

<b>Report to:</b>	<b>Performance Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>18 October 2012</b>
<b>Report Author:</b>	<b>Democratic Services Officer</b>
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Scrutiny Work Programme</b>

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

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 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 Article 6 of Denbighshire County 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 stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must 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 aim 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 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
  - 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
- 4.5 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 above the Council's Constitution 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 subjects. No such proposal forms have been received for consideration at the current meeting.
- Cabinet Forward Work Programme
- 4.7 When determining their programme of future work it is useful for scrutiny committees to have regard to Cabinet's scheduled programme of work. For this purpose a copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 2.
- 4.8 Welsh Audit Office Corporate Improvement Assessment  
A proposal form has been received from the Corporate Improvement Manager, Tony Ward, for scrutiny to consider the latest Improvement Assessment Letter issued by the Welsh Audit Office (WAO) on 17th September. The Improvement Assessment is the principal mechanism for the WAO to report its assessment of the council's performance and prospects for improvement. Although there are no formal recommendations in the Improvement Assessment, the Performance Scrutiny Committee need to have an opportunity to discuss the letter in order to decide whether there any particular aspects of performance that require further scrutiny.

The Corporate Improvement Manager has asked that scrutiny of the Improvement Assessment Letter takes place as soon as possible, so this has been provisionally scheduled as an item for the Performance Scrutiny Committee to consider at their meeting on 29th November, subject to the Committee's approval.

4.9 Performance Scrutiny Committee representation on Service Performance Challenges

As Councillor Bill Cowie is no longer a member of the Performance Scrutiny Committee it has been necessary to appoint a replacement member to represent the Committee at the Service Performance Challenge meeting for Legal and Democratic Services, which will be held on 17th October in County Hall, Ruthin. After members were invited to express their interest in attending the meeting, it was agreed that Councillor Dewi Owens would now represent the Performance Scrutiny Committee in place of Councillor Cowie.

**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 represent 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.

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