

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

2011/12 Draft Work Programme

14 June 2011

Report of Interim Head of Legal and Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To provide the Committee with the draft overview and scrutiny work programme for 2011/12, specifically to update on items carried forward from the 2010/11 overview and scrutiny work programme and to consider new items for inclusion on the 2011/12 work programme.

This report is public

Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended:

- (1) To note the update on items carried forward from the 2010/11 overview and scrutiny work programme;
- (2) To decide which items should be removed from the work programme in 2011/12;
- (3) To determine which new topics should be included on the 2011/12 Work Programme.
- (4) To confirm the work programme for 2011/12 for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- (5) To confirm the agenda for the meeting on 19 July 2011.

Details

1 Draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2011/12

- 1.1 The 2010/11 year end work programme for both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Performance Scrutiny

Board is attached at Appendix 1.

- 1.2 In determining the work programme for 2011/12 the Committee will wish to take into account the terms of reference as laid out in the Constitution (Appendix 2) and the informal criteria which should be applied to all suggestions for a scrutiny review (Appendix 3).

Forward Plan

- 1.3 During the year the Committee will wish also to review the Forward Plan to consider whether there are any issues which they would wish to look at in more detail in advance of the Executive discussion and decision. To facilitate a thorough consideration of the topic the Committee will need to identify the Forward Plan items at an early stage of the decision making process.
- 1.4 The Forward Plan is updated and published monthly; an electronic copy is available on the council's website and all councillors are sent a prompt containing the website link. Members of the Committee are encouraged to review the Forward Plan outside the committee meetings and to contact the Chairman, Vice-Chairman or Democratic Services Officer if there is a topic that they wish to review. The latest Forward Plan is attached at Appendix 4.

Corporate Improvement Plan

- 1.5 In determining their work programme the Committee will also wish to consider the content and scheduling of items included in the Corporate Improvement Plan (Appendix 5)

Council Resources

- 1.6 The Committee will understand that in planning their work programme they will need to consider the resources available from the Democratic Services team and the individual service areas to support the work and the timescales involved.

2. Update for items carried forward from 2010/11 and previous years

Scrutiny – agreed topics for consideration at committee meetings

Strategic Parking Issues

- 2.1 This is an agenda item for the meeting on 14 June 2011.

Secondary School Education Attainment Levels

- 2.2 This is scheduled as an agenda item for the meeting on 19 July 2011. This will be a select committee style Q&A session which will allow the Committee to decide whether there are any issues which they would want to review in detail.

Monitoring – to examine responses to scrutiny reports and to

check on implementation of recommendations

Kidlington Pedestrianisation Capital Bid

- 2.3 The Committee monitored progress on this scheme during 2010. The proposals for the scheme was the subject of an informal public consultation in the autumn and received overwhelming positive support. This support for the scheme meant the project board could agree to proceed forward to advertising a new draft Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for High Street. This draft TRO will be subject to statutory public consultation from 24 June 2011. If there are no significant objections it is anticipated that the scheme will be in place in the early autumn. However, if there are significant objections it may go to public enquiry. It is suggested that this topic remain on the work programme and that the Urban Centres Development Officer is asked to provide a written update to the September meeting of the Committee.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and Planning Policy

- 2.4 It is proposed that this item remains on the work programme and that the Committee reviews progress in the autumn.

Built Environment Conservation Area Policy

- 2.5 The Executive accepted all the recommendations from this review in February 2011. It is proposed that this item remains on the work programme and that the Committee reviews progress against the recommendations in the autumn.

Democratic Engagement with Young People

- 2.6 It is proposed that this topic be removed from the work programme for 2011/12.

Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour

- 2.7 It is proposed that this topic be removed from the work programme for 2011/12.

Private Sector Housing Strategy

- 2.8 The Committee previously agreed to review the council's progress against the Strategy Action Plan in the spring of 2011. It is proposed that this item is added to the agenda for the July meeting when the Head of Housing will be available to present the first annual progress report.

Youth Services

- 2.9 This was discussed at the March meeting of the Committee. It is proposed that this item remains on the work programme and that the Committee reviews progress against the recommendations in the autumn.

Preparations for the 2012 Olympics

- 2.10 The Committee looked at this topic in 2009/10. It was not reviewed in 2010/11. Plans for the Olympics are well advanced at a national level.

Cllr Nicholas Turner has special responsibility for Olympics 2012 and a district group with CDC, Banbury, Bicester and Kidlington councils has been set up to coordinate events and activities with a 2012 theme/flavour. There is also a countywide 2012 group on which Cllr Turner also sits to further coordinate Olympic planning in the area. This council has published a legacy document which details what we intend to do to ensure the district embraces and benefits from this unique event. Recently, the torch relay overnight stops have been announced and the council is keen to explore if it is able to feature on the route to or from the county in some way. Given the level of planning currently taking place, it is proposed that this topic be removed from the work programme for 2011/12.

