

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT	AGENDA ITEM No.
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TITLE OF REPORT: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2011/12

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER

1. SUMMARY

1.1 This report invites the Committee to consider its work programme for 2011/12.

2. FORWARD PLAN

2.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

3. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2011/12

3.1 In the past, the Committee has focussed its work programme around the Forward Plan, portfolio holder presentations and reports on the outcomes from task and finish groups.

3.2 The Forward Plan for June 2011 is attached at appendix A. This allows scrutiny of the Cabinet’s key decisions, although it does have some disadvantages because the Forward Plan:

- a) Whilst covering high level key decisions, effectively covers only a small percentage of the Council’s work;
- b) is subject to change, which can disrupt the Committee’s agenda;
- c) covers a limited time period, so the Committee cannot set its work programme for the whole year in one go;
- d) contains items at an advanced stage of discussion where the scope for amendment is small.

3.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is currently required under the terms of the Council’s Constitution ***‘To consider the Forward Plan and comment as appropriate prior to any decision being made’***. This means that whilst other areas of work may be considered and included, it is equally important that this formal function of scrutiny should remain visible within the committee’s published work programme.

3.4 The Committee is invited to consider items for its work programme for 2011/12.

Table 1: Outline Work Programme

19 July 11	Cllr Lynda Needham – Leader of the Council (tbc)
20 Sept 11	Portfolio Holder Presentation (tbc)
6 Dec 11	Portfolio Holder Presentation (tbc)

17 Jan 12	Portfolio Holder Presentation (tbc)
7 February 12	Portfolio Holder Presentation (tbc)
13 Mar 12	Portfolio Holder Presentation (tbc) Overview & Scrutiny Committee Annual Report

4. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

- 4.1 The Committee is also invited to suggest topics which could be looked at in more detail as task and finish groups.
- 4.2 The Committee is also invited to discuss how Task and Finish Groups are conducted, scheduled and resourced. The recent Task and Finish Group review of the Implementation of the Parking Strategy was conducted and concluded in a single day, akin to central government's select committee format, and a model adopted for some reviews at County Council level. This appears to have worked well with good participation by a number of witnesses and NHDC officers, and a small number of recommendations for improvement being agreed. These will form part of the report of the group back to Overview and Scrutiny at its next committee.
- 4.3 Whilst this format would certainly work for some reviews in the future, with significant emphasis being placed on background material and briefing being made available ahead of the single scrutiny day, it may be that a longer process of review should remain for other areas of work. For example the recent Waste Review could not have been conducted effectively in a single day. It is recommended that any future reviews be carefully scheduled and time limited in order to remain most effective, true to their original scope and timely in terms of the recommendations arising from them. A clear determination at the outset of the size of review and its potential resource implications will enable officers to ensure sufficient support is made to individual reviews and to programme them into their service planning accordingly.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 Members are asked to consider the Committee's work programme for 2011/12.

6. REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 To enable the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to plan and carry out its workload efficiently and effectively.

7. CONTACT OFFICERS

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8. APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix A – Forward Plan June 2011