

REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date of Meeting: 16th September 2014

Subject: Annual Scrutiny Work Programme

Responsible Officer: Rachel Gapp – Head of Policy

Scrutiny Lead Member area: All

Exempt: No

Wards affected: All

Enclosures: Scrutiny Work Programme

Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report sets out the proposed work programme for Scrutiny for 2014/15. It covers issues to be considered at committee, issues for the Scrutiny Leads to follow up and project work.

Recommendations:

That Scrutiny approves the work programme.

Section 2 – Report

Introductory paragraph

Scrutiny is an independent, member-led function, working with local people to improve services. As such it has an important role to play in improving democratic accountability for decisions taken by the council that affect the daily lives of our residents. It enables councillors, as representatives and leaders of their community, to lead a process that seeks to improve services

for local people and to hold decision-makers to account for the decisions they take.

The scrutiny leadership group, comprising the chairs, vice chairs and scrutiny leads, have responsibility for compiling and ensuring delivery of the scrutiny work programme with support from the Council's Policy Team.

Why a change is needed

Officer scrutiny support has been reduced following a restructure in April 2014 in order to contribute to the savings that the council had to make. There is no longer a dedicated scrutiny team. Instead, the new Council Policy Team will support the Scrutiny Leadership Group and provide research and policy capacity to scrutiny projects only. Scrutiny Leads are expected to operate self-sufficiently and feed into the Scrutiny Leadership Group, although Corporate Directors will arrange quarterly briefings for them. As such the scrutiny work programme needs to be reviewed and revised to match the level of resource and capacity now available to support it.

Following the local election in May 2014, the composition of scrutiny committees and scrutiny leads also changed. A new administration with new priorities for the council, means it is timely to reflect on how scrutiny wishes to operate and the issues it wishes to look at.

In deciding which issues scrutiny should include in its work programme, Members considered the following questions:

1. Is the Council recording persistent poor performance in this area?
2. Do customer complaints/satisfaction suggest a significant problem in this area?
3. Is a major change in policy taking place in this area (either by the Council or Government)?
4. Have there been or are there planned major changes to the service?
5. Is the policy/service a high priority for the Council?
6. Is there a concern that the policy/service should be a higher priority for the Council?
7. Will scrutiny's investigation lead to real change?

Following consideration of these questions, the appended work programme is set out for approval by Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Implications of the Recommendation

The recommendation only has implications for the work that Scrutiny will consider over the next year.

Financial Implications

The work programme will be delivered within the budget available

Performance Issues

None

Environmental Impact

None

Risk Management Implications

None

Equalities Implications

None

Council Priorities

The Scrutiny Work Programme supports all the Council priorities.

Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance

Name: Simon George



Chief Financial Officer

Date: 27th August 2014

Name: Caroline Eccles



on behalf of the
Monitoring Officer

Date: 27th August 2014

Ward Councillors notified:

NO

Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers

Contact: Rachel Gapp – Head of Policy Ext: 8774

Background Papers: None