

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2nd July 2013

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME PLANNING EVENT – REPORT TO COMMITTEE

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Ward(s) Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	N/A
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The attached report details the feedback received from Members who participated in the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Planning event on 12th June 2013. During the course of this event a significant number of topics were proposed as being suitable for further scrutiny.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to decide whether any of the topics suggested should be reviewed during the year. As part of this process Members are asked to consider the evidence basis for each of the proposed topics as well as the resource implications.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE

- 1) which topics would be suitable to review as Task Group exercises;**
- 2) which topics would be suitable for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider during the year;**
- 3) which of the proposed topics require no further action; and**
- 4) that the report be noted.**

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Planning Event was held on Wednesday 12th June 2013. The event, which was attended by 14 Members, was delivered as a scrutiny training session. During the event Members were provided with an overview of the powers of scrutiny and received information about the current strategic considerations for Council services.
- 3.2 As part of the event Members participated in groups in a workshop activity. The aim of this workshop was to provide Members with an opportunity to identify topics that could be reviewed during the year. A full list of subjects suggested during the event, together with background information and key considerations,

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2nd July 2013

can be viewed in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report. At the end of the workshop session each group was invited to agree three priority topics (Appendix 3).

- 3.3 As part of the workshop exercise each group was asked to consider the evidence basis for reviewing the topics that had been proposed. It is considered best practice in Overview and Scrutiny to assess this evidence so that the available member and officer resources are prioritised effectively. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is also invited to consider the evidence when determining whether any of the suggested topics should be subject to scrutiny.
- 3.4 At Redditch Borough Council there is a constitutional requirement for a scoping document, detailing terms of reference, to be completed for any Task Group exercises. The content of the scoping document is used by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as the basis for deciding whether a Task Group review should be undertaken. As such, Members are asked to note that, whilst topics potentially suitable for Task Group exercises may be identified from the list of subjects detailed in Appendix 1, no final decision will be made about any Task Group until a scoping document has been submitted for the consideration of the Committee.
- 3.5 There is the possibility that the Committee will conclude that, whilst some of the suggested topics might be appropriate to investigate, they would not be suitable for a Task Group exercise. These subjects might, however, be suitable for the Committee to consider at a scheduled public meeting. The Committee's work Programme should be considered when deciding suitable dates to receive reports or presentations on these topics.

Financial Implications

- 3.6 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. However, in line with constitutional requirements any Overview and Scrutiny reports completed during the year, including Task Group reports, will need to address the financial implications of recommendations made to the Executive Committee or other bodies.

Legal Implications

- 3.7 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. However, in line with constitutional requirements any Overview and Scrutiny reports completed during the year, including Task Group reports, will need to address the legal implications of recommendations made to the Executive Committee or other bodies.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.8 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider existing resource commitments when determining which subjects to review during the year.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

2nd July 2013

- 3.9 The Committee has already agreed to participate in the Joint Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Scrutiny Task Group in 2013/14. Two Members of the Committee, Councillors Mason and Hopkins, will be involved as the lead and substitute representatives respectively on this review. One of the Democratic Services Officers with lead responsibility for Overview and Scrutiny will also be involved in providing assistance to this exercise.
- 3.10 The two Democratic Services Officers with lead responsibility for Overview and Scrutiny at the Council have the capacity to effectively support a single Task Group each at any one time alongside the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This number of scrutiny exercises provides Members with the spare capacity to respond to issues that may arise unexpectedly during the year and which might require an urgent response.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.11 Consideration of the needs and priorities of customers represents best practice in the Overview and Scrutiny process. By focusing on issues that interest residents Members can ensure that resources are allocated to issues that address key concerns of the local community. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is therefore asked to consider the extent to which each of the proposed topics reflects the needs and priorities of local residents when deciding whether to look at these items.
- 3.12 A number of the subjects identified by Members during the event do not relate to services delivered by Redditch Borough Council. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is entitled to scrutinise any issues that may impact on the local community, including services provided by external partner organisations. Members should not therefore feel constrained to focus on areas within the remit of the Council.
- 3.13 There are no equalities and diversity implications arising directly from this report. However, in line with constitutional requirements any Overview and Scrutiny reports completed during the year, including Task Group reports, would need to address the equalities and diversity implications of recommendations made to the Executive Committee or other bodies.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

No risks have been identified.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Planning Event –
Workshop Feedback.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE**

2nd July 2013

Appendix 2 - All Suggested Topics.

Appendix 3 - Priority Topics (Selected by Each Group)

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