

Report To: Performance Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 5 April 2012

Report Author: Scrutiny Coordinator

Title: Scrutiny Work Programme

1. What is the report about?

- 1.1 The report presents the Performance 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 a proposed programme of future work to present to the new Committee following May's local authority elections, and to update members on relevant issues.

3. What are the recommendations?

That the Committee considers the information provided and approves, revises or amends its draft forward work programme as it deems appropriate.

4. Report details.

- 4.1 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.

- 4.2 The Committee is therefore 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 taking 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

- the scheduling of education related topics which require the attendance of the statutory education co-opted members
 - officers and/or lead Cabinet members who should be invited (having regard to whether their attendance is necessary or would add value)
 - questions to be put to officers/lead Cabinet members
- 4.3 When considering future items for inclusion on the forward work programme members may also find it helpful to bear the following questions in mind 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?
- 4.4 As mentioned in paragraph 4.1 above 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 issues. No such proposal forms have been received for consideration at the current meeting.
- 4.5 Planning Enforcement
Members will recall that the Committee requested a report detailing financial and other resources available to the planning enforcement team and its performance in delivering its services. Unfortunately, it was not possible to have the report ready for the current meeting and therefore with the Chair's consent the presentation of the report has been deferred to a future meeting.
- 4.6 Schedule of Meetings for 2012/13
County Council recently agreed on its schedule of meetings for the forthcoming municipal year. Following the local authority elections on 3 May the Council will need to appoint a Leader, who will then appoint members to the Cabinet before the membership of committees can be decided upon. Consequently this will result in a delay before the new committees meet for the first time. The first scrutiny meeting will be held on 31 May when Partnerships Scrutiny Committee will meet. Performance Scrutiny Committee is not scheduled to hold its first meeting until 28 June and, as no Council committees meet during August, its subsequent meeting will not be held until 6 September. A consequence of this new schedule of meetings is that the business agendas for both June and September's meetings presently exceed the optimum number of four items each. The Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-

Chairs Group will discuss the forward work programmes for all committees at its meeting on 29 March and the recommendations emanating from that discussion will be reported to the Committee at its meeting on 5 April with a view to resolving the scheduling problem.

4.7 Cabinet Forward Work Programme

A copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 2. The Committee may find this document useful when considering items for inclusion on its programme of future work.

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.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. What consultations have been carried out?

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

8. 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.

9. 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.

Contact Officer:

Scrutiny Coordinator

Tel No: (01824) 712554

Email: dcc_admin@denbighshire.gov.uk