

Meeting:	Health and social care overview and scrutiny committee
Meeting date:	6 July 2016
Title of report:	Work programme 2016/17
Report by:	Governance services

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not an executive decision.

Wards affected

Countywide

Purpose

To consider the committee's work programme and related scrutiny activities.

Recommendation

That the draft work programme (appendix b) be approved, subject to any amendments the committee wishes to make.

Alternative options

- 1 It is for the committee to determine its work programme to reflect the priorities facing Herefordshire. The committee needs to be selective and ensure that the work programme is focused, realistic and deliverable within existing resources.

Reasons for recommendations

- 2 The committee needs to develop a manageable work programme to ensure that scrutiny is focused, effective and produces clear outcomes.

Key considerations

The work programme

- 3 The work programme needs to focus on the key issues of concern and be manageable, allowing for urgent items or matters that have been called-in.
- 4 Following discussion at both overview and scrutiny committees about the development of their work programmes a workshop was held on 25 May 2016. This was to provide an opportunity for all members of the scrutiny committees to contribute to the development of an annual work programme. Members of the executive and directors attended to support this process.
- 5 The principal purpose of this exercise was for members to identify a shortlist of items for scrutiny for their respective committees.
- 6 Supporting documentation included the joint strategic needs assessment (Understanding Herefordshire), the corporate plan, the forward plan and draft performance outturn information for 2015/16. Also put forward were priorities for scrutiny suggested by executive members and directorates, and suggestions had also been invited from all members of the council and from the public.
- 7 Each committee was divided into two groups and as the first part of the exercise each group was invited to identify topics they would like to scrutinise allocating them high, medium and low priority. A consolidating exercise was then undertaken with the intention of selecting the top five priorities for scrutiny.
- 8 The outcome of this exercise is attached at appendix a.
- 9 In undertaking the exercise it was recognised that further attention would need to be given to the selected topics to assess the feasibility and practicality of scrutinising them, the type of scrutiny method that would be most suitable, and the timing. A report would be made to each scrutiny committee seeking approval of an agreed work programme. This would also take into account budget and policy framework and other items that necessarily needed to be considered by each Committee.
- 10 Following discussion with the chairman and officers, a draft revised work programme is appended (Appendix b) for consideration. As before, the work programme will remain under continuous review during the year to allow the committee to respond to particular circumstances.
- 11 In considering the draft work programme, consideration should be given to the most appropriate approach for scrutiny of items, in particular, those with broad themes. For example, it may be appropriate to focus on one aspect of an item by way of a task and finish group, for which a detailed scoping statement would be required. Alternatively, certain items may benefit from a spotlight review (as suggested for the sustainability and transformation plan), or an accountability session.
- 12 Should committee members become aware of additional issues during year they are invited to discuss the matter with the chairman and the statutory scrutiny officer.

Additional issues Raised at the Workshop

- 13 With regard to the monitoring of recommendations and actions, the workshop did touch on the importance of recommendations being realistic and possibly fewer in number and more focused. The need for monitoring, which would be assisted by

clear recommendations, has been acknowledged. It is proposed that an update on progress made in response to all recommendations will be reported quarterly as part of the work programme report.

- 14 On a number of occasions in discussing the work programme members have referred to the desirability of having the forward plan available to inform that discussion. The current forward plan is available to members through the councillors' handbook intranet site. Forthcoming key decisions are also available to the public under the forward plan link on the council's website:

<http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx?&RP=0&K=0&DM=0&HD=0&DS=1&Next=true&H=1&META=mgforthcomingdecisions&V=1>

- 15 There was support for a work programme workshop to be scheduled annually and this is included in the draft work programme attached at appendix b.

Community impact

- 16 The topics selected for scrutiny should have regard to what matters to residents.

Equality duty

- 17 The topics selected need to have regard for equality and human rights issues.

Financial implications

- 18 The costs of the work of the committee will have to be met within existing resources. It should be noted the costs of running scrutiny will be subject to an assessment to support appropriate processes.

Legal implications

- 19 The council is required to deliver an overview and scrutiny function.

Risk management

- 20 There is a reputational risk to the council if the overview and scrutiny function does not operate effectively. The arrangements for the development of the work programme should help mitigate this risk.

Consultees

- 21 The chairman and statutory scrutiny officer meet on a regular basis to review the work programme.

Appendices

Appendix a Outcomes from workshop on 25 May 2016

Appendix b Draft work programme 2016/17

Background papers

None identified.