



## **AGENDA ITEM: 12**

**CORPORATE AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW &  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:  
21 February 2013**

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**Report of: Borough Solicitor**

**Relevant Managing Director: Managing Director (People and Places)**

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**SUBJECT: WORK PROGRAMME – PROGRESS REPORT**

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Wards affected: Borough wide.

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To consider the current position of the Work Programme of the Corporate and Environmental Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the way forward for 2013/14.

### **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That the Committee determines **either** that it wishes to undertake a review as part of its work programme in 2013/14, as detailed at paragraph 5.2 **or** considers topics put forward through the established 'Member Items Protocol'.

2.2 That the Work Programme 2013/14 for the Corporate and Environmental Overview & Scrutiny Committee be considered at the first 2013/14 meeting of the Committee.

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### **3.0 BACKGROUND**

3.1 The current Work Programme for Corporate and Environmental Overview & Scrutiny Committee and included on the Council's web site is:

- Conducts in depth reviews/policy development as set out in its work programme in respect of the functions undertaken within each service, including related external matters.

The Committee considers as part of its routine work:

- Items referred from 'Members Update' at the request of a Member
- Members items/Councillor Call for Action (CCfA)
- Performance management
- Acts as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee
- Recommendations from previously conducted reviews

3.2 The Corporate and Environmental Overview & Scrutiny Committee establishes its own Work Programme annually. In relation to that Work Programme it was previously agreed that future work programmes would be informed:

- By inviting all Members and DSH to submit topics.
- By inviting members of the public to submit topics via a press release and the inclusion of an article on the Council's web site.
- And if appropriate, via a workshop session to which all Members be invited, including Key Stakeholders, the Press and members of the public, if determined by the Lead Officer, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson.

Potential topics to be considered by the Committee for inclusion in its Work Programme shall be included on the Council's web site with a request that any comments be forwarded to Member Services.

3.3 In depth work 'a review' is usually undertaken by the Committee, however it may also be carried out by informal cross party member working groups called "Commissions" to contribute to and inform the Overview and Scrutiny process.

3.4 At its meeting on 5 July 2012 the Committee considered outstanding work associated with the work previously undertaken by the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committees and confirmed the Work Programme for the combined Committee for 2012/13. The Work Programme timetable for the Committee was noted with the proviso that the Committee would re-consider its option to undertake an in-depth study at a later date.

#### **4.0 CURRENT POSITION**

4.1 The in-depth review 'Cycling in West Lancashire', commenced in July 2011 has progressed as per the timetable contained in its Project Plan. The final report on the review is being considered at this meeting. Any minor amendments will be fed into the final report before being considered by Cabinet or Council, as appropriate.

4.2 The review 'Role of the Parish and Town Councils and the impact of the Localism Bill' was completed in July 2012 and its recommendations endorsed by Council at its meeting held on 17 October 2012. The Committee will review its recommendations in June 2013.

4.3 The Committee considered the recommendations from the previously conducted review 'Governance Arrangements – Tenants Services' and noted that the Landlord Services Committee (Cabinet Working Group) would continue to monitor the arrangements.

- 4.4 The Member Development Commission has continued its work during 2012/13 and the Committee has been kept informed of its work through the notes from its meetings.
- 4.5 The Committee continues to consider items at the request of a Member. In 2012/13 it determined that Grass Cutting in West Lancashire should receive further consideration and Members heard from and questioned Officers from Street Scene on the work undertaken in relation to the maintenance of the Borough's grassed open public land.
- 4.6 The Committee's work programme also includes consideration of items referred to it at the request of a Member from the Members' Update.
- 4.7 The Committee continues to consider items as part of its performance management role, including the Annual Reports from West Lancashire Community Leisure/Serco and One Connect Ltd.
- 4.8 The Committee also acts as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee and as part of that role is considering a presentation on behalf of the West Lancashire Community Safety Partnership at this meeting.

## **5.0 FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME**

- 5.1 In considering the future Work Programme of the Committee Members will need to be mindful of its routine work which may limit the scope of the review they select in order to undertake and complete its work within reasonable timescales.
- 5.2 If the Committee does determine that it will undertake a review in 2013/14 then the following arrangements will need to be put in place.
- (i) Arrangements to request items for the Committee's Work Programme for 2013/14 from Members, Directorate Service Heads (DSH) and by inviting members of the public to submit topics via a press release and the inclusion of an article on the Council's web site, using the agreed procedure set out in paragraph 3.2 above.
  - (ii) Arrangements for all potential topics received by the deadline to be published on the Council's web site for Members of the public to comment or make suggestions on any future topics.
  - (iii) Following the deadline for receipt of potential topics the Lead Officer, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Labour Spokesperson be requested to score each of the topics using the agreed 'Scrutiny Topic Assessment Criteria.'

## **6.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS/COMMUNITY STRATEGY**

- 6.1 Enhanced overview and scrutiny arrangements can give a greater level of involvement for non-cabinet members in the decision making process.

## **7.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 There are financial and resource implications in respect of officer and member time in dealing with the matters under the Work Programme. There are also limitations to the scope of a review and number of topics that can be undertaken and these must be contained within existing resources.

## **8.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

8.1 The work of the Committee has to be balanced with other priorities in Member Services and dealt with accordingly. Officers will advise the Committee on the capacity to support the work and will be as helpful as possible in trying to accommodate Members requests.

## **9.0 CONCLUSION**

9.1 The topic selection process involves members applying their knowledge, experience and judgement throughout. Officers can support and advise members on topic selection having regard to the agreed criteria. It is for the Members of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee to decide how they wish to proceed.

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### **Background Documents**

There are no background documents (as defined in Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972) to this Report.

### **Equality Impact Assessment**

The decision does not have any direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. Therefore no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

### **Appendices**

None.