

# Title of report: **Work programme 2024/5**

**Meeting: Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee**

**Meeting date: 10 July 2024**

**Report by: Statutory Scrutiny Officer**

## **Classification**

Open

## **Decision type**

This is not an executive decision

## **Wards affected**

(All Wards)

## **Purpose**

To consider the draft work programme for the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee for the municipal year 2024/25.

## **Recommendation(s)**

**That:**

- a) The committee agree the draft work programme, which will be subject to periodical reviews, as the basis of their primary focus for the remainder of the municipal year.**

## **Alternative options**

1. The committee could decline to agree a work programme for its future committee meetings. This would likely result in unstructured and purposeless meetings.
2. The committee could also decline to determine who they would like to invite to participate in meetings, or which evidence they wish to receive in advance of the meeting. This would likely result in an inefficient use of their committee time.

## **Key considerations**

3. A fundamental part of good scrutiny is planning and agreeing a programme of work for the committee to undertake. A well-considered work programme:
  - a. identifies priorities for the committee's work that align with corporate and partnership priorities, as well as reflecting community concern;

- b. ensures that each identified topic has clear objectives that focus the committee's work;
  - c. creates a timetable for the committee's programme of work so that the committee carry out its work at the optimal time; and
  - d. provides officers and partners with requirements for evidence that will support the committee in providing evidence-based scrutiny
4. To prepare this work programme, the committee chair met with officers of the council to identify potential priority areas of work for the committee. These were scheduled within the work programme to ensure the committee considers topics when it is most useful to do so. The committee then discussed and further developed the draft work programme listed as appendix 1.
5. The committee would like to consider the findings of the market testing exercise arising from the recent Cabinet agreement to redesign and re-tender its public services contract. Due to the committee's schedule of meetings it would be unable to do so within a committee meeting. It therefore proposes a working group of the committee to meet to consider the findings arising from the exercise.
6. The findings from the market exercise will not be ready until late September 2024. In addition, the committee's own commissioned research into housing delivery models will not be complete until the very end of September 2024. It is therefore proposed to move the committee's scheduled September meeting to a date in October 2024.
7. Included in appendix 1 to this report are items within the council's forward plan of key decisions that are relevant to this committee. There is also a list of topics the committee may consider in the future, but has yet to develop sufficiently to include within the work programme.

### **Community impact**

8. Effective scrutiny enables the committee to reflect community concern, one of the four purposes of scrutiny as outlined by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.

### **Environmental impact**

9. This report contains no direct environmental impacts. However the work that the committee will undertake resulting from agreeing this work programme may have direct impacts. Reports arising from or supporting this work will outline their potential environmental impact.

### **Equality duty**

10. 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. This report contains no direct equality impacts. However the reports and issues that the committee will consider may have direct impacts. Reports arising from or supporting this work will outline the any associated equality impacts for committee consideration.

### **Resource implications**

11. This report constitutes part of the typical function of this committee. Similarly, a programme of work undertaken by committee is an integral part of the council's 'business as usual'. There is no resource implication in setting or agreeing a work programme. However agreed topics in the work programme, in particular any requests for bespoke research or the involvement of outside

experts or community groups, may incur resource costs. These will be contained in any reporting or planning of agreed topics within this work programme.

### **Legal implications**

12. The remit of the scrutiny committee is set out in part 3 section 4 of the constitution and the role of the scrutiny committee is set out in part 2 article 6 of the constitution.
13. The Local Government Act 2000 requires the council to deliver the scrutiny function.

### **Risk management**

14. There are no risks identified in the committee agreeing an effective and timely programme of work. However there is a risk to the council's reputation if committees fail to set a work programme, or set a programme of work that does not address local authority, partnership or community priorities.

### **Consultees**

15. In drafting this work programme, consideration has been given to:
  - a. The previous work of the Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee;
  - b. Priorities suggested by members of the committee; and
  - c. Herefordshire Council officers
16. This work programme is subject to ongoing review, which may involve additional consultees.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Connected Communities Scrutiny Committee draft work programme 2024/25

### **Background papers**

None