

Cherwell District Council
Overview and Scrutiny Committee

21 November 2017

Work Programme 2017-18

Report of Assistant Director - Transformational 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 determine a timetable for the Mobile Phone Signal Survey
- 1.3 To identify any items from the Executive Work Programme to form part of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for 2017/18
- 1.4 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 reviews

A361 Traffic review

- 3.1 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.

- 3.2 As part of the research carried out so far, the group found out about funding from the Department for Transport (DfT) as part of the Safer Roads Fund that Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) had the opportunity to bid for.
- 3.3 Officers at OCC were contacted during September regarding the outcome of the bid. They advised that the Department for Transport had delayed the funding announcements until early September.
- 3.4 A further update was received from OCC officers in November. The DfT have decided that they will make all announcements connected with both phases of the Safer Roads Fund together, and this is likely to be in the New Year.
- 3.5 The working group agreed that they would like to hold a joint meeting with the parishes along the route of the A361, to discuss issues and concerns in more detail.
- 3.6 Arrangements for such a meeting will be made by officers in due course.

Mobile phone signal review

- 3.7 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.
- 3.8 Councillor Andrew McHugh has been appointed to the working group, replacing Councillor Williams who left the Committee at the end of the 2016/17 Municipal Year.
- 3.9 At the meeting of the Committee in February 2017, 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.
- 3.10 At the last meeting of the Committee, it was agreed that the Survey Monkey based questionnaire put together by Councillor McHugh should be sent to all parishes in the district, to gather further information regarding mobile signal 'not spots', to help inform the work of the working group.
- 3.11 The survey has been created on the council's corporate Survey Monkey account, and is ready to be sent out.
- 3.12 The Committee are asked to determine a timescale for completion of the survey, before arrangements are made for sending it out to parishes.

Homelessness Reduction Act

- 3.13 At the last meeting of the Committee, it was reported that officers from Housing had requested to attend a future meeting to discuss the Homelessness Reduction Act.
- 3.14 Committee agreed to the item being added to the November 2017 meeting. However, the Joint Housing Manager has since advised that it has been necessary to delay the update to the January 2018 meeting, to allow officers additional time to consider and review any potential implications for the Council prior to consideration by Overview and Scrutiny.

Engagement with parishes

- 3.15 Following the training held in September 2017, the Committee agreed to engage with parish councils to find out if there are any subjects that they would like to refer to the Committee for discussion and/or review.
- 3.16 Officers from Democratic and Elections have liaised with the Chairman, to determine the best method of contacting the parishes.
- 3.17 It was felt that written correspondence, via email where available, would be the best way of explaining to the parishes the remit of the Committee, and asking them to submit possible topics for consideration.
- 3.18 Timing wise, the Chairman has requested that parishes be contacted as soon as possible, so that items for consideration of suggested topics can be added to the work programme in anticipation of the new Municipal Year.

Executive Work Programme

- 3.19 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.
- 3.20 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.
- 3.21 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.
- 3.22 At the time of writing this report, the current version of the Executive Work Programme is December 2017 to March 2018 and can be found on the following page of the website: [Forward Plan](#)
- 3.23 Following comments made at the previous meeting of the Committee, the Work Programme now contains a short description of the item to be considered, to give those reviewing the plan more information.

Future meetings Schedule

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

Overview and Scrutiny	2017/18
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Committee	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

5.1 None required as this is a standing report.

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 financial issues.

Comments checked by: Paul Sutton, Chief Finance Officer. 0300 003 0106,
paul.sutton@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

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 legal issues.

Comments checked by: Nigel Bell, Interim Legal Services Manager. 01295 221687,
nigel.bell@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk

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	
Report Author	Emma Faulkner, Democratic and Elections Officer
Contact Information	Tel: 01327 322043 emma.faulkner@cherwellandsouthnorthants.gov.uk