

Title of report: Committee work programme

Meeting: Adults and wellbeing scrutiny committee

Meeting date: Monday 29 March 2021

Report by: Democratic services

Classification

Open

Decision type

This is not an executive decision

Wards affected

Wards

Purpose

To consider the committee's work programme.

Recommendation(s)

That the committee:

- (a) reviews the work programme and identifies any additional items of business or topics for inclusion;**
- (b) an additional meeting be held on Friday 30 April 2021, 9.30 am to consider a report on mental health; and**
- (c) the schedule of recommendations and responses in appendix 1 be noted.**

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

Work programme

2. The work programme needs to focus on the key issues of concern and be manageable. It must also be ready to accommodate urgent items or matters that have been called-in.
3. Committee members considered potential items of business and priorities at a scrutiny work programming session (held on 20 November 2020). Scheduled meetings during the municipal year 2020/21 have been held on 21 September 2020 (suicide prevention strategy implementation), 23 November 2020 (Herefordshire market position statement 2020-25), and 13 January 2021 (2021/22 budget setting).
4. An additional meeting was held on 26 January 2021 (21/22 budget saving proposal amendment) and another additional meeting has been arranged for 24 March 2021 (NHS White Paper: integration and innovation).
5. As part of the work programme item considered at the 13 January 2021 meeting, the committee requested an informal briefing on mental health and this was held on 16 March 2021. It is now proposed that a further additional meeting be arranged for Friday 30 April 2021 to consider an agenda item on mental health.
6. The adults and communities directorate has asked the committee to consider 'new arrangements for commissioned home care project', in order to present the proposals for recommissioning homecare which is delivered to around 800 people in their own homes by care agencies, at its scheduled meeting on 10 May 2021.
7. The revised work programme is as follows:
 - 30 April 2021, 9.30 am**
 - Mental health
 - 10 May 2021, 2.30 pm**
 - Learning disability services
 - New arrangements for commissioned home care project
 - 21 June 2021, 2.30 pm**
 - Domestic abuse strategy
8. Committee business remaining to be scheduled during the municipal year 2021/22 includes: emergency and urgent care; out of hospital care; and the Hillside Care Centre.
9. Committee members have identified an intention to undertake a task and finish group on the Covid-19 response, with the scope and timing to be determined. In addition, the

chairperson and vice-chairperson have suggested undertaking scrutiny activity on the health impact of the intensive poultry industry, with the scope and timing also to be determined.

10. Written briefing notes have been received and will be circulated to committee members shortly on: substance use service; sexual health service; and the Herefordshire Safeguarding Adults Board annual report 2019/20. Briefing notes have also been requested on: the falls service; NHS Continuing Healthcare; and recruitment and retention.
11. The work programme will remain under regular review to allow the committee to respond to particular circumstances.
12. Should committee members become aware of issues for scrutiny during the year they are invited to discuss the matter with the chairperson and the statutory scrutiny officer.

Schedule of recommendations and responses

13. Appended to this report (appendix 1) is a schedule of the recommendations made by the committee during 2020/21 and the responses received.

Constitutional matters

Task and finish groups

14. 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.
15. 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 two 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) and may include, as appropriate, co-opted people with specialist knowledge or expertise to support the task. The committee will appoint the chairperson of a task and finish group.

Co-option

16. 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 work programme and / or task and finish group membership.

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:

[Forthcoming decisions](#)

18. An extract of the forward plan of forthcoming decisions, as at 19 March 2021, for the adults and communities directorate is attached (appendix 2).

Suggestions for scrutiny from members of the public

19. Suggestions for scrutiny are invited from members of the public through the council's website, accessible through the link below:

[Get involved](#)

Community impact

20. In accordance with the adopted code of corporate governance, Herefordshire Council is committed to promoting a positive working culture that accepts, and encourages constructive challenge, and recognises that a culture and structure for scrutiny are key elements for accountable decision making, policy development, and review. Topics selected for scrutiny should have regard to what matters to residents.

Environmental Impact

21. There are no general implications for the environment arising from this report.

Equality duty

22. Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the 'general duty' on public authorities is set out as follows:

A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to

- a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

23. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations, and demonstrate that we are paying 'due regard' in our decision making in the design of policies and in the delivery of services. All Herefordshire Council members are trained and aware of their Public Sector Equality Duty and equality considerations are taken into account when serving on committees

Resource implications

24. 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

25. The remit of the scrutiny committee is set out in part 3, section 4.5 of the constitution and the role of the scrutiny committee is set out in part 2, section 2.6.5 of the constitution. The council is required to deliver a scrutiny function.

Risk management

- 26.
- | Risk / opportunity | Mitigation |
|--|--|
| There is a reputational risk to the council if the scrutiny function does not operate effectively. | The arrangements for the development of the work programme should help mitigate this risk. |

Consultees

27. A work programming session involving scrutiny committee members was held in November 2020. The work programme is reviewed at every scheduled committee meeting and during business planning meetings between the chairperson, vice-chairperson and statutory scrutiny officer.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Schedule of recommendations and responses

Appendix 2 Forward plan of forthcoming decisions, extract as at 19 March 2021 for the adults and communities directorate

Background papers

None identified.