

Report to: Communities Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 6 December 2012

Report Author: Scrutiny Coordinator

Title: Scrutiny Work Programme

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 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 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 Review of Day Care Services in the North of the County
As the consultation process on the proposals under consideration with respect to the review of Day Care Services in the north of the county will continue until mid December it is neither appropriate nor possible to provide the Committee with a report summarising the consultation responses at the current meeting. Therefore, the report and

associated information will be presented to the Committee for consideration at its next meeting on 17th January 2013. However, in order that Members are fully conversant with the consultation timetable and the background to the review a separate information report will be circulated to Committee members ahead of the meeting on 6 December.

4.10 Strategic Asset Management

A report on 'Disposal of Council Buildings, Property and Land' was scheduled for presentation to the Committee at the current meeting. However, at a recent Service Challenge meeting it was decided that it would be beneficial for the Council to undertake an overview of its assets and for Members to examine what the Council owns, why it owns them and their location. This review would form the basis of a discussion on the future direction of Council asset ownership. Consequently, with the Chair's agreement, the original report has been withdrawn from the current meeting's business agenda. It will be replaced with a report on 'Strategic Asset Management'. Officers are requesting that this report be presented to the Committee at its January meeting (see Appendix 1). However, this meeting already has the optimum number of reports i.e. 4 on its business agenda. Members are therefore asked to consider this request.

4.11 School Transport

The Committee some time ago requested an information report on school transport (see the 'Information/Consultation Reports' section on Appendix 1 attached). It was originally intended that this report would be circulated to Committee members in December 2012, following the presentation of an Internal Audit report on 'Home to School Transport' to the Council's Corporate Governance Committee on 14 November 2012. The scope of the Internal Audit report encompassed both Conwy County Borough Council and Denbighshire County Council's home to school transport services and can be viewed on the Council's website by following the link below:

<http://mgintranet/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=130&MId=4535&Ver=4&LL=0>

- 4.12 As the information requested by the Committee is specific to Denbighshire and requires some detailed research and data Transport officers, due to workload pressures for the foreseeable future, are seeking the Committee's permission to defer the presentation of the information report until the spring of 2013. The Committee is asked to consider this request.

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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