

Meeting:	General scrutiny committee
Meeting date:	Monday 20 January 2020
Title of report:	Work programme
Report by:	Governance services

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not an executive decision.

Wards affected

All wards

Purpose and summary

To review the committee's work programme.

Recommendation(s)

THAT:

- (a) the draft work programme as set out at appendix 1 to the report be approved, subject to any amendments the committee wishes to make;**
- (b) the committee establishes a task and finish group on the climate emergency to undertake the work outlined in the draft scoping statement (Appendix 2 to the report) and confirming the membership and chairperson; and**
- (c) the committee determines any other matter in relation to the appointment of task and finish groups their chairmanship and any special responsibility allowance or the undertaking of a spotlight review.**

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.

Key considerations

Draft work programme

- 2 The work programme needs to focus on the key issues of local concern and be manageable. It must also be ready to accommodate urgent items or matters that have been called-in.
- 3 Should committee members become aware of any issue they think should be considered by the Committee they are invited to discuss the matter with the Chairman and the statutory scrutiny officer.
- 4 The draft work programme is attached at appendix 1.
- 5 The Committee on 23 July 2019 authorised the statutory scrutiny officer, following consultation with the chairperson and vice-chairperson, to add items to the work programme where it is necessary to ensure their timely consideration where there is no scheduled meeting to approve their inclusion.

Constitutional Matters

Task and Finish Groups

- 6 A scrutiny committee may appoint a task and finish group for any scrutiny activity within the committee's agreed work programme. A committee may determine to undertake a task and finish activity itself as a spotlight review where such an activity may be undertaken in a single session; the procedure rules relating to task and finish groups will apply in these circumstances.
- 7 The relevant scrutiny committee will approve the scope of the activity to be undertaken, the membership, chairperson, timeframe, desired outcomes and what will not be included in the work. A task and finish group will be composed of a least 2 members of the committee, other councillors (nominees to be sought from group leaders with un-affiliated members also invited to express their interest in sitting on the group). This may include, as appropriate, co-opted people with specialist knowledge or expertise to support the task. In appointing a chairman of a task and finish group the committee will also determine, having regard to the advice of the council's monitoring officer and statutory scrutiny officer, whether the scope of the activity is such as to attract a special responsibility allowance.
- 8 The Committee is asked to determine any matters relating to the appointment of a task and finish group and the chairperson and any special responsibility allowance or undertaking a spotlight review including co-option (see below).

Request to establish a task and finish group - climate emergency

- 9 On 8 March 2019 the council declared a climate emergency and called on the executive to undertake a range of actions. Cabinet approved the executive response on 26 September 2019. Elements of this response envisaged a role for the General Scrutiny Committee, inviting it to consider building the matter into the work programme and/or establishing a task and finish group to: review the draft carbon management plan; review partners' plans and strategies to recommend how best to develop a joint countywide strategy; develop and propose a checklist of criteria for the

development of new and review of existing council strategies to assess their suitability to deliver on carbon reduction.

- 10 On 29 November the Committee agreed that a scoping statement for this work be presented to the Committee and that a task and finish group be established to carry the work forward. A draft is attached for consideration at appendix 2.
- 11 Two members of the Committee indicated that they wished to serve on the Group: Councillors Hewitt and Wilding. In line with the approach adopted for the formation of the waste management strategic review, allowing the opportunity for each political group to be represented if they wished, group leaders have been invited to nominate members to serve on the group should the committee approve the scoping statement. The following additional nominations have so far been received: Councillors Fagan, and Swinglehurst.
- 12 The Committee is invited to consider the scoping statement, membership, and chairperson of the Group.
- 13 During member questions at Council in October 2019, Councillor Wilding asked the Leader to consider establishing a climate emergency committee, to support cabinet members and put forward plans and actions. The establishment of such a committee is a matter for Council and will be considered in due course. The proposed establishment of the task and finish group is a means of ensuring that there is wider member engagement in responding to the climate emergency in the shorter term.

Task and Finish Group – Waste Management Review

- 14 On 29 November 2019 the Committee established the above Group. Membership has been confirmed as Councillors Bartlett, Hewitt, Swinglehurst, Symonds (Chairperson) and Wilding (with confirmation of one further nomination expected.)

Co-option

- 15 A scrutiny committee may co-opt a maximum of two non-voting people as and when required, for example for a particular meeting or to join a task and finish group. Any such co-optees will be agreed by the committee having reference to the agreed workplan and/or task and finish group membership.
- 16 The Committee is asked to consider whether it wishes to exercise this power in respect of any matters in the work programme.

Tracking of recommendations made by the committee

- 16 A schedule of recommendations and action in response is attached at appendix 3.

Forward plan

- 17 The constitution states that scrutiny committees should consider the forward plan as the chief source of information regarding forthcoming key decisions. Forthcoming decisions can be viewed under the forthcoming decisions link on the council's website:

<http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/mgdelegateddecisions.aspx?XXR=0&DAYS=28&RP=0&K=0&DM=0&HD=0&DS=1&META=mgdelegateddecisions&V=0>

Suggestions for scrutiny from members of the public

- 18 Suggestions for scrutiny are invited from members of the public through the council's website, accessible through the link below. Any suggestions received are referenced in Appendix 1.

https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/info/200148/your_council/61/get_involved/4

Community impact

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

Equality duty

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

Resource implications

- 21 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

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

Risk management

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Risk/opportunity	Mitigation
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

- 24 The work programme is reviewed at every committee meeting. The Chairman and statutory scrutiny officer also review the work programme.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – draft work programme

Appendix 2 – draft scoping statement – climate emergency review

Appendix 3 - Schedule of recommendations made and response

Background papers

- None identified.