

Report to: Partnerships Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 5 June 2014

Report Author: Scrutiny Coordinator

Title: Scrutiny Work Programme

1. What is the report about?

The report presents Partnerships Scrutiny Committee with its draft forward work programme for members' consideration.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To seek the Committee to review and agree on its programme of future work, and to update members on relevant issues.

3. What are the recommendations?

That the Committee:

- 3.1 considers the information provided and approves, revises or amends its forward work programme as it deems appropriate; and
- 3.2 confirms/appoints representatives to serve on the various Service Challenge Groups and the Schools Standards Monitoring Group.

4. Report details.

- 4.1 Article 6 of the Council's Constitution sets out each Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference, functions and membership, whilst the rules of procedure for scrutiny committees are laid out in Part 4 of the Constitution.
- 4.2 The Constitution of Denbighshire County Council requires scrutiny committees to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. By reviewing and prioritising issues, members are able to ensure that the work programme delivers a member-led agenda.
- 4.3 For a number of years it has been an adopted practice in Denbighshire for scrutiny committees to limit the number of reports considered at any one meeting to a maximum of four plus the Committee's own work programme report. The objective of this approach is to facilitate detailed and effective debate on each topic.
- 4.4 The Committee is requested to consider its draft work programme for future meetings as detailed in appendix 1 and approve, revise or amend it as it deems appropriate. When deciding on the work programme members are asked to take into consideration:

- issues raised by members of the Committee
- matters referred to it by the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group
- relevance to the Committee's/Council's/community priorities
- the Council's Corporate Plan and the Director of Social Services' Annual Report
- meeting workload
- timeliness
- outcomes
- key issues and information to be included in reports
- whether the relevant lead Cabinet member will be invited to attend (having regard to whether their attendance is necessary or would add value). (In all instances this decision will be communicated to the lead member concerned)
- questions to be put to officers/lead Cabinet members

4.5 When considering future items for inclusion on the forward work programme members may also find it helpful to have regard to the following questions when determining a subject's suitability for inclusion on the work programme:

- what is the issue?
- who are the stakeholders?
- what is being looked at elsewhere
- what does scrutiny need to know? and
- who may be able to assist?

4.6 As mentioned in paragraph 4.2 the Constitution of Denbighshire County Council requires scrutiny committees to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. To assist the process of prioritising reports, if officers are of the view that a subject merits time for discussion on the Committee's business agenda they have to formally request the Committee to consider receiving a report on that topic. This is done via the submission of a 'proposal form' which clarifies the purpose, importance and potential outcomes of suggested topics. No such request has been received for consideration at the current meeting.

4.7 Cabinet Forward Work Programme

When deciding on their programme of future work it is useful for scrutiny committees to have regard to Cabinet's scheduled programme of future work. For this purpose a copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 2.

4.8 Progress on Committee Resolutions

A table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising members on progress with their implementation is attached at Appendix 3 to this report.

4.9 Community Safety Partnership

The Committee was scheduled to consider a report on the above Partnership at the current meeting. As departmental responsibility for the Partnership within the Council has recently changed and as not all required officers were available to attend today's meeting, the Chair permitted its deferment until the meeting on 10 July.

Heritage and Arts

- 4.10 A report on the Heritage and Arts Service was scheduled for presentation to this meeting. However as the report will contain information on how the Council should interact with Arms Length Organisations, and because Internal Audit is reviewing the way these organisations are managed by the Council, it was felt that it would be premature to prepare the report for scrutiny prior to the review concluding. The Chair has therefore agreed the deferment of the item until the autumn.

Service Challenge Groups

- 4.11 As we are now entering a new municipal year all scrutiny committees are being asked to appoint/re-appoint representatives on to the Council's Service Challenge Groups. A complete list of scrutiny representatives for 2013/14 can be seen at Appendix 4. The Committee is therefore requested to consider its appointments for the forthcoming year

School Standards Monitoring Group (SSMG)

- 4.12 Conversely the Committee is asked to appoint/confirm its representative and substitute representative on the above Group. For 2013/14 Councillor Dewi Owens was the Committee's representative on the Group. In addition to appointing confirming a representative for the forthcoming year the Committee is also asked to appoint a substitute representative.

5. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group

Under the Council's scrutiny arrangements the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) performs the role of a coordinating committee. The SCVCG met on 24 April 2014, no items were referred to this Committee for consideration. However, the Group are keen to find out if members have identified any scrutiny specific training they would benefit from receiving during the course of the forthcoming year.

6. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

Effective scrutiny will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities in line with community needs and residents' wishes. Continual development and review of a coordinated work programme will assist the Council in monitoring and reviewing policy issues.

7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision?

No Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the purpose of this report as consideration of the Committee's forward work programme is not deemed to have an adverse or unfair impact on people who share protected characteristics.

8. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

Services may need to allocate officer time to assist the Committee with the activities identified in the forward work programme, and with any actions that may result following consideration of those items.

9. What consultations have been carried out?

None required for this report. However, the report itself and the consideration of the forward work programme represent a consultation process with the Committee with respect to its programme of future work.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

No risks have been identified with respect to the consideration of the Committee's forward work programme. However, by regularly reviewing its forward work programme the Committee can ensure that areas of risk are considered and examined as and when they are identified, and recommendations are made with a view to addressing those risks.

11. Power to make the decision

Article 6.3.7 of the Council's Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work.

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