

WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

Report of the: Chief Executive
Contact: Margaret Jones
Urgent Decision?(yes/no) No
If yes, reason urgent decision required:
Annexes/Appendices (attached): Annexe 1: Work Programme 2015/16
Annexe 2: Scope of the Review into the arrangements for publicising and determining planning applications set out in Scrutiny Forms A, B and C
Other available papers (not attached):

REPORT SUMMARY

This report asks the Committee to agree the work programme for 2015/16.

<u>RECOMMENDATION (S)</u>	<i>Notes</i>
<p>That the Committee:</p> <p>(1) Approves the work programme (attached at <u>Annexe 1</u>)</p> <p>(2) Appoints three separate task groups to undertake the reviews into (i) the arrangements for publicising and determining planning applications (ii) the social centres and (iii) the Route call service</p> <p>(3) Agrees to co-opt a member of the Strategy & Resources Committee nominated by that Committee's Chairman, to each of the task groups appointed under 2(ii) and 2(iii) above.</p>	

1 Implications for the Council's Key Priorities, Service Plans and Sustainable Community Strategy

- 1.1 Specific implications are dependent on the items agreed for inclusion in the work programme of the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee. Such implications are considered by the Committee before undertaking any specific scrutiny investigation.

2 Background

- 2.1 Paragraph 1 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules requires the Committee to approve an annual Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme including the programme of any sub-committees or panels.

- 2.2 To mark the start of the new municipal year 2015/16, a new work programme which meets the responsibilities of the Committee has been drafted.

3 Work Programme 2015/16

- 3.1 The 2015/16 work programme of the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee and appointed task groups is attached at Annexe 1. This work programme has been structured around the four meetings of the Committee scheduled into the municipal calendar for 2015/16 and one Special meeting discussed in paragraph 5.2 below.

Audit Items

- 3.2 Audit commitments within the Committee's work programme include regular update reports from both Baker Tilly (Internal Auditors) and Grant Thornton (External Auditors). The Internal Audit Assurance Report 2014/15 and the Annual Governance Statement 2014/15 are both scheduled for June 2015 (see items 6 and 7 of this Agenda). Other audit related reports scheduled into the work programme include a report on progress made against Council action plans associated with the Annual Governance Statement and District Auditor's Audit Findings (November 2015) and an annual report on the Internal Audit Plan (April 2016). A report on the Risk Management Framework is scheduled for November 2015.

Scrutiny Items

- 3.3 Scrutiny items scheduled in to the work programme comprise both regular items and those identified specifically for review during 2015/16.
- 3.4 Regular items include bi-annual reports on the Epsom and Ewell Community Safety Partnership. An end of year 2014/15 Report is scheduled for June 2015 (item 4 of this Agenda) and a 6 month update report for 2015/16 is scheduled for November 2015.
- 3.5 Regular performance management reports have been scheduled across the year. These reports present the Committee with up to date statistics and information on progress made against the policy committees' Key Service Priorities. The end of year 2014/15 performance management report is scheduled for June 2015 (item 8 of this Agenda); progress reports 1 to 3 for 2015/16 shall be brought to the Committee at each of its subsequent meetings.
- 3.6 Lastly two regular reports to update the Committee on the Corporate Equalities Action Plan and on the use of delegated powers at the Council (items 9 and 10 of this agenda) have been scheduled for June 2015; a third report to update the Committee on Data Quality is scheduled for November 2015.
- 3.7 Three items have been identified for specific review/investigation during 2015/16:
- 3.7.1 Review of the administrative arrangements for publicising and determining planning applications.
- 3.7.2 Review of the social centres
- 3.7.3 Review of the Route call service

- 3.8 Should the Committee agree to undertake these reviews, it is considered that three task groups, comprising selected members of the Committee, should be appointed to undertake the review work. Each Task Group would then report its findings and recommendations back to the full committee for consideration and recommendation to officers/the appropriate policy committee.

