

## **Title of report: Committee work programme**

**Meeting: General scrutiny committee**

**Meeting date: Monday 21 March 2022**

**Report by: Democratic services officer**

### **Classification**

Open

### **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision.

### **Wards affected**

(All wards)

### **Purpose**

To consider potential items for future scrutiny activity.

### **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

- (a) **The committee considers the prioritisation of potential items for future scrutiny activity.**

### **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**

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. During 2021/22, the committee considered the following items of business:

Meeting date and  
link to the papers:

Agenda items:

[11 June 2021](#)

Herefordshire Council's response to the Covid pandemic

[19 July 2021](#)

Update on executive response clarifications to the committee's Waste Management Strategic Review and the review of the Climate and Ecological Emergency

[10 August 2021](#)

Freehold disposal of the Town Hall, St Owen Street, Hereford

[22 September 2021](#)

Priority flood repair works capital programme: realignment

Development options for the former Holme Lacy School

Maylord Orchard

[15 November 2021](#)

An update from the Police and Crime Commissioner

[27 January 2022](#)

2022/23 budget setting

[21 March 2022](#)

Update on the planning service

(this agenda)

4. During the year, the committee identified the following potential items for future scrutiny activity:

- Digital strategy
- Estate management
- Hereford City Centre Transport Package (HCCTP)
- Management of capital projects and contract management
- New Model Institute for Technology and Engineering (NMITE)

5. The committee reviewed a scoping statement for a task and finish group on litter but it was not possible to progress this activity during 2021/22.

6. Suggestions for potential items for future scrutiny have also been made at the following meetings:

Meeting date and  
link to the minutes:

Suggestions:

[Audit and governance committee, 24 November 2021](#)

Matters pertaining to the delivery of Fastershire

[Council, 28 January 2022](#)

That scrutiny undertake a review of public engagement in respect of the policy update associated with the SCI (Statement of Community Involvement) and whether any improvements to consultation with the local community could be utilised more widely across the council for other consultation exercises.

7. The committee may wish to consider the prioritisation of potential items to inform the work programming for the new scrutiny committees in 2022/23 at this meeting, or to request a separate work programming session for committee members during April 2022.

## **Constitutional matters**

### **Reorganisation of scrutiny committee functions**

8. Informed by the work undertaken by the re-thinking governance working group, Council on [4 March 2022](#) approved a revised constitution, with implementation with effect from 20 May 2022. This includes the reorganisation of scrutiny committee functions into 5 committees, as follows:
  - Children and young people scrutiny committee
  - Connected communities scrutiny committee
  - Environment and sustainability scrutiny committee
  - Health care and wellbeing scrutiny committee
  - Scrutiny management board
9. Details of the new scrutiny committee remits can be found within [Section 4 - Scrutiny functions](#)

### **Suggestions for scrutiny**

10. Members of the public are invited to suggest topics for scrutiny, this link provides further details: [Get involved.](#)

### **Tracking of recommendations made by the committee**

11. A schedule of recommendations made to the executive and the executive responses in relation to the November 2021 and January 2022 meetings is attached at appendix A.

### **Forward plan**

12. The constitution states that scrutiny committees should consider the forward plan as the chief source of information regarding forthcoming decisions. This can be viewed through the forthcoming decisions link on the council's website: [Forthcoming decisions](#)

## **Community impact**

13. 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**

14. Herefordshire Council provides and purchases a wide range of services for the people of Herefordshire. Together with partner organisations in the private, public and voluntary sectors we share a strong commitment to improving our environmental sustainability, achieving carbon neutrality and to protect and enhance Herefordshire's outstanding natural environment.
15. The topics selected for scrutiny will take environmental impact into account.

## **Equality duty**

16. 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.
17. The public sector equality duty (specific duty) requires us to consider how we can contribute positively 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. As this report concerns the administrative function of the committee, it is not considered that it will have an impact on the equality duty.
18. The topics selected for scrutiny need to have regard to equality and human rights issues.

## **Resource implications**

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

## **Legal implications**

20. The council is required to deliver an overview and scrutiny function. The development of a work programme that is focused and reflects priorities facing Herefordshire will assist the committee and the council to deliver the scrutiny function.

## **Risk management**

21. 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 to mitigate this risk.

## **Consultees**

22. The work programme is reviewed at committee meetings. The chairperson, vice-chairperson and statutory scrutiny officer also keep the work programme under regular review.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix A      Schedule of recommendations made to the executive and the executive responses (November 2021 and January 2022)

## **Background papers**

None identified.