

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 1 September 2009
Report of: Borough Solicitor
Subject/Title: Work Programme update

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 To consider items proposed for inclusion in the Committee's Work Programme and determine which items should be included in the Work Programme for the current municipal year.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee agree its Work Programme, determine a priority order, agree timescales and methodology.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 It is good practice to agree a Work Programme to enable effective management of the Committee's business.

4.0 Wards Affected

- 4.1 All

5.0 Local Ward Members

- 5.1 Not applicable.

6.0 Policy Implications including - Climate change - Health

- 6.1 Not known at this stage.

7.0 Financial Implications for Transition Costs (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

- 7.1 None identified at the moment.

8.0 Financial Implications 2009/10 and beyond (Authorised by the Borough Treasurer)

- 8.1 Not known at this stage.

9.0 Legal Implications (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk Management

10.1 There are no identifiable risks.

11.0 Background and Options

11.1 At the previous meeting of the Committee on 13 July 2009, Members approved a revised list of potential items for the Work Programme which at that time contained a number of issues raised by the Resources and Health and Wellbeing Portfolio Holders. Meetings have now been held with the Performance and capacity and Procurement, Assets and Shared Services Portfolio Holders. A number of additional items have now appeared in the work programme for consideration.

11.2 The Committee is now in a position to thoroughly review its work programme. Not only should members assess all items against the following criteria, members should now start to identify the method the committee intends to employ to progress any scrutiny involvement– for example, whether items should be dealt with by a Task/Finish panel or by the Committee etc :-

- Does the issue fall within a corporate priority
- Is the issue of key interest to the public
- Does the matter relate to a poor or declining performing service for which there is no obvious explanation
- Is there a pattern of budgetary overspends
- Is it a matter raised by external audit management letters and or audit reports.
- Is there a high level of dissatisfaction with the service

Also, if during the assessment process any of the following emerge, then the committee should consider rejecting the topic:

- The topic is already being addressed elsewhere
- The matter is subjudice
- Scrutiny cannot add value or is unlikely to be able to conclude an investigation within the specified timescale

- 11.3 In view of the long list of topics that now appears in the work programme, the Committee should now determine which of those items are likely to be the subject of any O&S activity during this inaugural year. It may well be worth acknowledging that realistically, the committee will only have resources to undertake two in depth reviews at any one time. It is likely that only those with a current high rating will be pursued, although, some medium rated matters will be the subject of presentations/reports to committee to provide background information.
- 11.4 It is therefore now appropriate to refine the list further into an active list of matters rated sufficiently high to carry out review work; those which can be retained on a reserved or pending list for possible further action and those that can be deleted. Indicative dates for O&S involvement can then be allocated to the active list which will in turn allow Chief Officers to be made aware of items in their work area to ensure that there is plenty of time for consultation on timescales and content.

12.0 Overview of Year One and Term One Issues

- 12.1 It is good practice to have a Work Programme for the Committee to consider and prioritise on a regular basis.

13.0 Access to Information

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting the report writer:

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