

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO THE SUBJECT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 3

17 JULY 2017

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – OPERATIONAL AND PARTNERSHIP SERVICES

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE

1. Purpose of the Report

- a) To present the Committee with a list of potential Forward Work Programme items for comment and prioritisation;
- b) To ask the Committee to identify any further items for consideration using the pre-determined criteria form.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives / Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The key improvement objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2016–2020 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The Corporate Improvement Objectives were adopted by Council on 1 March 2017 and formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2016 and 2020. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background

- 3.1 At the beginning of the municipal year each Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to identify issues for consideration during the year, using the pre-determined criteria (**Appendix A**) which emphasises the need to consider issues such as impact, risk, performance, budget and community perception when identifying topics for investigation. The purpose of Appendix A is to ensure a strategic responsibility for Scrutiny and that its work benefits the organisation.
- 3.2 Under the terms of Bridgend County Borough Council's Constitution, each Overview and Scrutiny Committee must publish a Forward Work Programme (FWP) as far as it is known.

4. Current Situation / Proposal

- 4.1 An effective FWP will identify the issues that the Committee wishes to focus on during the year and provide a clear rationale as to why particular issues have been selected, as well as the approach that will be adopted; i.e. will the Committee be undertaking a policy review/ development role ("Overview") or performance management approach ("Scrutiny").

- 4.2 On 28 June 2017, a report was presented to Council where it provided details of the new Scrutiny Committee Structure, Terms of Reference and its processes.
- 4.3 As agreed by Council, there will be 8 scheduled meetings during the year for each Scrutiny Committee. The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is able to look at a maximum of 16 topics over a 12 month period.
- 4.4 Each of the following topics would sit within the remit of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee:
- Performance Monitoring
 - Corporate Plan
 - Business Planning
 - Budget Monitoring
 - Public Service Board
 - Partnership working
 - Contract Management
- 4.5 In addition to this, the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will have responsibility for setting and prioritising the overall FWP for the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- 4.6 The Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be allocated one item at a time from the overall FWP undertaking Scrutiny investigation of the subject over a maximum of two meetings. Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees can therefore consider up to 8 topics per year. It is hoped that consideration of one item will enable greater focus on priority items and will enable Members to drill down further into topics and overall achieve more effective outcomes.
- 4.7 Officer Planning Meetings will take place every two months between the Scrutiny Officers and each Corporate Director to deliberate the items on the overall FWP. In addition to these meetings, FWP Development Meetings will also take place between Cabinet Members and Scrutiny Chairs every three months in order for both Cabinet and Scrutiny to discuss and co-ordinate their FWPs.
- 4.8 The FWPs will remain flexible and will be revisited at each Corporate Overview and Scrutiny meeting with input from each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee and any information gathered from FWP meetings with Corporate Directors and Cabinet.

Draft Forward Work Programmes

- 4.9 Attached at **Appendix B** is a summary of the list of topics that has been compiled from suggested items from the previous Scrutiny Committees prior to the elections. It also includes some proposals from Corporate Directors and detail from research undertaken by Scrutiny Officers taking into account the following:
- *Corporate Plan ;*
 - *Directorate Business Plans;*
 - *Performance Reports to Scrutiny Committees;*
 - *Annual business planning and budget setting process.*

- 4.10 A more detailed version of the draft Forward Work Programme can be found at **Appendix C.**
- 4.11 The Committee is asked to prioritise up to six items to present to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for formal prioritisation and designation to each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Process for Feedback

- 4.12 All conclusions made at Subject Overview and Scrutiny meetings, as well as recommendations and requests for information should be responded to by Officers, to ensure that there are clear outcomes from each topic investigated.
- 4.13 These will then be presented to the relevant Scrutiny Committee at their next meeting to ensure that they have had a response.
- 4.14 When each topic has been considered and the Committee is satisfied with the outcome, the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee will then present their findings to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee who will determine whether to remove the item from the FWP or to re-add for further prioritisation at a future date.

Corporate Parenting

- 4.15 Corporate Parenting is the term used to describe the responsibility of a local authority towards looked after children and young people. This is a legal responsibility given to local authorities by the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004. The role of the Corporate Parent is to seek for children in public care the outcomes every good parent would want for their own children. The Council as a whole is the 'corporate parent', therefore all Members have a level of responsibility for the children and young people looked after by Bridgend. ¹
- 4.16 In this role, it is suggested that Members consider how each item they consider affects children in care and care leavers, and in what way can the Committee assist in these areas.
- 4.17 Scrutiny Champions can greatly support the Committee in this by advising them of the ongoing work of the Cabinet-Committee and particularly any decisions or changes which they should be aware of as Corporate Parents.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework & Procedure Rules

- 5.1 The work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committees relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the Council's Policy Framework and consideration of plans, policy or strategy relating to the power to promote or improve economic, social or environmental wellbeing in the County Borough of Bridgend. Any changes to the structure of the Scrutiny Committees and
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the procedures relating to them would require the Bridgend County Borough Council constitution to be updated.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality implications attached to this report.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 There are no financial implications attached to this report.

8. Recommendations

8.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- (i) Identify any further detail for inclusion on the overall Forward Work Programme 2017-18 to include specific information required on each item and invitees to be invited to attend;
- (ii) Prioritise up to six items from the FWP to present to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee for formal prioritisation and designation back to the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- (iii) Identify suitable items for Webcasting from the overall Forward Work Programme;
- (iv) Agree to use the criteria form for any additional items for future consideration on the Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes.

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Background documents

None.