

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

31 JULY 2017

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR – OPERATIONAL AND PARTNERSHIP SERVICES

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2017-18

1. Purpose of Report.

- a) To present the Committee with its own draft Forward Work Programme (FWP) for 2017-18 for consideration and approval;
- b) To present the Committee with a list of potential Forward Work Programme items for formal prioritisation and allocation to each of the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

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 as far as it is known.

4. Current situation / proposal.

- 4.1 An effective Forward Work Programme 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 have responsibility for setting and prioritising the overall forward work programme 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. It is anticipated that any investigation will last no longer than two meetings. SOSCs can consider up to eight topics per year. 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 forward work programme. In addition to these meetings, Forward Work Programme 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 Forward Work Programmes 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 draft forward work programme with proposed dates for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 4.10 Attached at Appendix C is a list of topics that has been compiled from suggested items from the Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committees along with further items proposed from the previous Scrutiny Committees prior to the elections. This incorporates proposals from Corporate Directors, Cabinet Members 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.*

4.11 This list of items requires formal prioritisation by the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee and allocation back to each Subject Overview and Scrutiny Committee for investigation.

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.

4.15 Recommendations can also be made directly to Cabinet from any Scrutiny Committee, following the rules and procedures as laid out in the Constitution.

4.16 Where the recommendations relate to a report already on the Cabinet forward work programme, it is for the relevant Corporate Director to include their response to the recommendations in their report to Cabinet. Where there is not a report scheduled for Cabinet, the Scrutiny Committee will send their own report directly to Cabinet containing their recommendations.

Corporate Parenting

4.17 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

4.18 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.

4.19 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.

¹ Welsh Assembly Government and Welsh Local Government Association *'If this were my child... A councillor's guide to being a good corporate parent to children in care and care leavers'*, June 2009

5.1 The work of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee relates to the review and development of plans, policy or strategy that form part of the 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.

6. Equality Impact Assessment

6.1 There are no equality impacts arising directly from this report.

7. Financial Implications.

7.1 The delivery of the Forward Work Programme will be met from within existing resources for Overview and Scrutiny support.

8. Recommendation.

8.1 The Committee is recommended to:

- a) Identify any further detail to include specific information required on each item and invitees to be invited to for inclusion on the Committee's own Forward Work Programme 2017-18;
- b) Identify any further detail and agree three priority topics from the list of items attached at Appendix C and allocate as appropriate to the Subject Committees for their next meetings;
- c) Identify three further priority topics from the list of items attached at Appendix C as an indication of the possible items for future allocation to the Subject Committees;
- e) Identify suitable items for Webcasting from the overall Forward Work Programme;
- f) Agree to use the criteria form for any additional items for future consideration on the Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes.

Andrew Jolley
Corporate Director – Operational and Partnership Services

Contact Officer: Scrutiny Unit

Telephone: (01656) 643613

E-mail: scrutiny@bridgend.gov.uk

Postal Address Bridgend County Borough Council,
Civic Offices,
Angel Street,
Bridgend,
CF31 4WB

Background documents

None