

**Report to:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
**Date of meeting:** 23 June 2011  
**Report of:** Legal and Democratic Section Head  
**Title:** Work Programme and Task Groups 2011/12

1.0 **SUMMARY**

1.1 This report asks the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider items it wishes to incorporate in its work programme for 2011/12 and subjects that can be allocated to Task Groups for review. The draft work programme for 2011/12 is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees the draft work programme for 2011/12.
- 2.2 That Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers whether to establish any Task Groups.

**Contact Officer:**

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**Report approved by:** Jason McKenzie, Legal and Democratic Section Head

### 3.0 **DETAILED PROPOSAL**

3.1 The agenda in 2011/12 will contain a number of standard items –

- Call-in
- Task Group Updates
- Budget Panel update
- Forward Plan
- Performance report
- Work Programme

#### 3.2 Call-in

The terms of reference for Overview and Scrutiny Committee require it to review any Executive decisions which have been called in by the relevant number of non-executive Councillors.

#### 3.3 Task Group Updates

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for establishing Task Groups and agreeing the scope of the review. It is intended that Task Groups will inform Overview and Scrutiny Committee of the progress of their reviews and present their final reports for approval. The final Task Group reports will then be presented to Cabinet, Council or other relevant organisations.

#### 3.4 Budget Panel Updates

The Budget Panel has been established as a sub-committee of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The report will inform Overview and Scrutiny of the work it has undertaken and any recommendations it needs to consider as referred to it by Budget Panel.

#### 3.5 Forward Plan

The terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee states that it undertakes regular review of the Cabinet's Forward Plan. The Forward Plan contains information about those Executive key decisions it is proposed will be taken within the following four months.

#### 3.6 Performance Report

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is tasked with monitoring the Council's performance. Under the previous scrutiny arrangement this was carried out by Call-in and Performance Scrutiny Committee on a quarterly basis. It is intended that this will continue and a report is included elsewhere on this agenda.

#### 3.7 Work Programme

The work programme is an evolving document and it is intended that it will be reviewed at each meeting. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will need to identify which previous reviews it wishes to monitor.

3.8 There are a number of items which have been carried forward from Policy Development Scrutiny Committee and Call-in and Performance Scrutiny Committee. Details are attached as Appendix 2 to this report. Members need

to consider when they would like the review updates incorporated into the programme.

- 3.9 Through the annual scrutiny survey a number of suggestions were put forward by Members and officers for scrutiny in 2011/12. Unfortunately the Committee and Scrutiny Team were unable to identify who had put forward the majority of the suggestions. The outstanding suggestions are –
- Revenues and Benefits – systems, speed of payment and outcomes, comparisons to other local councils
  - Shared Services – towards a merger?
  - Council support for Small Businesses in light of the current economic pressures. Should include a survey of SMEs – in all sections of the town and not just the Town Centre,
  - Housing – Council's role
  - Play – Council's role
  - Post implementation review of major projects including change
  - Outcomes from value for money studies
- 3.10 Where the Committee and Scrutiny Team were able to identify the Councillor or officer who had suggested topics, the new scrutiny proposal form was sent for completion. The form has also been sent to all Councillors, the Mayor and Leadership Team for suggestions. The scrutiny proposal form is attached as Appendix 3 to this report.
- 3.11 The Scrutiny Proposal Form has been developed to ensure the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has sufficient information when considering subjects for Task Groups. It will then be able to develop the terms of reference and scope of the review. On receipt of a scrutiny suggestion, the Committee and Scrutiny Officer will forward the information to the appropriate Head of Service for their comments. The suggestion and comments will then be presented to Overview and Scrutiny Committee for a final decision.
- 3.12 As at 10 June 2011 five scrutiny suggestions have been put forward utilising the Scrutiny Proposal form. The suggestions were forwarded to the relevant Heads of Service. Further information on each suggestion is shown below.
- 3.13 Recruitment of ex-offenders and disadvantaged youths  
Councillor McLeod suggested that a review could be established to look at a policy on the recruitment of ex-offenders and disadvantaged youth. The proposal was forwarded to the Head of Human Resources for consideration. Full details of the suggestion and the Head of Human Resources comments are attached at Appendix 4.
- 3.14 Hospital Parking and its high charges  
Councillor Collett suggested that a review should be carried out regarding parking at the hospital and the high charges. The proposal was forwarded to the Managing Director and Executive Director Services for advice on who to contact. A response is awaited. The proposal form is attached as Appendix 5.

- 3.15 Bin Collection Service in narrow streets  
Councillor Meerabux suggested a review of the bin collection service in narrow terraced streets, for example in Callowland and Central wards. The proposal was forwarded to the Head of Environmental Services for comment. A response is awaited. Full details of the suggestion are attached as Appendix 6.
- 3.16 Parking in narrow terraced residential streets by large commercial vehicles  
Councillor Meerabux suggested that a scrutiny review should be set up to investigate the parking in narrow terraced streets by large commercial vehicles. The suggestion was forwarded to the Head of Planning for her comments. The original proposal and the Head of Planning's response is attached at Appendix 7.
- 3.17 Use of Cassiobury Park  
Councillor Meerabux suggested that the use of Cassiobury Park should be reviewed. The proposal was forwarded to the Head of Community Services and her response has been incorporated into the scrutiny proposal form, which is attached at Appendix 8.
- 3.18 Task Groups  
The Scrutiny Committee is asked to decide whether it wishes to establish any Task Groups to undertake reviews. The terms of reference for the Task Group would need to be set and a scope prepared. The Committee and Scrutiny Officer will then contact all non-executive members to ask whether they would be interested in taking part in the review. The final membership will be appointed at the next Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Work Programme 2011/12

Appendix 2 – Items carried forward from 2010/11

Appendix 3 – Scrutiny Proposal Form

Appendix 4 – Scrutiny suggestion – Recruitment of ex-offenders and disadvantaged youth

Appendix 5 – Scrutiny suggestion – Hospital parking and its high charges

Appendix 6 – Scrutiny suggestion – Bin collection service in narrow terraced streets

Appendix 7 – Scrutiny suggestion – Large commercial vehicles parking in narrow terraced streets

Appendix 8 – Scrutiny suggestion – Use of Cassiobury Park

### Background Papers

Report and Minutes – Annual Council 25 May 2011

### File Reference

None