

## SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

---

**REPORT TO:** Scrutiny and Overview Committee

6 September 2012

**AUTHOR:** Scrutiny Development Officer

---

### WORK PROGRAMME 2012/13

#### Purpose

1. To enable the committee to plan its work programme for 2012/13.

#### Options

2. The Committee may wish to agree the draft programme at **Appendix A** subject to amendments made at this meeting.

#### Considerations

3. At the meeting of 5 July Members agreed a draft work programme as at Appendix A.
4. This included the intention to begin a joint task and finish group with two parish councils looking at their street scenes.
5. Members also agreed to invite one or two portfolio holder(s) per meeting, to scrutinise their work programmes and explore any areas for further scrutiny input.
6. Further topics may be chosen from the Council's Forward Plan as at <http://scambs.moderngov.co.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=293&bcr=1>.
7. All scrutiny activities need to add value to the work of the Council and contribute to the achievement of its corporate objectives.
8. In choosing topics for the work programme, Members are reminded of the agreed selection criteria as at **Appendix B**.

#### Current reviews

9. There are no task and finish group reviews currently running. However discussions have begun at an officer level regarding a possible joint review with Bassingbourn and Litlington parish councils as suggested at the last meeting. It was felt that such a review would help the Council to demonstrate its readiness to embrace the spirit of localism.
10. The chairman and vice-chairman of this committee plan to meet with the chairmen of the parish councils shortly to seek their views.

#### Potential topics for scrutiny in 2012/13

11. At the last meeting, the committee agreed that a possible topic for scrutiny was the housing of vulnerable people, specifically young people who fell outside the statutory category for housing. Officers have since briefed the committee on the extensive and

imaginative ways in which this group is served by the council and partners and the chairman was satisfied that there is no immediate scope for the committee to add value. The committee may wish to discuss this again when meeting the Housing Portfolio Holder in March.

12. A review of bus and [community transport](#) has been listed for further consideration via a one-day review in October, subject to any progress made by the County Council. Officers plan to brief the chairman later this month.
13. At the start of 2011/12 the committee expressed an interest in reviewing communication and community engagement, once a new communications manager was in post. A review of corporate communication was reported to the committee in March 2012, with community engagement being left for future scrutiny. The committee might wish to discuss the timing of this with the Corporate and Customer Services portfolio holder when he attends the committee in November.
14. The County Council is planning a joint scrutiny event with all Cambridgeshire councils, Forest Heath, North Herts, Peterborough, Rutland, St Edmundsbury, Uttlesford and West Norfolk regarding the Local Enterprise Partnership. Further details are expected later this month.

#### **Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder issues**

15. At the last meeting, the committee was advised to wait until January 2013, when the Police and Crime Commissioner and Police and Crime Panel are in place, before deciding how best to complement scrutiny activities regarding crime and disorder.

#### **Progress on past recommendations**

16. At the last meeting the committee recommended that the Council:
  - a) has a target on the amount of waste being put to landfill and
  - b) considers having a separate collection of small electrical goods and cabling.
17. Officers confirm that the amount of waste being put to landfill is already measured but not published on CorVu. The committee may therefore wish to ask for this figure periodically, for example when holding the portfolio holder to account annually, and when examining costs during the budget and service planning process.
18. With regard to the separate collection of small electrical goods and cabling, officers have advised that following a Producer Responsibility European Directive, manufacturers are using various means of enabling customers to recycle. The Council currently has two recycling banks for such items (at Sawston and Bassingbourn) and we are waiting to see if usage, and therefore cost efficiency, increases once the banks become more widely known. We are contacting the two parish councils to ask for help with publicity of the banks.
19. The Chairman has invited the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder to attend the meeting to allow further discussion.
20. At the last meeting the committee also made recommendations regarding the Council's response to the draft health and wellbeing strategy for Cambridgeshire. The Council's public health specialist undertook to weigh these points along with those gained through other local consultation when drafting a response to the shadow

Health and Wellbeing Board. A draft response will be circulated by email to members prior to issue.

