

Report To:	OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	Date:	12 JANUARY 2017
Heading:	SCRUTINY WORKPLAN 2016-17		
Portfolio Holder:			
Ward/s:	ALL		
Key Decision:	NO		
Subject To Call-In:	NO		

Purpose Of Report

The Scrutiny workplan is a standing item on the Overview and Scrutiny Agenda. This report aims to focus Members on reviewing and managing the Scrutiny workplan. Members are requested to review current topics remaining on the 2016/17 workplan and consider potential new topics for the 2017/18 refresh. In doing so Members should discuss potential future review topics taking into account reasons for any future review, potential value added, timescales and priorities.

The workplan will be a live document and ongoing consultation will continue to be undertaken with Service Directors, Third Tier Officers and Members. Community engagement will also form part of an ongoing consultation process. All suggestions received will be discussed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with the aim of developing a sound, informed and flexible workplan that will add value to the community and the work carried out by the Council and its partners.

Recommendation(s)

- Note the ongoing topics on the 2016-17 workplan
- Consider any additional future topics for the 2017/18 workplan that may benefit from Scrutiny involvement

Reasons For Recommendation(s)

Consulting, reviewing and agreeing items for the Scrutiny workplan 2017/18 provides guidance and direction for the work undertaken by Scrutiny in the coming year.

Alternative Options Considered (With Reasons Why Not Adopted)

No alternative options have been considered, as agreeing the Scrutiny workplan is part of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution.

Detailed Information

What is a Work Plan?

The Scrutiny Work Plan outlines the areas of work which are expected to be scrutinised over the coming months / year by or on behalf of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Panels A and B. Topics added to the workplan should have expected outcomes to add value to the services delivered by the Council and its partners and/or improve the quality of lives of Ashfield residents.

It is recognised that there is a need for flexibility in the work plan so as to allow relevant issues to be dealt with as and when they arise. It is suggested that the number of items placed on the workplan should be limited to no more than 8.

Sources of Work Plan Ideas

Numerous sources of information can help to inform topic selection, including:

- Concerns that have been raised by the public relating to Council delivered services
- Issues of community concern – not necessarily services delivered by the Council
- Issues that have been flagged up by reviews, audits or inspections (past and present).
- Issues relating to Councils outcomes, objectives and priorities
- Consultations and interviews
- Underperformance
- "Stakeholders" concerns – raised by the Council's partners or the users of services
- Partnership objectives
- Cabinet Members, Chief Executive or Service Directors presentations about the pertinent issues that are emerging and any opportunities or threats on the horizon.
- Central government priority changes.
- Analysis of customer complaints.
- Improvement Plans.
- Forward Plan
- Budgetary analysis.

Scrutiny is also encouraged to think about external Scrutiny and the monitoring of other public bodies, and how its activities will engage partner organisations, the media and the public.

Selecting a Work Plan Topics

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should use effective processes to select topics that will contribute towards the best possible workplan for Scrutiny. This means looking at the sources of information that may help and using them to choose the right topics. This involves:

- Drawing out and discussing what matters most to Councillors and to the community at large.

- Finding out about any research that has been completed or that is planned
- Prioritising topics.
- Looking at what the Scrutiny function has done before.
- Considering what added value is expected as a result of Scrutiny involvement
- Considering whether the topic is already being reviewed elsewhere
- Planning how to get the best from the Committee and Panel meetings

It is also important to note that Overview & Scrutiny have limited time and resources and therefore workplans need to be manageable. It is not possible to include every topic suggested by Members, Service Directors or the Public in the workplan. Successful Scrutiny is about looking at the right topic in the right way and Members will need to be selective whilst also being able to demonstrate clear arguments in favour of including or excluding topics.

Risks

A common pitfall for Overview & Scrutiny can be the inclusion of topics on the work plan that are unmanageable, of limited interest to the community, purely for informational purposes, have few outcomes and fail to 'add value' to the work of the Council or the well being of the community. As such the selection and prioritisation of topics is critical to the effectiveness of Overview & Scrutiny as such processes can ensure clearer focus, particularly in poor or weak areas of performance or major issues of concern to the wider community.

Remaining Topics on the 2016/17 Scrutiny Workplan

Topic	Panel	Update
How are we working with other support services to tackle homelessness?	Scrutiny Panel B	Underway
Cemeteries - Home Made Kerb Sets	Scrutiny Panel A	Underway
Impact of car parking usage in town centres	TBC	TBC
Community Grant Process and Area Committees/Enhancing community engagement in local issues	TBC	TBC
Local Health Issues and Inequalities	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	TBC
Street Cleaning / Dog Fouling – How can we improve education and identification	Scrutiny Panel B	TBC

Implications

Corporate Plan:

The Scrutiny work plan should include issues based on performance, priority objectives and community concerns, many of which contribute to the Councils priorities, vision and outcomes

contained in the Corporate Plan 2016 – 2019;

- Health and wellbeing of our residents.
- Economic Regeneration
- Place and Communities.
- Organisational Improvement
- Housing

Legal:

Consultation with Elected Members on items for the Scrutiny workplan is in accordance with procedure rules set out in the Councils Constitution.

Finance:

There are no immediate direct financial implications contained in the report, however Scrutiny reviews suggested and agreed for the workplan will consider financial implications and seek appropriate advice where applicable at the earliest opportunity.

Budget Area	Implication
General Fund – Revenue Budget	None
General Fund – Capital Programme	None
Housing Revenue Account – Revenue Budget	None
Housing Revenue Account – Capital Programme	None

Human Resources / Equality and Diversity:

Where there are HR / equality and diversity implications identified through items agreed for the Scrutiny workplan, these will be consulted upon and considered as part of the wider workforce planning and equalities agendas.

Other Implications:

Unison / GMB will be consulted upon reviews that have potential staffing issues in a timely manner.

Reason(s) for Urgency (if applicable):

None

Background Papers

Scrutiny Workplan 2016/17

Report Author and Contact Officer

Mike Joy, Scrutiny Manager
01623 457232
m.joy@ashfield-dc.gov.uk

RUTH DENNIS
ASSISTANT CHIEF EXECUTIVE (GOVERNANCE)