

**Report To:** Communities Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 12 April 2012

**Report Author:** Scrutiny Coordinator

**Title:** Scrutiny Work Programme

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**1. What is the report about?**

The report presents Communities 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 considers the information provided and approves, revises or amends its 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 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?
- 4.4 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 Members will see from the attached draft work programme that a number of items listed under 'Future Issues' require the Committee to scope the purpose of the reports and the desired outcomes to be achieved from scrutinising the topics. These topics/areas were identified at the training session held for Committee members twelve months ago. Members are asked to consider whether these topics are still relevant and merit being carried forward to the new Council. If they are considered to be relevant, in order to enable officers to start preparing reports for presentation at future meetings the Committee is asked to determine why it wishes to receive reports on these subjects and what it expects to achieve from scrutinising them. The five questions listed in paragraph 4.3 should assist members with this task.
- 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. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group**

- 5.1 Under the Council's scrutiny arrangements the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) has assumed the role of a coordinating committee. At its meeting on 29 March the SCVCG considered a request from the Chair of this Committee that the effectiveness of enforcement with regard to dog fouling be scrutinised. The SCVCG concurred with the view that this issue merits scrutiny and recommended that Communities Scrutiny Committee schedules the item into its forward work programme. Members are therefore asked to scope the topic and determine when it should be considered by the Committee.
- 5.2 Recently the Committee agreed to scrutinise the Strategy for West Rhyl, which forms part of the Rhyl Going Forward programme. Around the same time Partnerships Scrutiny Committee decided that it would scrutinise the other two major workstreams which form part of the Rhyl Going Forward programme – the Retail and Town Centre Workstream and the Tourism and Coastal Strip Workstream. Both committees had requested that reports be presented to them on these subjects in July 2012. Following receipt of the committees' requests the Rhyl Going Forward Programme Manager contacted the Scrutiny Coordinator to explain that, whilst he was willing to present reports on the strategy and workstreams to both Committees, he felt this seemed to be a slightly disjointed approach to scrutinising the programme and its effectiveness. He therefore suggested that if one committee was charged with scrutinising the whole programme it would provide for a more holistic approach and benefit the programme in its entirety. The SCVCG agreed with the Programme Manager's view and has therefore recommended that Communities Scrutiny Committee assume responsibility for scrutinising the Rhyl Going Forward Programme. The Committee is asked to discuss this request, and if it agrees to accept responsibility for scrutinising the Rhyl Going Forward Programme, to determine whether the item on the West Rhyl Strategy scheduled for 16 July should be expanded to include the other two workstreams in the Programme.

## **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 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.

**8. 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.

**9. 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.

**10. 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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