

Meeting:	General overview and scrutiny committee
Meeting date:	27 September 2016
Title of report:	Draft work programme and task and finish groups
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:

- (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; and**
- (b) a task and finish group on devolution be established to undertake the work outlined in the draft scoping statement (Appendix 2) and the membership be confirmed.**

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

Draft 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 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.
- 5 Revisions to the programme since the last meeting include:
 - Following discussion at the Forward Plan Briefing a proposed report on the highway maintenance plan will now be the subject of a briefing note instead.
 - The proposed report on the Travellers' Sites Development Plan Document – Preferred Options Consultation will be the subject of a briefing note in the first instance and of a report later in the year.
 - It is proposed at the invitation of the cabinet member – transport and roads to consider the outcome of consultation on the passenger transport review prior to consideration of the matter by Cabinet in December 2016.
 - The proposed addition of a report in November on Edgar Street/Hereford Football Club
 - Proposed task and finish group review of devolution (see paragraphs below)

Task and finish groups

- 6 The Leader of the Council following discussion with the Chairman of this Committee has invited the Committee to consider options open to the council in response to the national devolution deal agenda including the relative merits of applying to become a full constituent member of West Midlands Combined Authority.
- 7 Cabinet on 28 July approved the Council's application to become a non-constituent member of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA). The report noted that the council could consider becoming a constituent member of WMCA. This was not currently being recommended as there had been insufficient time to fully evaluate the governance, democratic and economic business case for doing so. However, this option may be considered at some point in the future. The Committee is therefore being invited to contribute to this matter. A draft scoping statement is attached at appendix 2.
- 8 The report to Cabinet on 28 July is available via the following link:
<http://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50038559/Cabinet%20report%20Members%20of%20WM%20combined%20authority.pdf>
- 9 In July the Committee requested a number of briefing notes on a range of topics noting that aspects of these topics may subsequently be considered as subjects for scrutiny by task and finish groups. A series of briefing notes will be issued separately to members of the committee. If members consider that any matters warrant task and finish group work these need to be put forward for consideration by the committee. If approved as task and finish group topics scoping statements would then be brought forward in due course.

Executive responses

- 10 An executive response is awaited to the report on the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Tracking of Recommendations Made by the Committee

- 11 A Schedule of Recommendations made and action in response to date is attached at appendix 3.

Forward plan

- 12 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>

Community impact

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

Equality duty

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

Financial implications

- 15 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

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

Risk management

- 17 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

- 18 The Chairman and Statutory scrutiny officer meet on a regular basis to review the work programme.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - Draft Work Programme

Appendix 2 - Draft Scoping Statement - devolution

Appendix 3 – Schedule of general overview and scrutiny committee recommendations made and action in response

Background papers

None identified.