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**Report of: Corporate Director of Transformation & Resources**

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**SUBJECT: WORK PROGRAMME TOPIC SELECTION 2022/23**

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Wards affected: Borough wide.

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 To consider the Work Programme for the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2022/23.

## **2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That arrangements be put in place to request items for the Work Programme 2022/23 from Members, Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Parish Councils and by inviting members of the public to submit topics via the press release and by the inclusion of an article on the Council's web-site.
- 2.2 That the timetable attached at Appendix A for establishing the Work Programme for the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2022/23 be agreed.
- 2.3 That the Press Release attached as Appendix B be approved,
- 2.4 That all potential topics received by the deadline be published on the Council's web site.
- 2.5 That following the deadline for receipt of potential topics, the Lead Officer, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Conservative and Our West Lancashire Spokesperson be requested to score, at a virtual meeting, each of the topics using the agreed selection criteria set out at Appendix C, with the person submitting the topic being given the opportunity to attend that meeting and provide reasons for the submission.

- 2.6 That a report on the Work Programme for 2022/23 together with the results of the scoring exercise, be considered at the next meeting of the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee to select which topic/s are to be selected for In-Depth Review.
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### **3.0 BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The current Work Programme for the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee which is referred to on the Council's web site can be summarised as:

#### **'Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee'**

The Committee conducts in depth reviews/policy development as set out in its work programme and also 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 topic selected for review in the 201/22 Work Programme is "Action on Climate Emergency' combined with 'Create/Designate Hedgehog and Wildlife areas in public parks/gardens across the Borough". The final report on the review is included on the agenda for this meeting.
- 3.3 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 Corporate Management Team (CMT) to submit topics.
  - By inviting Parish Councils 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 Spokespersons.
- 3.4 Potential topics to be considered by the Committee shall be included on the Council's web site with a request that any comments be forwarded to Member Services.
- 3.5 An in-depth review is usually undertaken by the main Committee, however during the year, Member Development Commission have conducted a review of existing Scrutiny Arrangements at West Lancashire Borough Council, and has

recommended that future in-depth scrutiny is undertaken in Task & Finish Groups. Details of the review and outcomes are included in a separate report on this agenda and the manner in which in-depth reviews are undertaken will be dependent on the outcome of that report ie. by the main Committee or in Task & Finish Groups.

#### **4.0 TOPIC FOR 2022/23**

4.1 The suggested timetable for topic selection for 2022/23, including relevant actions is attached at Appendix A. It is intended that the invitation press release at Appendix B be sent out the following day, subject to approval, to enable Parish Councils sufficient time to submit topics. The Scrutiny Topic Assessment – Selection Criteria, is attached at Appendix C.

4.2 In considering topic selection, the Committee will need to be mindful of the work that can be completed within reasonable timescales.

#### **5.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 Enhanced overview and scrutiny arrangements can give a greater level of involvement for non-cabinet members in the decision making process. The introduction of Task and Finish Groups will increase that involvement, as membership will be open to all Members (Cabinet Members by invitation only).

#### **6.0 FINANCIAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 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 future review and number of topics that can be undertaken and these must be contained within existing resources.

6.2 Depending on the nature of the review topic chosen, Members may wish for external organisations to participate. Their presence can be invited but the Committee has no power to insist upon their attendance.

#### **7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT**

7.1 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. However if Task and Finish Groups are approved, The Council will be requested to appoint a part time Member Services Officer to facilitate the additional associated work.

#### **8.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from this report, however it is inevitable that there will be future implications arising from the work that scrutiny will undertake at Committees and in the Task and Finish Groups, which will be considered.

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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. However, if a topic was selected for in-depth review it may have an impact on those groups and, if so, this will be assessed when the Project Plan is prepared.

## **Appendices**

- A Draft timetable for establishing Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2022/23
- B Press Release
- C Scrutiny Topic Assessment – Selection Criteria