



**CORPORATE AND
ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW &
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:
10 MARCH 2022**

Report of: Corporate Director of Transformation & Resources (Lead Officer)

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**SUBJECT: IN DEPTH REVIEW TOPIC/S FOR 2022/2023 – RECOMMENDATIONS OF
THE SCORING PANEL**

Wards affected: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 To consider the recommendations of the Topic Scoring Panel held on 22 February 2022 and additional recommendations from Council held on 23 February for Task & Finish Groups.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the results of the scoring exercise (Appendix A) undertaken by the Panel be noted and endorsed.

2.2 That the following topics recommended by the Panel to be selected for review by a Task & Finish Group in 2022/23, be approved:

- Topic 4 – Grass Cutting Contracts
- Topic 9 – Litter clearance Skelmersdale and other areas

2.3 That Task & Finish Groups requested by Council at its meeting held on 23 February 2022 be established in respect of:

- Community Environmental Improvements, including community orchards
- Shop Front Improvements

2.4 That the actions identified in Appendix A be approved in respect of those topics not selected for review and an update report on what action has been taken in respect of these suggestions, be reported to the Committee in September 2022.

- 2.5 That a press release be prepared and issued to inform local residents of the chosen review topic(s) selected for review by Task & Finish Groups and the actions identified in Appendix A, in respect of those topics not selected for review.
 - 2.6 That a presentation on the selected topic be provided and a draft Project Plan for the review be prepared for the first meeting of Task & Finish Group.
 - 2.7 That the Work Programme for the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the established Task & Finish Groups, as set out in paragraph 4.6 below, subject to any amendments agreed by the Committee, be confirmed and included on the Council's web site.
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3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee establishes its own Work Programme annually. At its meeting on 9 December 2021 the Committee confirmed that arrangements would be put in place to request items for its Work Programme for 2022/23. This would be done:
 - By inviting members of the public to submit topics via a press release and by the inclusion of an article on the Council's web site.
 - By inviting all Members, Parish Councils and Corporate Management Team (CMT) to submit topics.
- 3.2 Further, that following the deadline for receipt of potential topics, a list of topics received were published on the Councils Website, and invitations were sent to all contributors to attend the Topic Scoring meeting, to make representation regarding their proposed topic.
- 3.3 The Lead Officer, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, nominated Conservative Group Spokesperson and Our West Lancashire Spokesperson would then score the potential topics put forward.
- 3.4 The scoring exercise was subsequently undertaken on 22 February 2022,, using the scrutiny topic selection criteria, taking into account Council's Corporate Priorities and the information that had been submitted on each topic, including verbal representations.
- 3.5 The following submitted topics were considered:
Appendices
 - Topic 1 - What Happens to Waste after Collection / Recycling
 - Topic 2 - Skelmersdale Memorial Park, Sandy Lane
 - Topic 3 - Graffiti
 - Topic 4 - Grass Cutting Contracts
 - Topic 5 - Removal of car park charges to increase footfall- Ormskirk

- Topic 6 - Dog Fouling – additional enforcement measures
- Topic 7 - Additional litter/dog-waste bin sites
- Topic 8 - Water management Strategies
- Topic 9 - Litter clearance Skelmersdale and other areas
- Topic 10 - Skelmersdale Community Farm

4.0 CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The Recommendations of the Panel and the Scoring Results are set out in Appendix A to the report. The Panel have recommended the following topics for in depth review:

- Topic 4 – Grass Cutting Contracts
- Topic 9 – Litter clearance Skelmersdale and other areas

4.2 At Council on 23 February 2022, during consideration of the Revenue and Capital Budget Setting report and amendments, it was also recommended that the Committee establish Task & Finish Groups in respect of the following:

- Community Environmental Improvements, including community orchards
- Shop Front Improvements

4.3 Following the decision of the Committee in respect of 4.1 and 4.2, Member Services will seek the interest of Members in the various Task & Finish Groups and consult group Leaders, identify a Lead Officer and relevant service officer support and following consultation, will prepare a draft Project Plan (including Terms of Reference) for the appointed Task and Finish Groups.

4.4 The format of the Task and finish groups will be as follows:

(a) Membership:

- 6 Members (3 Lab, 2 Con, 1 OWL), subject to change each year to reflect political makeup and inclusion of Independent councillor(s) as appropriate
- Additional Members (To be appointed by the Task & Finish Group/Committee if required)
- Co-optees: If required

(Members volunteer to be a member of the group, and selection is made on the members particular interest and expertise in the area being scrutinised. Members not to be restricted to Scrutiny Members, but open to all. Cabinet Members by invitation only.)

(b) Meetings

- to be held ad hoc, dependent on the nature of the topic, eg if there is a set deadline for a review to take place and conclude in order to make a decision, the group will meet several times within a short timeframe.
- To be held virtually

(c) Remit:

- Initial meeting will set out the Terms of Reference, membership, timeframe, etc via a project plan proforma
- Final reports of the Task & Finish Group to be submitted to Corporate & Environmental Overview & Scrutiny Committee for approval prior to consideration by Cabinet / Council.

4.5 The actions/recommendations of the Panel in respect of those items not chosen for in-depth review are set out in Appendix A. An update report on what action has been taken in respect of these suggestions, will be reported to the Committee in September 2022.

4.6 The Work Programme for the Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee and relevant Task and Finish Group will be included on the Council's web site as follows:

"Corporate and Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee'

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*
- *Reviews the recommendations from previously conducted reviews*

The Committee also appoints Task and Finish Groups to conduct in-depth reviews/policy development. Task and Finish Groups will consider topics in more detail, as requested, and report findings/recommendations to the Committee. The Committee will then submit recommendations to Cabinet and Council, as appropriate.

Task & Finish Groups established for 2022/23 are as follows:

(to be included following approval by the Committee)"

4.7 A press release will also be issued to inform local residents of the chosen review topics.

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.

5.2 The introduction of Task and Finish Groups allows more focused scrutiny outside of the main committee and increased non-cabinet Member involvement.

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.

6.2 An additional part time resource of 10 hours per week has been approved to support the work of Task and Finish Groups. Depending on the number of topics chosen and the scope of the review, Task and Finish Groups will either run side by side or consecutively.

7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 The work of the Committee has to be balanced with other priorities 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.

8.0 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no health and wellbeing implications arising from this report, however these will be considered for any topic selected for review.

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 report does not have a direct impact on members of the public, employees, elected members and / or stakeholders. However, any recommendations coming forward from the selected topic may have an impact on those groups and, if so, these will be assessed during the review.

Appendices

- A. Summary of Outcome and recommendations of the Panel – Topic Scoring Exercise
- B. Corporate Priorities in detail
- C. Scrutiny Topic Selection Criteria