

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL
FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY 3 JUNE 2015
COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2015/2016
REPORT OF FRANK WILSON, STRATEGIC DIRECTOR
(Contact: Frank Wilson, Tel: (01993) 861291)

(The decisions on this matter will be resolutions)

1. PURPOSE

To assist the Committee in considering its Work Programme for 2015/2016.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee determines its Work Programme for 2015/2016 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 a limited number of 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 at 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 2015/2016 Work Programme. A draft programme incorporating items rolled forward from last year and any items that have been submitted for consideration by members is attached at Appendix B.

4. ALTERNATIVES/OPTIONS

In accordance with the Constitution of the Council, the 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.

Frank Wilson
Strategic Director

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Date: 13 May 2015

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?

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2015/2016				
	Work Area	Comments	Meeting / Anticipated Completion Date	Originator
Items Originated by the Committee				
1	Affordable Housing Working Party	In February 2015 it was agreed to establish a Working Party to give consideration to alternative methods by which affordable housing developments could be financed.	December 2015	FMOS
2	Rural Broadband Project	To monitor and review the project for high speed rural broadband.		A report was considered in December 2014 and an update was provided at the last meeting. It was agreed that further updates be provided at key stages of the project. Representatives of the Cotswold Broadband project group are to attend this meeting to provide up to date information.
3	2020 Vision Project	Reports will be brought forward as the project develops.		FMOS It was agreed at the December 2014 meeting that the Committee should monitor the 2020 Vision Project. It was agreed that further updates would be provided as appropriate.

4	Service Efficiency Reviews	In February 2012 it was agreed that Service Heads be invited to attend Committee meetings to discuss the operation of their services.	Strategic Director to agree programme with Chairman.	<p>FMOS</p> <p>Having regard to the significant demands placed upon senior staff by the on-going evolution of the 2020 Vision Project, Members were invited to consider if there were any particular service areas they would wish to consider.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Shared Head of Revenues and Housing Support be invited to attend a future meeting once the new service had been given the opportunity of 'bedding in'</p>
5	Performance Indicators	To receive information on performance indicators relating to Corporate Resources, Business Information and Change, Customer Services, Revenues and Benefits, and Legal and Democratic Services.	Reports on Performance Indicators are considered on a quarterly basis.	
6	Treasury Management Activity and Performance	To receive information on treasury management and the performance of in-house and external fund managers' Activity.	Reports on treasury management activity and performance are considered on a quarterly basis.	The Council's treasury management advisers, Arlingclose, are to attend this meeting to offer their advice on the remaining balance of the SWIP.

7	Budget	To consider the initial draft base budgets, draft fees and charges for and the latest Capital Programme for the current and future years.	December 2015	The Cabinet is required to consult Overview and Scrutiny Committees on its budget proposals in accordance with the Council's Constitution.
8	Medium Term Financial Strategy	To consider the annual refresh of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.	A report is submitted on an annual basis	
9	Investment Property Review	To advise Members of current property investments and their performance since the last review.	A report is submitted on an annual basis	