

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
22 SEPTEMBER 2015**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

20

TITLE OF REPORT: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY OFFICER

PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR JULIAN CUNNINGHAM

1. SUMMARY

1.1 The Committee's work programme for 2015/16.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 The Committee is asked to consider and comment on its work programme.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 To enable the Committee to plan its work effectively.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 None.

5. CONSULTATION WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS AND WARD MEMBERS

5.1 None.

6. FORWARD PLAN

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

7. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS

7.1 The Task and Finish Group on the **Quality of Council Reports** will begin this month. Its membership is Cllrs Henry, Hemingway, Morris, Mantle and Jarvis. It will be conducted differently, with the Scrutiny Officer doing much of the work beforehand so members are better briefed about issues before the first meeting. This task and finish group should last 4-8 weeks with a report to this Committee in December or January.

7.2 The Committee decided at its last meeting that the **Council's Approach to Managing Larger Projects** should be its next task and finish group, and should run alongside the review of the Quality of the Council's Reports. A draft scope which has been seen by the Chairman is attached at **Appendix A** for the Committee's consideration. Once this is agreed, nominations will be sought from Group Leaders and the scope finalised with the Chair of the Task and Finish Group. A report should be ready for the Committee's meeting in January or March.

- 7.3 The scope includes different types of projects for the Committee and the task and finish group to choose from - different sites in the district, construction vs non-construction, NHDC alone v partnership working. I have provisionally dispensed with the section on expected outcomes – It doesn't really make much sense to anticipate the outcome before the inquiry. Nor is a lead officer included, as the Committee has indicated that it wishes task and finish groups to be member led in future although officers will still play a part in the review. It is proposed that the Scrutiny Officer undertakes an initial literature review on each chosen project on behalf of the TFG to establish some basic information for members.
- 7.4 After this, members have indicated they would like to look at **recharges** which will take the Committee's task and finish group programme to the end of the civic year. The Scrutiny Officer will prepare a draft scope on recharges for the Committee's meeting in December.
- 7.5 A list of other possible topics previously suggested by members is listed below:
- a review of NHDC's Document Centre;
 - keeping North Herts tidy;
 - balancing cost savings against possible environmental impacts;
 - Section 106 Agreements.

8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETINGS

- 8.1 The work programme for the Committee's meetings is attached at **Appendix B**. The Scrutiny Officer will ask attending Portfolio Holders to address any previous resolutions of the Committee on homelessness, the Common Housing Allocation Scheme, performance data etc.
- 8.2 At its last meeting, the Committee requested that Cllr Hone, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and IT attend in December. It has since been established that the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee will retain most of their existing responsibilities but in a modified form, reviewing rather than scrutinising the Council's finances. The Committee may therefore wish to review its invitation to Cllr Hone.
- 8.3 This Committee is the Council's **Crime and Disorder Committee** which is required to meet in that capacity at least once a year. Community safety falls within Cllr Hunter's responsibilities so it may be sensible to invite Hertfordshire Constabulary to attend in December and combine this with Cllr Hunter's presentation on Community Engagement and Rural Affairs. The review of the Council's grant schemes is also scheduled for Cabinet in December.
- 8.4 Cllr Lovewell could then attend in January, Cllr Needham in March and Cllr Gray in June 2016.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None.

10. FINANCIAL AND RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 None.

11. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 None.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 The Equality Act 2010 came into force on the 1 October 2010, a major piece of legislation. The Act also created a new Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force on the 5 April 2011. There is a general duty, described below, that public bodies must meet, and this is underpinned by more specific duties which are designed to help meet them.
- 12.2 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of its functions: give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation; advance equality of opportunity; and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.3 There are no equalities implications arising from this report.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 There are no social value implications arising from this report.

14. APPENDICES

- 14.1 Appendix A – Draft Scope: The Council’s Management of Larger Projects
14.2 Appendix B – Programme for Committee Meetings
14.3 Appendix C – Forward Plan for 12 August 2015

15. CONTACT OFFICERS

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16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 None.