

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

REPORT TO: CORPORATE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 15 June 2010
Report of: Borough Solicitor
Subject/Title: Work Programme update

1.0 Report Summary

- 1.1 To review items in the 2009/2010 Work Programme, to consider new items listed in the schedule attached, together with any other items suggested by Committee Members.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Committee recommend a draft work programme for 2010/2011 to be subject to consultation with Cabinet.

3.0 Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 It is good practice to agree and review the 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 2010/11 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 This Committee at its meeting held on 19 April 2010 approved a paper entitled 'Strengthening the Scrutiny Function' which proposed a more formal approach to the work programme setting process in 2010 to enable the views of Cabinet to be fed into the process. This approach was also considered and endorsed by the Scrutiny Chairs Group. The main aim of the new approach is to share work programmes with colleagues in Cabinet and Corporate Management Team (CMT) at the outset, so that Overview and Scrutiny becomes an integral part of the Corporate business planning process of the Council. Work programme items will subsequently be linked to relevant Corporate plan targets, and where appropriate, Performance Indicators and LAA targets.

11.2 It is intended that all emerging work programmes will be presented to Cabinet informally in July, and then each Committee will formally endorse its work programme before the summer recess. It is suggested that this Committee puts in place arrangements to give the Chairman authority to agree the final work programme, as the meeting with Cabinet briefing is likely to be after the date of this Committee on 13 July 2010.

11.3 This does not however preclude the committee from adding to or subtracting from the work programme during the year, nor does it affect the committee's powers to deal with call-ins, or items referred to it by Cabinet etc. However, care should be taken to ensure that there is sufficient leeway to allow for additional activities throughout the year.

11.4 The schedule attached, presents the work programme in a new format. This document will be updated when the final programme is formally approved at the next meeting, so that all the appropriate targets will be included within the schedule.

11.5 In reviewing the work programme, Members must pay close attention to the emerging Corporate Plan and Sustainable Communities Strategy. Both of these documents are currently in consultation stage and are expected to be adopted by Council in July

11.6 The emerging Corporate Plan has 5 emerging strategic objectives which are:

- Cheshire East people empowered through local services and personal choice
- The growth and development of a sustainable Cheshire East
- Closing the gap for everyone in Cheshire East
- Enhancing our Cheshire East environment
- Being an excellent Council and working with others to deliver in Cheshire East

11.7 The draft Sustainable Communities Strategy 'Ambition for All' has 7 Priorities for action:

- **Nurture strong communities**

Give people a strong local voice
Support the community to support itself
Deliver services as locally as possible
Ensure communities feel safe

- **Create conditions for business growth**

Harness emerging growth opportunities
Provide a leading broadband infrastructure
Make the most of our tourism, heritage and natural assets
Create a climate attractive to business investment

- **Unlock the potential of our towns**

Regenerate Crewe
Revitalise Macclesfield
Deliver sustainable growth for our towns

- **Support our children and young people**

Ensure good transitions and skills for the future
Improve support and facilities for children and young people
Strengthen the voice of children and young people
Improve the health of children and young people

- **Ensure a sustainable future**

Provide affordable and appropriate housing
Encourage environmentally sustainable living
Improve transport connections and accessible services
Protect and enhance our heritage and countryside

- **Prepare for an increasingly older population**

Help people stay fit and active for longer
Improve care and support for those who need it

- **Drive out the causes of poor health**

Target actions to reduce heart disease and cancer
Tackle the impact of alcohol misuse on individuals and society
Focus local actions on the wider determinants of health

11.8 Members must also have regard to the general criteria which should be applied to all potential items when considering whether any Scrutiny activity is appropriate. Matters should be assessed against the following criteria:

- 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

11.9 If during the assessment process any of the following emerge, then the topic should be rejected:

- 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

12.00 One additional matter the committee will have to take into consideration, is the impact of the recent announcement by Government that the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) regime is to be scrapped, In relation to the selection of potential work programme items.

13.0 The Scrutiny Chairs Group recently reviewed the responsibility split of the Committees in order to simplify the links between portfolio holders and their respective Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

13.1 The Governance and Constitution Committee will at its next meeting formally commend the new arrangements to Council, which will mean that overview and scrutiny of the following portfolio holders will be the responsibility of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee:

- Andrew Knowles – Wellbeing
- Frank Keegan – Resources
- Peter Mason - Procurement, Assets and Shared Services

13.2 The area covered by David Brown (Capacity and Performance), which had previously been within the responsibilities of this Committee is now with the Sustainable Communities Committee

14.0 Access to Information

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

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