

**WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL**  
**ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY 13 JUNE 2019**

**COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2019/2020**  
**REPORT OF THE HEAD OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

**(Contact: Keith Butler, Tel: (01993) 861521)**

(The decisions on this matter will be resolutions)

**1. PURPOSE**

To assist the Committee in considering its Work Programme for 2019/2020.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

That the Committee determines its Work Programme for 2019/2020 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 2018/2019 Work Programme. A draft programme incorporating items rolled forward from last year is attached at Appendix B.

**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.

Keith Butler  
Head of Democratic Services

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Date: 10 April 2019

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?

## Appendix B

	<b>Work Area</b>	<b>Comments</b>	<b>Meeting / Anticipated Completion Date</b>	<b>Originator</b>
<b>1</b>	Thames Water Flood Prevention and Infrastructure Issues	<p>The Committee has already undertaken significant work in respect of flooding issues.</p> <p>Thames Water has agreed to keep the Committee updated on progress with the strategies.</p> <p>At the meetings in June and July discussion took place about representatives of Thames Water and the Environment Agency being invited to attend an event to respond to Members' concerns regarding sewage treatment infrastructure and water quality in rivers in the District.</p> <p>This is took place on Thursday 4 October.</p> <p>At the last meeting it was agreed that a similar event would be held later in the year.</p>	October 2019	Environment O&S
<b>2</b>	Open Space Grass Cutting	<p>Following the County Council's withdrawal of funding, West Oxfordshire had agreed to supplement the resultant shortfall in grass cutting.</p> <p>The Council has also been looking at options for a more coherent approach including collaborative working with town/parish councils but has found it difficult to make progress.</p>	Adjourned for the present to be revisited when resources allow.	Environment O&S
<b>3</b>	Implementation of Car Parking Strategy	<p>At the June meeting it was noted that the Cabinet was to give consideration to the implementation of the Car Parking Strategy and agreed that this item be added to the Work Programme.</p> <p>At the July meeting there was discussion around the enforcement of on-street parking and the adequacy of bay markings, which are the responsibility of the County Council and the Group Manager undertook to establish whether other districts enforced on-street parking on behalf of the county.</p>	Further updates will be provided as appropriate.	Environment O&S

4	Low Carbon and Environmental Plan - Biodiversity	<p>The WODC Low Carbon and Environmental Plan was approved in February 2014.</p> <p>Members receive regular updates on progress with actions in the plan.</p> <p>In considering a report on 12 July, the Committee agreed to request an update from planning officers on biodiversity and how it is integrated with the planning function.</p> <p>The Cabinet is due to consider a report in June 2019.</p>	On-going	Environment O&S
5	Environmental Regulations	<p>At its meeting held on 21 July 2016 the Committee agreed to monitor the aftermath of Brexit and the dismantling of the Department for Energy and Climate Change in relation to environmental laws and regulations and, in particular, two issues with a direct bearing on West Oxfordshire; air quality and flood alleviation measures.</p>	On-going	Environment O&S
6	Oxfordshire Energy Strategy	<p>A report on the Oxfordshire Energy Strategy will be submitted to this Committee prior to its consideration by Cabinet – this has been deferred until July 2019.</p>	July/August 2019	
7	Single Use Plastics	<p>Update report from the working party &amp; officers</p>	Update to June 2019 meeting & Ongoing	Environment O&S
8	Waste Collection Data	<p>Waste Team to provide tonnage data for plastics and other waste streams e.g glass for comparison</p>	Ongoing / Rolling item to each meeting	Environment O&S
9	Notice of Motion – Equality and the Environment	<p>At its meeting held on 24 April the Council referred the Notice of Motion on Equality and the Environment to this Committee and the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p>	A report appears as Agenda Item No. 10	Council