

Meeting: Environment Sub Committee

Date: 8 June 2016

Title: Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2016/17

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Service: Law and Governance

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1** To inform Members of the topics received for potential inclusion in the 2016/17 Environment Sub-committee work programme, to set-out the work programme process to date and the next steps for finalising the topics to be included.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1** The sub-committee is recommended to agree the work programme items that have been evaluated and prioritised so far and identify any further topics relevant to the remit of the sub-committee that could be included in the 2016/17 work programme.

3. Details

- 3.1** The process of establishing the 2016/17 overview and scrutiny work programme began in February 2016 with an email to all Members and Tier 1, 2 and 3 managers, seeking ideas for topics scrutiny could usefully look at. It was explained with this request that, as in previous years, the focus of overview and scrutiny would be on contributing to policy development.
- 3.2** The Senior Leadership Team discussed the work programme at a meeting in March 2016, helping to identify some key policy areas for scrutiny to focus on. The work programme process and suggestions received to date was also discussed at a meeting of scrutiny chairs and deputies in March 2016.
- 3.3** In addition to asking senior staff and Members to put forward ideas, an article was also placed in the residents' magazine inviting members of the public to raise any issue that they thought would be suitable for scrutiny to investigate. As a result 2 suggestions were submitted: one in relation to Alzheimer's support and one in relation to pedestrian routes.
- 3.4** In order to ensure that the topics selected will deliver the greatest value in terms of policy development, relevant officers have done some preliminary work to scope and evaluate the topics that been received. A full list of the suggestions received relevant to Environment Sub-committee is attached as Appendix A. These have been split into

topics that would constitute an in-depth investigation (to be undertaken by a sub-group) and monitoring reports that could be dealt with during sub-committee meetings.

- 3.5** In determining which topics should be prioritised for in-depth investigation, the following criteria have been considered:
- Is it timely?
 - Will it duplicate any other work ongoing within the Council or the NECA scrutiny work programme?
 - Will it add value/contribute to policy development?
- 3.6** As has been practice in previous years, it is recommended that sub-groups (of around 4/5 members) be established to carry out the topics that have been selected for in-depth investigation. These sub-groups operate in a more informal way and can consult with a wide range of witnesses in various settings, often over a shorter period of time. When dealing with a specific topic, this focused way of working is often more productive than trying to achieve the same in a formal committee setting. Whilst more than one topic can be prioritised across the municipal year, only one sub-group per committee/sub-committee can be established at any one time due to resourcing restraints.
- 3.7** If there are several in-depth investigation topics identified by a committee/sub-committee that are unlikely to be completed within the municipal year, these can be carried forward to the next municipal year, providing they would still be timely to consider at that time.
- 3.8** During the meeting, Members will have the opportunity to raise any other topics relevant to the remit of the sub-committee that they think should be included in the work programme. Additional topics raised will be scheduled accordingly in consultation with the Chair and the Deputy Chair.

4. Appendices

2016/17 work programme suggestions for Environment Sub-committee

5. Background Information

The following documents have been used in the compilation of this report and may be inspected at the offices of the author.