

**BUSINESS SUPPORT
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
9 DECEMBER 2008
WORK PROGRAMME**

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Summary

This item advises Members of the current work programme and allows them to adjust it in the light of latest priorities, issues and circumstances. It gives Members the opportunity to shape and direct the Committee's activities over the year.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 Under Chapter 4 – Rules, paragraph 22.1 (v) General terms of reference, each overview and scrutiny committee has the responsibility for setting its own work programme.

2. Background

2.1 Appendix 1 to this report sets out the existing work programme for the committee.

3. Agenda planning meeting

3.1 Members will be aware that Overview and Scrutiny Committees hold agenda planning meetings on a regular basis. These give officers greater guidance on information Members wish them to provide when scrutinising an issue. An agenda planning meeting was held on 20 November 2008.

3.2 It was agreed that the Assistant Director, Communications, Performance and Partnerships give the Committee a presentation on the new Comprehensive Area Agreement at the next meeting. It was also agreed that Members of the Committee receive a briefing note relating to the Prudential Borrowing Programme. The Chairman also agreed subsequently agreed that the Assistant Director, Housing and Corporate Services present members with a briefing note covering the

information requested by Members of the committee relating to the Medway Council Comprehensive Housing Repairs and Maintenance Contract.

4. The co-ordinating role of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee

4.1. Under Medway's constitution, Chapter 4 – Rules – paragraph 22.2 (xxiii) this Committee has the overall responsibility 'to provide guidance and leadership on the development and co-ordination of the scrutiny function for all Overview and Scrutiny Committees, including guidance on priorities for scrutiny activities'.

4.2. To assist the Committee in fulfilling this role the Chairman has agreed that a regular overview of business discussed by the other O and S Committees should be presented at these meetings. Whilst each O and S Committee is able to determine its own work programme this Committee may wish to comment on common themes and the balance of business being covered by each Committee. The work of Overview and Scrutiny Committees can include:

- items raised by individual members of the Committee or any six members of the Council who are not members of the Committee
- work on matters referred for review by the Council.
- Pre-decision scrutiny of items on the Cabinet's Forward Plan selected by the Committee for discussion
- policy review and development often undertaken in small cross party task groups. Each Committee usually undertakes one or two reviews of this type each year.
- pre-budget scrutiny
- consideration of petitions presented at Full Council
- consideration of called-in Cabinet decisions

4.3. Appendix 2 to this report sets out an overview of the work undertaken by each Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the last cycle of meetings and for the next cycle. In addition Appendix 3 sets out the items in the Cabinet's Forward Plan indicating by asterisk items identified by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee for pre-decision scrutiny.

5. Cabinet Forward Plan

5.1 Appendix 3 sets out the current forward plan.

6. Financial and legal implications

6.1 There are no financial or legal implications arising from this report.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1 That Members consider whether any changes need to be made to the work programme, including whether to add any items from the forward plan.
- 7.2 Members are asked to note the work undertaken by all overview and scrutiny committees in the last cycle and to be considered at the next cycle of meetings (set out in appendix 2 to this report).

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