4 Review of the administrative arrangements for publicising and determining planning applications

- 4.1 At the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee meeting of 5 February 2015 the Committee considered a proposal to undertake a review of the administrative arrangements for publicising and determining planning applications. The Committee agreed that such a review should be included in its work programme for 2015/16.
- 4.2 A scope for the review, set out in Scrutiny Review Forms A, B and C was presented to the Committee at its meeting held on 9 April 2015. The scope was agreed subject to reference to planning applications with short legal time limits (such as Mobile Telephone masts) being included. Updated Scrutiny Review Forms A, B and C are attached at Annexe 2.
- 4.3 The delivery methodology (discussed in Form B) specified that a small scrutiny task group of approximately 4 members should be appointed on a short, fixed term basis at the June 2015 meeting of the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee.

5 Reviews into the social centres and Route call Service

- 5.1 The reviews of the social centres and Route call service (specified in 3.7.2 and 3.7.3 above) form part of the work programme for preparing the Medium Term Financial Strategy, outlined in the report to the Financial Policy Panel of 9 June 2015. The scopes of both reviews are due to be finalised following discussion at the Financial Policy Panel meeting scheduled for 7 July 2015.
- 5.2 Both of these reviews will need to be undertaken within specific timescales. The review work will commence in July, the findings/recommendations of the Task Groups will need to be considered by the full committee in early October 2015. This means that a Special meeting of the Committee will need to be held; a date of the 6 October 2015 has been identified.
- 5.3 Environment Committee is currently scheduled for 6 October 2015. However, as a result of the financial and service planning programme necessary to deliver the Medium Term Financial Strategy and 2016/17 budget it is necessary to reschedule the Environment Committee and officers will be liaising with the Chairman as to a suitable date (possibly 27 October 2015).
- 5.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules enable the Committee to co-opt other Councillors to constitute sub committees or panels. It is considered that the social centres and Route call service reviews would both benefit from co-option, in particular, co-option of a member of the Strategy & Resources Committee. It is therefore suggested that the Committee consider co-opting a member of the Strategy & Resources Committee to each of the two review task groups, the co-opted member to be nominated by the Chairman of the Strategy & Resources Committee.

6 Proposals

- 6.1 It is proposed that the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee approve the work programme attached at Annexe 1.
- 6.2 The Committee is also asked to appoint three separate Task Groups to undertake the investigative work associated with each of the three reviews specified in paragraph 3.7 above, including any co-opted members.

7 Financial and Manpower Implications

- 7.1 The Committee will wish to consider workload implications for both its Members and the Scrutiny Officer when approving its work programme. In depth scrutiny reviews undertaken by task groups require more intensive input from members as well as the Scrutiny Officer for specific time periods.
- 7.2 In order to complete the reviews into the social centres and Route call service according to the timescale specified, input will be required from July until the end of September. Specific dates will be identified and agreed with members of the appointed task groups at the beginning of each review.
- 7.3 In order to undertake all three reviews to a high standard, it is considered that input to the review into the administrative arrangements for publicising and determining planning applications should be planned for October/November. A report on the task group's findings and any recommendations could then be taken back to the full Committee in February 2016. The precise timescale would be closely monitored.
- 7.4 ***Chief Finance Officer's comments:*** *There are no further matters to bring to members' attention.*

8 Legal Implications (including implications for matters relating to equality)

- 8.1 The work programme at Annexe 1 has been designed to meet the Committee's responsibilities set out in legislation and its Terms of Reference.
- 8.2 Specific implications will be dependent on the items selected for inclusion in the work programme of the Committee.
- 8.3 ***Monitoring Officer's comments:*** *No comments for the purposes of this report.*

9 Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications

- 9.1 Scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership is a responsibility of the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee.

10 Partnerships

- 10.1 The Committee has the ability to make reports or recommendations on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of that area.

11 Risk Assessment

- 11.1 Agreeing items for review/scrutiny at the beginning of the municipal year will enable the Committee to take steps to ensure that it meets all its responsibilities (statutory and local). It will also enable the Committee to manage its workload across the year to identify priorities and reschedule work according to need/risk.

12 Conclusion and Recommendations

- 12.1 The Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for setting its own work programme. With a new committee now established, a work programme encompassing all areas of responsibility has been drafted.
- 12.2 It is recommended that the Audit, Crime & Disorder and Scrutiny Committee approve the work programme attached at Annexe 1 and appoint the task groups to undertake the specified review work. The Committee will be kept informed of progress throughout the year.

WARD(S) AFFECTED: N/A