

Committee: Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Date: 17 March 2020

Subject: Planning the Panel's 2020/21 work programme

Wards: All

Lead officer: Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

Lead member: Councillor Natasha Irons, Chair of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

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Recommendations:

- A. That the Panel reviews its 2019/20 work programme (set out in the appendix), identifying what worked well, what worked less well and what the Panel would like to do differently next year;
 - B. That the Panel suggests items for inclusion in the 2020/21 work programme – both agenda items and potential task group review topics; and
 - C. That the Panel advises on agenda items for its meeting on 25 June 2020.
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1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To enable the Panel to plan its work programme for the forthcoming municipal year and, in particular, to agree agenda items for the first meeting of the municipal year.

2. DETAILS

Identifying issues for the 2020/21 work programme

- 2.1 At the beginning of each municipal year, each Overview and Scrutiny body determines the issues it wishes to build into its work programme for the forthcoming year. The Overview and Scrutiny bodies have specific roles relating to budget and business plan scrutiny and performance monitoring, and these should automatically be built into the work programme.
- 2.2 In addition to this, Overview and Scrutiny bodies may choose to build a work programme which involves scrutinising a range of issues through a combination of pre-decision scrutiny items, policy development reviews carried out by task groups, performance monitoring, on-going monitoring items and follow up to previous scrutiny work.
- 2.3 The remit of the Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel is as follows:
 - Housing, including housing need, affordable housing and private sector housing;
 - Environmental sustainability, including energy, waste management, parks and open spaces and the built environment;
 - Culture, including tourism, museums, arts, sports and leisure;
 - Enterprise and skills, including regeneration, employment, adult education and libraries; and
 - Transport.

- 2.4 The scrutiny officers are currently gathering suggestions for issues to scrutinise, either as Panel agenda items or task group reviews. Suggestions are being sought from members of the public, councillors and partner organisations including the police, NHS and Merton Voluntary Service Council. The council's departmental management teams are being consulted in order to identify forthcoming issues on which the Panel could contribute to the policymaking process.
- 2.5 The Panel is therefore invited to suggest items for inclusion in the 2020/21 work programme – both agenda items and potential task group review topics.
- 2.6 All the suggestions received will be discussed at the Panel's topic workshop on 8 June 2020. As in previous years, participants will be asked to prioritise the suggestions using criteria so that the issues chosen relate to:
- The Council's strategic priorities;
 - Services that are underperforming;
 - Issues of public interest or concern; and
 - Issues where scrutiny could make a difference

Planning the first meeting of the 2020/21 municipal year

- 2.7 A note of the workshop discussion and draft work programme will be reported to the first meeting of the Panel in the new municipal year. The Panel will be requested to discuss this draft and agree any changes that it wishes to make.
- 2.8 The Panel is asked to advise on any other items that it would be helpful to include on the agenda for its 25 June 2020 meeting.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Panel can select topics for scrutiny review and for other scrutiny work as it sees fit, taking into account views and suggestions from officers, partner organisations and the public.

4. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED

- 4.1 To assist Members to identify and prioritise a work programme for 2020/21, the Scrutiny Team will undertake a consultation programme with Panel Members, co-opted members, members of the public, LB Merton Officers and Voluntary and Community Sector organisations to determine other issues/items for Members' consideration for inclusion in the Panel's 2020/21 work programme.

5. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are none specific to this report. Scrutiny work involves consideration of the financial, resource and property issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific financial, resource and property implications.

6. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Scrutiny work involves consideration of the legal and statutory issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific legal and statutory implications.

- 7. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**
- 7.1 It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engaging with local partners in scrutiny reviews. Furthermore, the outcomes of reviews are intended to benefit all sections of the local community.
- 7.2 Scrutiny work involves consideration of the human rights, equalities and community cohesion issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific human rights, equalities and community cohesion implications.
- 8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**
- 8.1 Scrutiny work involves consideration of the crime and disorder issues relating to the topic being scrutinised.
- 9. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**
- 9.1 There are none specific to this report. Scrutiny work involves consideration of the risk management and health and safety issues relating to the topic being scrutinised. Furthermore, scrutiny work will also need to assess the implications of any recommendations made to Cabinet, including specific risk management and health and safety implications.
- 10. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**
- 10.1 2019/20 work programme
- 11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**
- 11.1 None

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