

Cherwell District Council
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

11 July 2017

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| Work Programme 2017-18 |
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Report of Assistant Director Transformation and Governance

This report is public

Purpose of report

To give an update on the Overview and Scrutiny work programme for 2017-2018

1.0 Recommendations

The meeting is recommended to:

- 1.1 To review the draft work programme (Appendix 1).
- 1.2 To identify any items from the Executive Work Programme to form part of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2017/18
- 1.3 To identify any other possible future topics for scrutiny and consider whether these topics should have scoping documents produced, based on the considerations of risk and what value scrutiny can add through considering the issue.

2.0 Introduction

- 2.1 The Committee are required to review the Work Plan at each meeting and make any amendments required as a result of developments since the last meeting.

3.0 Report Details

Update on current Scrutiny review

Youth Engagement Review

- 3.1 The Youth Engagement Review was established in October 2014, and a scoping document was signed off by the Committee. Councillors Bryn Williams and Neil Prestidge were appointed to the working group, along with Councillor Dan Sames. Councillor Sames left the Committee in 2015.

3.2 In February 2017, the Committee approved a scoping document for a revised review (appendix 1).

3.3 At the last meeting of the Committee in May 2017, it was agreed that the review should continue.

3.4 A meeting of the working group will be arranged in due course.

A361 Traffic review

3.5 At the meeting of the Committee in May 2016, it was agreed that a working group be established to look at a potential review regarding the A361 through the district.

3.6 A [scoping document](#) was approved at the November 2016 meeting of the Committee.

3.7 The working group have carried out some initial research, as well as contacting parishes along the route of the A361 to find out about any particular black spots.

3.8 At the last meeting of the Committee in May 2017, it was agreed that the review should continue.

3.9 As some Members of the working group are now no longer on the Committee, new members will need to be appointed. Correspondence asking for expressions of interest has been sent to the Committee, and officers will provide a further update on this at the meeting.

Mobile phone signal review

3.10 Following concerns regarding the quality of mobile phone signal across the district, the Committee agreed to set up a working group comprising of Councillors Anderson, Brown, Lis, Prestidge and Williams.

3.11 At the last meeting of the Committee in February, officers advised the Committee of work being undertaken by the British Infrastructure Group (BIG) into the same subject. At that time, it was agreed that the working group would continue research gathering with a view to submitting it to the BIG review.

3.12 Due to apologies from members of the working group at the last meeting of the Committee in May, a decision has not yet been taken as to whether or not the review will continue in 2017/18.

Executive Lead Members

3.13 During the last Municipal Year, the Committee invited Executive Lead Members to give an overview of their areas of responsibility

3.14 At the last meeting of the Committee in May it was agreed that the invitations should be continued for the current year. Executive Lead Members have been contacted, and responses received so far have been included on the work programme.

Debt and Money Advice Contract

3.15 In April 2017 a new contract for Debt and Money Advice Service started with Citizens Advise North Oxfordshire and South Northamptonshire.

- 3.16 The new contract started on 1 April 2017 and ensures that all Cherwell District residents continue to be able to access independent debt and money advice within the district either through face-to-face, telephone, email and online appointments/advice. The services delivered from the contract will be key in supporting local residents to resolve financial difficulties, manage their money and mitigate risks coming from the various welfare reforms that have been introduced such as the lowering of the maximum amount households can claim (the benefit cap) and the roll out of Universal Credit to working age benefit claimants in Cherwell from November 2017.
- 3.17 Officers are keen for Overview and Scrutiny to receive an update on progress of the contract, and propose to submit an information report to Committee in 2018, subject to the Committee's agreement.

Executive Work Programme

- 3.18 As part of the monthly work programme report, the Committee reviews the Executive Work Programme 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 Executive Work Programme items at an early stage of the decision making process.
- 3.19 The Executive Work Programme 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 Executive Work Programme 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.
- 3.20 The Committee will wish to note any items of interest in the current version of the Executive Work Programme and consider whether to include them on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2017/18.
- 3.21 At the time of writing this report, the current version of the Executive Work Programme is August to November 2017 and can be found on the following page of the website: [Cherwell Forward Plan](#)

Future meetings Schedule

- 3.22 The meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the next Municipal Year are listed below:

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| Overview and Scrutiny Committee | 2017/18 29 August 10 October 21 November 23 January 2018 20 February 27 March |
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4.0 Conclusion and Reasons for Recommendations

- 4.1 The recommendations as set out in the report are believed to be in the best interests of the Council.

5.0 Consultation

None

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

- 6.1 The following alternative options have been identified and rejected for the reasons as set out below.

Option 1: To agree the recommendations as set out in the report.

Option 2: To amend the recommendations.

Option 3: Not to agree the recommendations.

7.0 Implications

Financial and Resource Implications

- 7.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. The report of the individual scrutiny reviews will address any specific legal issue.

Comments checked by:

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Legal Implications

- 7.2 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:

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8.0 Decision Information

Wards Affected

Each scrutiny review will identify the wards affected.

Links to Corporate Plan and Policy Framework

Each Scrutiny Review will identify the relevant Corporate Plan and Policy framework links.

Lead Councillor

None

Document Information

| Appendix No | Title |
|---------------------|---|
| 1 | Work Programme 2017/18 |
| Background Papers | |
| None | |
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