

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO CORPORATE RESOURCES AND IMPROVEMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

24 JUNE 2015

REPORT OF THE ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE – LEGAL & REGULATORY SERVICES

FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME 2015-16

1. Purpose of Report.

- 1.1 To present the Committee with suggested topics for consideration in the development of its Forward Work Programme for 2015-16.

2. Connection to Corporate Improvement Objectives/Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The key improvement objectives identified in the Corporate Plan 2013-2017 have been embodied in the Overview & Scrutiny Forward Work Programmes. The amended Corporate Improvement Objectives adopted by Council on 25 February 2015 formally set out the improvement objectives that the Council will seek to implement between 2013 and 2017. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees engage in review and development of plans, policy or strategies that support the Corporate Themes.

3. Background.

- 3.1 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. This FWP period runs from May 2015 – May 2016.

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 8 April 2015, a report was presented to Council where it was agreed that:

- i) Each of the following topics be considered by only one Scrutiny Committee:
- Performance Monitoring
 - Corporate Plan
 - Business Planning
 - Budget Monitoring

- ii) There would only be 6 scheduled meetings during the year for each Scrutiny Committee, which will look at a maximum of 12 service area topics. Without the capacity to support additional meetings there is a need for each of the Scrutiny Committees to:
 - Identify 12 topics for consideration which will provide the most significant value for the Authority and to the residents of the Borough of Bridgend;
 - Prioritise their workloads i.e. if a key topic arises one of the existing planned topics will have to be removed from the programme;
 - Focus their investigations to make best use of available resources;
 - Determine appropriate recommendations which will support the delivery of the appropriate outcomes.
- iii) Once the Forward Work Programmes for each Committee have been determined, the Scrutiny Chairs will monitor the programmes of each Committee at their monthly meeting to ensure that the corporate priorities are being met. Proposals to consider a corporate priority topic will be included in the Forward Work Programme report submitted to every Scrutiny Committee meeting.
- iv) There will be 8 meetings during the year allocated to facilitate collaborative committees to deal with cross-cutting issues, such as Supporting People and Bridgend Change Programme.
- v) In addition to the above meetings, there are 14 meetings allocated to Research and Evaluation Panels (REPs)
 - 2 meetings for the Local Service Board Scrutiny REP
 - 4 meetings for the School Engagement REP
 - 2 meetings of the Social Services Annual Reporting Framework (SSARF) REP
 - 6 meetings of the Budget REP

4.3 During March and April, Scrutiny Officers developed a long list of potential items for inclusion on the Forward Work Programme, using the criteria set out below, which emphasise the need to consider issues such as impact, risk, performance, budget and community perception when identifying topics for investigation.

Examples of Issues to Consider when Selecting Areas for Scrutiny:

Initial Reasons:

- 1 Is the subject within the Committee's terms of reference?
- 2 How can Members add value in their representative role?
- 3 Is the subject being/been/due to be dealt with elsewhere in the Authority/partner agencies?
- 4 What would be the purpose of conducting a review of this area?
- 5 To what extent does the subject impact upon the Council's ability to achieve its key priorities?

Risk:

6 Is the subject a high-risk area? How does it relate to the Authority's risk management framework?

Performance Measures:

7 Has the Council demonstrated poor performance in this area?

8 To what extent is there scope to improve service delivery in this area?

Community Perception:

9 Has any consultation with stakeholders taken place in this area? If so, how robust was the consultation process?

10 Does the local community rank the subject as important?

11 How does the subject impact upon the Council's Community Leadership role?

12 Is the subject of public interest highlighted in the local media?

External Factors:

13 Has the matter been the subject of external/internal review or inspection? If so, what were the findings of the review?

14 Is there any recent/upcoming legislation that will affect the Council's approach to this subject?

15 Is the subject a Local Service Board priority?

Budget:

16 Is there a high level of budgetary commitment to the subject? Is there a pattern of budgetary overspends?

4.4 Officers also used the following sources in order to select items for inclusion on the long list:

- *Committee Requests for Scrutiny from previous Forward Work Programmes;*
- *Wales Audit Office Assessment Letters;*
- *Corporate Risk Assessment;*
- *Directorate Business Plans;*
- *Performance Reports to Scrutiny Committees;*
- *Annual business planning and budget setting process;*
- *Commission of Public Service Governance and Delivery (the Williams Report)*

4.5 Following the development of the long list, Scrutiny Chairs and officers took part in a work planning exercise in order to develop a shortlist of items and provisionally allocate each item to a meeting date. The shortlist for Corporate Resources and Improvement is set out at Appendix A and proposed topics for the collaborative committee which cross over with Corporate Resources and Improvement are set out at Appendix B.

5. Effect upon Policy Framework& Procedure Rules.

- 5.1 The work of the Corporate Resources and Improvement 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 well being 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 implementation 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:
- i. Consider the suggested topics for inclusion on the Committee's Forward Work Programme 2015-16;
 - ii. Identify the 12 Primary topics for inclusion on the Forward Work Programme and prioritise those topics for presentation to the Committee;
 - iii. Determine if it wishes the Overview and Scrutiny Unit to undertake scoping exercises with regard to any additional topics that it wishes to be considered for inclusion on its Forward Work Programme;
 - iv. Prioritise the delivery of the Joint Scrutiny topics involving the Committee.

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Background documents

Wales Audit Office Assessment Letters (August and November 2013);
Corporate Risk Assessment;

Directorate Business Plans;
Commission of Public Service Governance and Delivery (the Williams Report);
Minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Committees May 2014 –May 2015.