

Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 1 October 2012

Title: Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2012/13

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Service: Strategic Services

Directorate: Chief Executive

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

This report presents the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2012/13 and provides Members with guidance on delivering the activities identified. This report has been added to the agenda as an urgent item, as delaying consideration and approval of the work programme will cause delay to the work of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its sub-committees.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- a) note and agree the contents of the work programme, as attached as Appendix A;
- b) endorse the scoping document to be used by sub-committees/study groups when undertaking in-depth investigations, at Appendix B; and
- c) agree the establishment of a sub-group of the Children, Education and Skills sub-committee and Adult Social Care, Health and Well-Being sub-committee to undertake a study into child poverty.

3. Background

- 3.1 The work programme, as attached as Appendix A, sets out the topics prioritised for consideration by overview and scrutiny during 2012/13. As part of the work programme setting process, consultation was undertaken with:

- Members
- Directorates and Head of Service
- Area Forums

At meetings earlier in the municipal year, the sub-committees discussed the various topics suggested and identified areas that are timely to scrutinise and will offer the most potential in terms of improving services by influencing decision makers.

- 3.2 In addition to these topics, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its sub-committees will continue to monitor the delivery of the Change, Efficiency and Improvement programme

and review the Forward Plan. Some of the topics on the list are items carried forward from last municipal years work programme.

- 3.3 The work programme was discussed and finalised by the Chairs and Deputies at its meeting on 20 September 2012. The final agreed programme will be reported to the sub-committee at the next round of meetings.
- 3.4 In order to add value by contributing to policy development, it is advised that the sub-committees focus on a small number of in-depth topics, which will result in well researched recommendations for decision makers, both internal and external, to consider. A scoping document has been prepared for Members and officers to use when beginning a study, ensuring that the purpose and aims of the work is established from the start and that a work plan is drawn up which directly supports the delivery of these aims. Members are advised to consider the different ways of working that are available to them when undertaking studies, i.e. sub-groups, informal meetings with officers and engaging with service users.
- 3.5 It is recognised that the workload for some of the sub-committees will be too much to undertake in the remainder of this municipal year. The work programme has been designed as a rolling programme, where work will be carried on into 2013/14, with the opportunity to review priorities as necessary.
- 3.5 One of the topics identified for scrutiny to consider, child poverty, is an issue which cuts across the remits of 2 sub-committees: Children, Education and Skills and Adult Social Care, Health and Well-Being. It is therefore recommended that, to avoid any duplication in efforts on this topic, a sub-group be set up to undertake this piece of work, comprising of Members of these 2 sub-committees. Officers, in consultation with the Chair of the Children, Education and Skills sub-committee and the Adult Social Care, Health and Well-Being sub-committee, will seek volunteers to serve on the sub-group and write a proposed remit for the study.

4. Appendices

Appendix A – work programme 2012/13

Appendix B – scoping documents for in-depth investigations