### Implications

21. Financial	The Committee has a discretionary budget of £5,000. Up to £3,000 may be needed for Member training. Some external venues carry a small hire charge. External witnesses and co-optees may claim expenses.
Legal	The Local Government Act 2000 requires the Council to have at least one scrutiny committee. The Police and Justice Act 2006 requires the Council to place crime and disorder matters on at least one scrutiny agenda each year. However, the Committee is advised to wait until later in 2012/13, given the provisions of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the imminent establishment of a Police and Crime Panel. The Constitution states that the Committee will set its own work programme.
Staffing/capacity	The committee has been supported by one scrutiny officer; however the post holder is about to resign and officers are working with the chairman to agree the best way to support the scrutiny function in future. Each item selected for scrutiny will require the additional support of at least one lead officer in the relevant service area. Capacity for sub committee work is also dependent on the number of elected members available and willing to participate.
Risk Management	The potential burden on the organisation of supporting scrutiny work must be balanced against the potential value it can add. External scrutiny carries the risk of affecting the Council's relationship or credibility with partners.
Equality opportunities	All proposed changes to policy or services require an Equality Impact Assessment.

### Involvement of Children and Young People

22. Children and young people (CYP) have been invited to suggest topics and this will continue. The Committee has also agreed to involve CYP in reviews and to ensure that all reports to the committee describe CYP involvement.
23. Consultation will be extended to include the new Youth Council once it is in place later this month and joint scrutiny projects may be suggested. Youth Council members will be invited to join the finance workshop in November.

### Consultation

24. Cabinet, elected members, senior officers and residents, including the Council's nascent consultation panel, have been invited to suggest potential topics. Parish councils continue to be consulted during the year.
25. Ongoing consultation with nearby councils, including the county council, explores the potential for joint scrutiny activities.

### **Effect on Corporate Objectives**

26. The Committee's selection criteria ensure that any topic selected for scrutiny will contribute to at least one of the Council's priorities.
27. Scrutiny itself helps the Council to "listen to and engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure it delivers first class services and value for money".

**Contact Officer:** Jackie Sayers, Scrutiny Development Officer Tel: (01954) 713451

## Draft Work Programme 2012/13

Thursday 27 Sept 4pm	New Build Strategy - workshop
Thursday 1 Nov 5.30pm	Finance workshop – to include Youth Council?
Mon 5 November 6pm	<p>Progress on corporate plan actions/performance            Medium Term Financial Strategy            Portfolio Holder Presentation by Leader, Finance and Corporate &amp; Customer Services portfolio holders – to include updates on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Corporate communications</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Customer contact</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Learning from feedback</a></li> </ul> <p>Q2 service and finance performance</p>
Thurs 10 Jan 2013 6pm	
Monday 11 Feb 5.30pm	Finance workshop
Thurs 14 Feb 6pm	<p>Corporate Priorities            Medium Term Financial Strategy            Q3 service and finance performance            2013/14 Budget</p>
Thurs 21 March 6pm	<p>Mears update            Portfolio Holder Presentation by Housing portfolio holder – to include update on <a href="#">Sheltered Housing Support review</a></p>
23 April 2013 7pm	<p>Q4 service and finance performance            Portfolio Holder Presentations by Planning Policy &amp; Localism and Planning &amp; Economic Development portfolio holders - to include update on <a href="#">review of planning and historic buildings service, last updated in December 2011</a>            Draft annual scrutiny report</p>



### PAPER Analysis



When considering whether to adopt an item onto its agenda programme, the Committee will score the item using the following criteria:

1. **Public Interest:** the concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen for scrutiny  
(1= low public interest, 2=medium public interest, 3=high public interest)
2. **Ability to change:** priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence  
(1= little chance of changing, 2=reasonable chance, 3=good chance)
3. **Performance:** priority should be given to the areas in which the Council, and other agencies, are not performing well.  
(1= good performance, 2=moderate performance, 3=low performance)
4. **Extent:** priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or large parts of the District.  
(1= only one ward, 2= multi-ward issue, 3= the entire District)
5. **Replication:** work programmes must take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort.  
(1= already well covered, 2=already partly covered, 3=not already covered)

Also of major importance is the extent to which any potential scrutiny issue has implications for the Council's priorities, as well as the overall Vision:

South Cambridgeshire will continue to be the best place to live and work in the country. Our district will demonstrate impressive and sustainable economic growth. Our residents will have a superb quality of life in an exceptionally beautiful, rural and green environment.

The Council will be recognised as consistently innovative and a high performer with a track record of delivering value for money by focusing on the priorities, needs and aspirations of our residents, parishes and businesses.

The Vision is supported by the following strategic aims:

- A. We will listen to and engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure we deliver first class services and value for money.
- B. We will work with partners to create and sustain opportunities for employment, enterprise and world-leading innovation.
- C. We will make sure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer outstanding and sustainable quality of life for our residents.