

**Report to:** Communities Scrutiny Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 25 October 2012

**Report Author:** Democratic Services Officer

**Title:** Scrutiny Work Programme

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

The report presents the 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:

- 3.1 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 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 Denbighshire County Council's Constitution 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 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 In addition, when considering items for inclusion on the future forward work programme members may also find it helpful to have regard to the following questions when determining a subject's suitability for inclusion:
- 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 proposal forms have been received for consideration by the Committee 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 Review of Day Care Services in the North of the County  
A report on the review of Day Care Services had been scheduled for the Committee's meeting on 25th October, but this has now been deferred to the meeting on 17th January 2013 with the Chair's approval.
- 4.9 Supporting People Strategy Update (Appendix 3)  
The Supporting People Strategy and Spend Plan report had been originally proposed for consideration by the Partnerships Scrutiny Committee on 8th November; however, members allocated this to the Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting on 25th October. Due to a

regional exercise looking at comparable spending across the region; it has not been possible to complete this work for 25th October meeting. It is therefore proposed that the report should be considered at the next Communities Scrutiny meeting on 6th December, prior to being submitted to Cabinet on 18th December. A further report will need to be scheduled for scrutiny following the publishing of local authorities' 3 Year Spend Plans in January 2013, so it is asked for this to be considered by Communities Scrutiny at their meeting on 28th February 2013.

4.10 Information Report - Local Housing Strategy Update

An information report providing an update of progress made against the Local Housing Strategy is enclosed for members' information (Appendix 4). The Local Housing Strategy is presently being revised in conjunction with Glyndwr University and the Communities Scrutiny Committee has been asked to consider the draft strategy document at their meeting on 28th February 2013, and the final strategy document when it is available around June 2013.

4.11 Consultation Report - Draft Tenancy Agreement and Handbook

A copy of the draft tenancy handbook has been circulated via email to members of the Communities Scrutiny Committee inviting comments and suggestions for improving the handbook prior to submission to Cabinet. Any observations should be returned to Adele Cunnah by 9 November.

The new draft Tenancy Agreement will also require consultation from the Communities Scrutiny Committee, and this will be circulated for comments in the near future.

4.12 Consultation Report - Community Covenant with the Armed Forces

The Community Engagement Manager has requested that as part of the consultation for the development of a community covenant between Denbighshire County Council and the Armed Forces, members of the Communities Scrutiny Committee are invited to comment on the draft covenant document. This will be circulated to members for their comments and observations in November.

4.13 School Transport

The Committee had requested an information report to be submitted following the audit of school transport. The Passenger Transport Manager has advised that a report detailing the findings of the audit will be presented to the Corporate Governance Committee on 14th November, and that an information report summarising these findings will then be included in the meeting papers for the Community Scrutiny Committee's meeting on 6th December.

**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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