RAF Bicester

- 2.11 The former Domestic site has been sold to City and Country Group who have submitted an application for conversion of the existing buildings to residential use and for additional new development within the grounds. The Council is currently considering the application.
- 2.12 The former technical site remains in Defence Estates ownership with one building and the flying field leased to Windrushers Gliding Club. The remainder of the site is mothballed and in a poor state of repair. Defence Estates released a report on 20 March giving its initial conclusion that none of the former land owners are entitled to be offered their land back from MOD.
- 2.13 We have lobbied the local MP and met with the Government Minister, we have designated a conservation area, we have undertaken a survey of the buildings with an itemised schedule of repair works required, we have published a Planning Brief setting out the constraints and opportunities, we will incorporate these aspirations for the site in the LDF process. We have worked with Bomber Command Heritage on their aspirations for the site. We have supported the Working Group set up by Bicester Town Council to push for joined up thinking for the future of the site, albeit there has been less co-operation between Windrushers and Bomber Command Heritage than would be desirable.
- 2.14 As a Local Planning Authority (LPA) we have done as much as we can to encourage Defence Estates to make the buildings wind and weather tight, to bring the site to the market, to encourage Windrushers Gliding Club and Bomber Command Heritage to co-operate with each other, to protect the buildings and promote the site for appropriate new uses. There is little further action that the LPA can undertake and it is proposed that this topic be removed from the work programme for 2011/12.

Residents' Parking Schemes

- 2.15 The Committee agreed to maintain a "watching brief" on this item and the Lead Member, Urban and Rural Services and the Strategic Director, Environment and Community would circulate briefing notes as

appropriate. As there are no immediate plans to introduce a scheme to Banbury and any issues relating to the Bicester scheme are dealt with as an operational service matter it is proposed that this topic be removed from the work programme.

3 Potential Work Programme Items 2011/12

Scheduling – to identify and agree potential topics for scrutiny

3.1 The Corporate Management Team has suggested that the council's commitment to equalities would be an appropriate topic for a scrutiny review in 2011/12. The proposal is that the Committee look at two distinct areas:

1. The Council's Equality Framework for Local Government 'Achieving' Self Assessment

This evidence based self-assessment of the council's equalities performance has been prepared by the Equality Corporate Steering Group. This is an officer only group and it is essential that the assessment is subject to an independent review and challenge by members of the council.

Timing: September 2011

Approach: 1 or 2 group discussions facilitated by the Resources: Community Planning, Performance & Partnerships Manager and the Equalities Officer; followed by discussion at committee meeting.

Outcome: To ensure that we have self assessed Cherwell DC at the correct level and to highlight areas of weakness to allow continued improvement within Corporate Equalities.

2. To review the implementation of the Equality Act 2010

Timing: January 2012

Approach: Committee meeting consideration of a report prepared by the Resources: Community Planning, Performance & Partnerships Manager and the Equalities Officer.

Outcome: To ensure the Cherwell DC have implemented the new Equality 2010 Act correctly and that access to our services is fair for all. The Equality Act is legal legislation so it is also important to treat this as a health check so that we are not left vulnerable.

3.2 On the 23 May 2011 the Executive considered a report on the Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Voluntary Car Driving Schemes in Cherwell. The Executive approved all of the recommendations in the report but asked that it be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. A copy of the original report and an additional briefing document is attached at Appendix 6.

4 Agenda for 19 July 2011

- 4.1 This is the draft agenda for the meeting in July:
1. Secondary School Education Attainment Levels
The Committee will wish to consider whether to invite the new Cabinet Member for Schools Improvement, (Oxfordshire County Council) to attend the meeting.
 2. Private Sector Housing Strategy
The Head of Housing will be attend to present the first annual progress report.
 3. Work Programme 2011-12
Regular agenda item presented by the Scrutiny Officer.

5 Future Meetings Schedule

- 5.1 The future meeting dates for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Resources and Performance Scrutiny Board are listed below.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee	19 July 2011 13 September 2011 18 October 2011 15 November 2011 06 December 2011
Resources & Performance Scrutiny Board	21 June 2011 18 July 2011 6 September 2011 11 October 2011 22 November 2011

Implications

Financial: There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific financial issues.

Comments checked by Sarah Best, Senior Accountancy Assistant 01295 221736

Legal: There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific financial issues.

Comments checked by Paul Manning, Solicitor, 01295 221691

Risk Management: If the work programme contains too many items there is a risk that scrutiny agendas become overloaded. This undermines effective scrutiny because Members are unable to concentrate on the key issues and officer resources are over-stretched. It may be necessary to hold further meetings during the year if the risk of not achieving the work programme becomes apparent. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific risk issues.

Comments checked by James Doble, Democratic, Scrutiny and Elections Manager, 01295 221587

Wards Affected

Each scrutiny review will identify the wards affected

Corporate Plan Themes

Each scrutiny review will identify the relevant corporate plan themes

Document Information

Appendix No	Title
Appendix 1	Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Work Programme 2011/12
Appendix 2	Terms of Reference: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Appendix 3	Informal criteria to apply to proposed scrutiny topics
Appendix 4	Forward Plan
Appendix 5a	Corporate Plan 2011-12
Appendix 5b	Corporate Plan timeframe 2012-13
Appendix 5c	Corporate Improvement Plan
Appendix 5d	Corporate Improvement plan timetable 2011-12
Appendix 6	Commissioning of Advice, Volunteering and Voluntary Car Driving Schemes in Cherwell
Background Papers	
As previously circulated	5 January 2011 - Car Parking Call-in
	May 2011 - Bicester Vision Parking and Shopping Survey Results Summary
	August 2010 - Bicester Parking
Report Author	Catherine Phythian, Senior Democratic and Scrutiny Officer
Contact Information	01295 221583 Catherine.phythian@cherwell-dc.gov.uk