) Considers the information update from previous working groups;
- 2) Consider and agree the final report and recommendations Domestic Abuse working group;
- 3) Considers the Cabinet response to the Surface Water Flooding working group;
- 4) Identifies areas for examination in the 2021/22 work programme; and
- 5) Considers if there are any issues in the Forward Plan which require additional information.

2. Scrutiny Working Groups

2.1. Work programme 2019/20

2.2 Economic Development Working Group, The Opportunity to Intervene – for economic and social reasons.

The report and recommendations from this review was presented to Cabinet on the 19 March 2020. A written response to the recommendations was presented to the 7 September 2020 committee accepting that the use of the matrix designed by the working group as a

useful tool when to considering the wider benefits of potential sites/schemes through the Commercial Property Investment Strategy.

To update members of the committee on the use of the matrix the following response was received:

At this point, there has not had the opportunity to use the matrix. The economic development team have been prioritised helping with the response to Covid and supporting businesses with securing Covid grants, reopening and/or retaining as many local jobs as possible. This means that currently the team has not been looking at opportunities for new projects.

2.3 Response to question on Policy Advisors

At a previous meeting a general question was put to Cabinet Members asking how the Policy Advisors are used, and is their role necessary, beneficial and cost effective.

The role of the Policy Advisor as notified at the Annual General Meeting on 22 May 2019 was created to support Cabinet Members in their respective portfolios with specific regard to the development and progression of Gedling Plan actions. The CIPFA/SOLACE publication 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' sets out 7 core principles, one of which is 'developing the capacity of the entity, including the capability of its leadership and the individuals *within it*'. The creation of the Policy Advisors meets this objective, and enables new and existing members to become more closely involved in the workings of the Cabinet and providing opportunities to extend their knowledge base and skills.

How are they used?

The Policy Advisors undertake a variety of tasks to provide input and support to the Cabinet Members, details of which are reported on a regular basis to the Leader, with the most recent report sent to Cabinet on 11 February 2021.

Is their role necessary, beneficial and cost effective?

The Chief Executive has canvassed each of the Cabinet Members for their views, and the overwhelming response is that the Policy Advisors are absolutely needed, and the value of this support in allowing Cabinet Members to undertake more strategic work should not be underestimated.

2.4 Domestic Abuse and Access to Emergency Accommodation

Working group members: Councillors S Barnes, Boyle, Clunie, Rachael Ellis, Roxanne Ellis and Paling.

The final report and recommendations arising from the working group are attached at **Appendix 1**. Subject to the approval of the Committee, the report will be submitted to the next available Cabinet meeting. The relevant Portfolio Holder will be asked to provide a written response within 28 days.

2.5 Flooding

Working group members: Councillors Adams, Boyle, Clunie, Greensmith, Paling, M Smith and S Smith.

The final report and recommendations were presented to the April Committee. The report was submitted to Cabinet on 19 May and the response is attached at **Appendix 2**. Members' are recommended to consider and discuss the response.

3 2021/2022 Scrutiny Work Programme

3.1 One of the main roles of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is establishing and managing the Council's programme of scrutiny work.

This includes:

- agreeing a programme of work for the municipal year
- monitoring progress of the programme throughout the year
- developing reports and recommendations on issues of local concern
- evaluating the progress of any recommendations made.

Effective work programming is important for effective scrutiny. When setting the work programme the Committee should aim to have clear priorities for what it is hoping to achieve and how they want to do it.

The work programme, which is a flexible plan, outlines the programme for the coming municipal year and is usually developed at the first meeting after the Annual Council. The programme is drawn together by the Chair and members of the Committee and can include issues put forward by Members, topics that arise during discussion with Portfolio Holders and senior officers, concerns generated from the Corporate Complaints Policy,

the Gedling Plan, results of the Gedling Conversation, performance data and potential issues arising from corporate priorities or the Forward Plan.

- 3.2** Regular items in the programme include scrutiny of Portfolio Holders with a focus on performance, consideration of the Corporate Risk Management Scorecard, examination of complaints data and examining the work of the local Community Safety Partnership. The committee has earlier agreed at the April committee to continue with the programme of Portfolio Holder attendance. When a Portfolio Holder attends it is a requirement of the committee that members take the opportunity to use data available to scrutinise issues of concern within the Portfolio. Issues relating to performance targets being met, complaints received or any emerging themes relating to the Portfolio that require attention should be considered. A rolling programme of attendance by Portfolio Holders and relevant Corporate Directors for 2021/22 will be arranged. Members will be asked prior to each meeting which specific service areas they would like to examine. Questions for Portfolio Holders will be requested in advance of each meeting, however 'ad hoc' questions may be put forward at the meeting itself. Information regarding Cabinet and Portfolio responsibilities is attached at **Appendix 3**
- 3.3** A draft 2021/22 work programme is attached at **Appendix 4** which includes items already scheduled including dates for performance review information and the mandatory annual review of the work of the Local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships
- 3.4** The Committee is asked to discuss and identify issues they would like to include in the work programme for 2020/21. This is for inclusion in the programme both for Committee meetings and also for detailed examination by task and finish working groups. Members are asked to consider all the suggestions put forward at committee and decide how to address the identified topics. Items put forward could be included in the Committee agenda, be addressed by short, time limited reviews of two or three meetings, or be programmed for longer in depth examination. Members are reminded when identifying issues for examination consideration should be given to how the review will result in improvements for local people.
- 3.5** A copy of the Forward Plan which sets out details of key and non-key decisions which the Cabinet, individual portfolio holders or officers expect to take during the next four months period is attached at **Appendix 5**. A

key decision is one that has financial implications over £500,000 or one that significantly affects two or more wards. This is included to make members aware of planned decisions and to assist them to consider if there are any decisions about which they may want further information.

4 Financial Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5 Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implication arising from this report.

6 Equalities Implications

6.1 There are no equality implications arising from this report.

7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

7.1 There are no carbon reduction/environmental sustainability implications arising from this report.

8 Appendices

Appendix 1 - Domestic Abuse Working Group draft report

Appendix 2 – Executive Response to Flooding Working Group Report

Appendix 3 – Cabinet Portfolios

Appendix 4 – Draft Committee Work Programme

Appendix 5 - Executive Forward Plan