

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
THURSDAY 25 MAY 2017

COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2017/2018

REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC DIRECTOR

(Contact: Christine Gore, Tel: (01285) 623605)

(The decisions on this matter will be resolutions)

1. PURPOSE

To assist the Committee in considering its Work Programme for 2017/2018.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee determines its Work Programme for 2017/2018 having regard to the information contained in this report and the recommendations agreed by Council.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. At the first meeting of the Committee in the new municipal year initial consideration is given to the Work Programme for the year having regard to the approach to scrutiny work adopted by Council on 22 October 2008, the intention of which was that work programmes should comprise fewer more strategic issues. These would probably be key policy areas either reviewing implemented policies or input to future policy development which the Committee would investigate over several meetings with the aim of adding value.
- 3.2. At that time it was agreed to adopt a “toolkit” approach in deciding whether a major review or Working Party should be implemented. This would initially be completed by the relevant Chairman, Vice Chairman and Strategic Director so as to ensure that all suggested reviews would be subject to a series of criteria before they could proceed. A copy of the “toolkit” is attached as Appendix A.
- 3.3. It is not intended that the ‘Toolkit’ approach be used for small reviews requiring only a brief report. There will still be the opportunity to bring forward one-off reports/papers on particular issues of interest to the Committee outside of the normal Work Programme but it will also be necessary to maintain a general overview of the ways in which external agencies are responding to community concerns including when necessary inviting representatives to attend meetings of the Committee. The inclusion of a standing agenda item for Members questions also provides the opportunity for Members to raise ‘hot topics’.
- 3.4. The Committee is invited to consider which topics are considered the priorities for a strategic review in line with the agreed approach to scrutiny for inclusion in the 2017/2018 Work Programme. A draft programme incorporating items rolled forward from last year is attached at Appendix B and the areas of responsibility of the Committee are shown at appendix C.

4. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

In accordance with the Constitution of the Council, Committee has the power to investigate any matters it considers relevant to its work area, and to make recommendations to the Council, the Executive or any other Committee or Sub-Committee of the Council as it sees fit.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

6. REASONS

To enable the Committee to review its Work Programme.

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Strategic Director

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Date: 2 May 2017

Background Papers
None

SCRUTINY TOOLKIT/ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

The potential scrutiny issue should:

- Be of local and preferably current concern
- Have a clear purpose
- Be linked to the Council's corporate objectives
- Be capable of being influenced by the Committee
- Be of manageable scope – focussed rather than too wide ranging
- Be of sufficient scope to warrant a scrutiny review – not something that can easily be fixed by meeting with the service provider or, for example, a future officer presentation or report
- Not be being scrutinised by another Scrutiny Committee"

In addition, the following should be considered:

- Is there a minimum of, say, four councillors who wish to participate in the review (where a working group is to be established) or who wish to
- Does it require any financial resources?
- How much Officer time would be required?
- Does the concern on the issue extend to the public?

Once a matter has been agreed for inclusion in the work programme, the following considerations should form the basis of the planning of the review:

- How long should the review be scheduled to take?
- How will we judge whether the review was successful?
- Will there be distinct stages to the review?
- What documentation/evidence/research may be needed and why?
- Will there be a need for site visits, where and why?
- Who might be called as witnesses and why?
- How might the cabinet/executive be called to account?
- What challenges might this raise for scrutiny members?
- What support will be required from officers?
- How will we deal with public relations/media interest?
- How will we engage with the public?
- What other issues or barriers need to be addressed?

	Work Area	Comments	Meeting / Anticipated Completion Date	Originator
1	RAF Brize Norton	Meetings of the Liaison Group are on-going.	On-going for periodic updates	E & S
2	Oxfordshire Health Care Transformation Programme	At its meeting held on 12 March the Committee gave consideration to the Council's response to the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group in relation to Phase One of its consultation on the Oxfordshire Healthcare Transformation Programme. Consultation on Phase Two of the Transformation Programme will take place later this summer.	On-going as required	E & S
3	Police, Community Safety and CDRP	The Committee receives an annual update from the Local Police Area Commander regarding policing priorities for the area.	September 2017	Council
4	Elements of the Local Development Framework (LDF) as appropriate	The approval of the Local Plan is a statutory process. Stage 2 of the Examination hearings commenced on Tuesday 9 May. The Inspector appointed to undertake the Examination has clearly indicated his intention to see it through both Stage 2 and Stage 3, the hearings for which will take place in July.	On-going as required	E & S
5	Welfare Reform Act – Meeting with Registered Social Landlords	In 2016 the Committee requested a report on the operation of the choice based lettings system and housing support arrangements. At the last scheduled meeting it was agreed that this be deferred until September 2017	September 2017	E & S

	Work Area	Comments	Meeting / Anticipated Completion Date	Originator
6	Leisure Management Contract Working Party	<p>In 2016 the Committee established a Working Party to give consideration to the procurement of the leisure management contract and delivery of the current service.</p> <p>Having met on three occasions, Members were content that appropriate steps were being taken to ensure that the new contract would deliver a high quality service and agreed that no further meetings would be held until the new contract was in place.</p>	On-going	E & S
7	Deer Park Medical Centre	<p>In October 2016 the Committee established a Working Party to explore options by which primary care provision might be retained at Deer Park.</p> <p>The Working Party met on two occasions and further meetings were postponed pending consideration by the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The Joint HOSC confirmed that it considered the closure to represent a substantial change in the level of service provision and referred the matter to the Secretary of State for determination.</p> <p>The Secretary of State's decision is still awaited.</p> <p>The surgery has now closed and many patients have transferred to other practices. Healthwatch and the Patient's Forum are assisting those yet to register with alternative practices.</p>	On-going	

**Economic and Social O&S Committee
Areas of Responsibility**

Planning and Local Plan

The committee has responsibility for scrutiny of the planning function.

At the current time the Local Plan is being developed and the second hearing session has now been postponed to allow the Council to carry out further work. Suggested changes to the plan will be reported to Cabinet and Council (expected to be in September) before submission to the Inspector.

The revised Local Plan timetable was agreed by Cabinet in March.

A progress report on the existing plan is also received on an annual basis.

Housing and Benefits

There have been a number of changes regarding housing matters in recent months including the introduction, on a trial basis, of a Digital Nominations Scheme. The committee has a liaison role with housing providers in the district and it is anticipated that a special meeting will be held with Registered Social Landlords to discuss current issues and challenges.

In addition changes to the benefits regime including the introduction of Universal Credit is a major change for the district council.

Health Issues

This is a very wide ranging area of work and covers many aspects of the health agenda. Scrutiny of health matters is largely through the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the council appoints a representative to serve on this body who can take forward the views of the council.

The committee also has a role in respect of consultations on health matters and it is anticipated that there will be a county wide consultation on community hospital provision later this year, which the Committee should properly consider and respond to in some detail.

Social Care

Whilst generally services relating to children, adults and the elderly are not a direct responsibility of this council, they do impact on residents in the district.

Members are aware of potential funding and service cuts to some services and this may be an area where the committee will wish to respond to consultations and possible changes to service delivery in the district.

Leisure

The council uses a contractor, currently Greenwich Leisure Limited, to deliver its leisure services and the letting of a new contract is in the early stages. The Committee may wish to monitor the progress of the procurement process.

Business Issues

The economy of the district is an area that the committee has looked at in the past particularly in light of new retail developments within the district and elsewhere. The Committee may wish to maintain a watching brief on these issues and receive regular update reports.