

BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 APRIL 2017

WORK PROGRAMME

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Summary

This report 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.

1.0 Budget and Policy Framework

1.1 Under Chapter 4 – Rules, paragraph 21.1 (xv) General terms of reference, each overview and scrutiny committee has the responsibility for setting its own work programme.

2.0 Background

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

3.0 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 guidance on information Members wish them to provide when scrutinising an issue. An agenda planning meeting was held on 17 March. The Chairmen, Vice-Chairman, Councillor Maple (Opposition Spokesperson) and Councillor Freshwater (Opposition Spokesperson) were in attendance and were updated on the Committee's current work programme and advised of the reports to be submitted to this meeting. The following issues were discussed:

Medway Norse

- 3.2 Members discussed how frequently and where in the committee cycle Medway Norse should report to the Committee. The possibility of operational issues (around June/July, perhaps on an annual basis) relating to Medway Norse and Medway Commercial Group (MCG) being discussed at the respective O&S Committee(s) was suggested, with this Committee scrutinising draft budget proposals in relation to both organisations at its December meeting. To take this forward, it was agreed there should be a discussion about the scrutiny of Medway Norse and MCG at the next informal meeting of O&S Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Opposition Spokespersons.
- 3.3 In the meantime, it was agreed that the update on Medway Norse due to come to this meeting should instead come to the July meeting.

Work Programme

- 3.4 It was agreed that the progress report on various land disposals (currently in the unallocated section of work programme) should come to July meeting.

Universal Credit and Welfare Reform

- 3.5 Members asked that representatives from the Department of Works and Pensions be invited to speak to the Committee when the next progress report on Universal Credit and Welfare Reform is due – currently expected in October.

Task Groups

- 3.6 In December 2015, the Committee agreed the following programme of Task Groups:

Review two (to follow the Task Group on Housing) and led by the Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

How far has Medway gone in developing a dementia friendly community?

Review three (cross-cutting with membership drawn from the Children and Young People and Regeneration, Community and Culture Overview and Scrutiny Committees):

Employment Opportunities for 18-21 year olds (including apprenticeships)

- 3.7 The Dementia Task Group has completed its work and will be reporting to Cabinet on 9 May. The Employment Opportunities for 18-21 year olds Task Group will follow, with scoping due to start towards the end of May.

- 3.8 A report will be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee proposing a timetable and process for the selection of topics for the next round of in-depth scrutiny reviews.

House of Commons Select Committee

- 3.9 The Communities and Local Government Select Committee has begun an inquiry into whether overview and scrutiny arrangements in England are working effectively and whether local communities are able to contribute to and monitor the work of their councils.
- 3.10 The Committee invited written evidence on various issues and the Head of Democratic Services, following consultation with Members, submitted a response on behalf of the Council – attached as Appendix 3 for Members' information.

4.0 Future Work Programme

Forward Plan

- 4.1 The [Forward Plan](#) of forthcoming Cabinet decisions is published on the Council's website.
- 4.2 Set out below is a list of items featuring on the current Forward Plan that fall within the terms of reference of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee is asked to identify any items it wishes to consider as pre-decision scrutiny (where dates permit) other than those already programmed in Appendix 1.

Title of Decision	Anticipated Decision Date
<p>Recruitment Freeze</p> <p>This report will bring forward vacant posts for Members' approval in accordance with the process approved by the Cabinet on 7 January 2003.</p>	<p>9 May, 6 June and 11 July 2017</p>
<p>Six Monthly Review of the Council's Corporate Risk Register</p> <p>This report will set out the six monthly review of the Council's Corporate Business Risk Register for Cabinet's consideration and approval.</p>	<p>9 May 2017 <i>(on agenda for this meeting)</i></p>
<p>Cabinet Advisory Groups</p> <p>This report will seek approval to the establishment of the Cabinet Advisory Groups for 2017/2018.</p>	<p>6 June 2017</p>

<p>Medway Norse Six Monthly Update</p> <p>This report will present the latest monitoring information regarding the performance of Medway Norse.</p>	<p>6 June 2017 <i>(see para.3.2)</i></p>
<p>Revenue and Capital Budgets Outturn 2016/2017</p> <p>This report will set out the year end outturn in respect of the capital and revenue budgets 2016/2017.</p>	<p>6 June 2017</p>
<p>Treasury Management Outturn Annual Report</p> <p>This report will provide an overview of treasury management activity during 2016/2017.</p>	<p>11 July 2017</p>

5.0 The Co-ordinating Role of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee

5.1 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'*.

5.2 To assist the Committee in fulfilling this role, it has been agreed that a regular overview of business discussed by the other overview and scrutiny committees should be presented at these meetings. Whilst each overview and scrutiny 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 Members
- 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
- pre-budget scrutiny
- consideration of petitions
- consideration of called-in Cabinet decisions.

5.3 Appendix 2 to this report sets out the current work programmes of the other three overview and scrutiny committees.

6.0 Financial and legal implications

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

7.0 Recommendations

7.1 The Committee is asked to:

- (a) note and identify items for inclusion in the work programme (Appendix 1);
- (b) agree the changes to the current work programme as set out in paragraph 3;
- (c) note the work programmes of all overview and scrutiny committees (set out in Appendix 2 to this report), and;
- (d) note the Council's submission to the the Communities and Local Government Select Committee inquiry into overview and scrutiny arrangements in England (Appendix 3).

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Business Support O&S work programme

Appendix 2 - Other O&S Committee work programmes

Appendix 3 - Submission to the Communities and Local Government Select Committee

Background papers: None.

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