



**F. McArdle**  
**Chief Executive**

Civic Offices, Civic Way,  
Swadlincote, Derbyshire DE11 0AH

[www.south-derbys.gov.uk](http://www.south-derbys.gov.uk)

**Please ask for: Democratic Services**  
Phone: (01283) 595722 / 595848  
Minicom: (01283) 595849  
DX 23912 Swadlincote  
Email :  
[democraticservices@south-derbys.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@south-derbys.gov.uk)

Date: 16 June 2015

Dear Councillor,

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

A Meeting of the **Overview and Scrutiny Committee** will be held in the **Council Chamber**, on **Wednesday, 24 June 2015 at 18:00**. You are requested to attend.

Yours faithfully,

Chief Executive

To:- **Conservative Group**

Councillor Mrs. Farrington (Chairman), Councillor Swann (Vice-Chairman) and Councillors Atkin, Mrs. Coe and Mrs. Patten

**Labour Group**

Councillors Bambrick, Mrs. Stuart and Pearson.



## **AGENDA**

### **Open to Public and Press**

- 1** Apologies
- 2** Minutes  
  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes 11th February 2015 **4 - 6**  
  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes 25th March 2015 **7 - 8**
- 3** To note any declarations of interest arising from any items on the Agenda
- 4** To receive any questions by members of the public pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No.10.
- 5** To receive any questions by Members of the Council pursuant to Council procedure Rule No. 11.
- 6** Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA) - Report on usage **9 - 10**
- 7** Annual Report of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2014-15 **11 - 20**
- 8** Setting the Work Programme 2015-16 **21 - 23**

### **Exclusion of the Public and Press:**

- 9** The Chairman may therefore move:-  
That in accordance with Section 100 (A) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraph of Part I of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in the header to each report on the Agenda.
- 10** To receive any Exempt questions by Members of the Council

pursuant to Council procedure Rule No. 11.



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

11<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2015

**PRESENT:-**

**Conservative Group**

Councillor Mrs. Plenderleith (Chairman), Councillor Atkin (Vice-Chairman), and Councillor Mrs Patten

**Labour Group**

Councillor Bambrick, Councillor Mrs Heath and Councillor Pearson

OS/42 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs. Hood (Conservative Group) and Councillor Mrs Mead (Labour Group).

OS/43 **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 and 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014 was taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

OS/44 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM ITEMS ON AGENDA**

The Committee were informed that no declarations of interest from Members of the Council had been received.

OS/45 **QUESTIONS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 10**

The Committee were informed that no questions from members of the Public had been received.

OS/46 **QUESTIONS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11**

The Committee were informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

OS/47 **HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2015/16 AND PROPOSED RENT INCREASE**

The Director of Finance and Corporate Services gave a presentation on the HRA's base budget position for 2015/16, the longer-term business plan, together with the proposed rent increase for 2015/16. This was based on the

report that was considered and agreed by the Housing and Community Services Committee on the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2015. The presentation provided additional detail about the self-financing framework, the HRA debt portfolio, capital investment and the New Build programme.

Councillor Mrs. Plenderleith gave an overview of some of the benchmarking taking place in Housing at the moment with regards to rent increases. No other substantive issues were raised.

The Director of Finance also confirmed that no substantive issues had been raised during the budget consultation period and that the General Fund position remained unchanged from that reported in January.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the report and presentation was noted.***

OS/48 **CEMETERY PROVISION**

Councillor Atkin delivered a verbal update on the progress made so far and said a considerable amount of work had taken place, in particular over the last couple of months. The Culture & Community Manager is currently drafting the Survey, which will be sent out to the public in the next few weeks.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That, a written report be presented at the next Committee meeting in March 2015.***

OSC/49 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

**RESOLVED:-**

***That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it was likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.***

OSC/50 **EXEMPT QUESTIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE No 11.**

The Committee were informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

The Meeting terminated at 6.35 p.m.

COUNCILLOR MRS. PLENDERLEITH

CHAIRMAN

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

25<sup>th</sup> March 2015

**PRESENT:-**

**Conservative Group**

Councillor Mrs. Plenderleith (Chairman), Councillor Atkin (Vice-Chairman) and Councillor Mrs Patten

**Labour Group**

Councillors Bambrick, Mrs Heath and Pearson

OS/51 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Councillor Mrs Hood (Conservative Group) and Councillor Mrs Mead (Labour Group).

OS/52 **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meetings held on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014 and 21<sup>st</sup> January 2015 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

Councillor Atkin queried the current situation with regard to Minute OS/27 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014 NHS Dental Service provision. It was confirmed that further work was required in this area.

OS/53 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ARISING FROM ITEMS ON AGENDA**

The Committee were informed that no declarations of interest from Members of the Council had been received.

OS/54 **QUESTIONS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 10**

The Committee were informed that no questions from members of the Public had been received.

OS/55 **QUESTIONS RECEIVED BY MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE NO. 11**

The Committee were informed that no questions from Members of the Council had been received.

OS/56 **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE  
2014/15**

Councillor Mrs. Plenderleith presented the Annual Report in its draft form. Amendments were suggested in relation to 2.5 NHS Dental Service Provision and 2.12 Budget Proposals 2014/15 and Financial Plan to 2020.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the Annual Report be noted and approval given to the delegation arrangements for the Report's completion.***

OS/57 **CEMETERY SERVICE AND PROVISION OF CEMETERY SPACE**

The Culture and Community Manager presented the report, highlighting the shortage of land available for burials and the action being taken to identify new locations, the outcomes of which will be the subject of a future report to the Committee.

Councillor Atkin thanked Joanne Abassi for her assistance with the report and Councillor Mrs Patten suggested that Councillors should make enquiries relating to potential locations whilst on official duties in the District.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the report's contents be duly considered.***

The Meeting terminated at 6.15pm

COUNCILLOR MRS. PLENDERLEITH

CHAIRMAN



---

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM: 6</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>24<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2015</b>	<b>CATEGORY: DELEGATED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM</b>	<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>	<b>OPEN</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>ARDIP KAUR – 595715 ardip.kaur@south-derbys.gov.uk</b>	<b>DOC:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>REGULATION OF INVESTGATORY POWERS ACT 2000 (RIPA) – REPORT ON USAGE</b>	<b>REF:</b>
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>TERMS OF REFERENCE:</b>

---

## **1.0 Recommendations**

- 1.1 To note the internal report on the Council's use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000.

## **2.0 Purpose of Report**

- 2.1 To note the report on the Council's use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 since 1<sup>st</sup> December 2014.

## **3.0 Detail**

- 3.1 Full Council on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2015 approved the Council's amended RIPA Policy and Guidance document. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is authorised to review the Council's use of RIPA, set the Council's general surveillance policy, and consider quarterly reports on the use of RIPA to ensure that it is being used as per the Council's policy.
- 3.2 RIPA is intended to regulate the use of investigatory powers and ensure they are used in accordance with human rights. This is achieved by requiring certain investigations involving covert surveillance to be authorised by an appropriate Authorising Officer and then a JP before they are carried out.
- 3.3 Directed surveillance is often conducted by local authorities to investigate benefit fraud or to collect evidence of anti-social behaviour. It may involve covertly following people, covertly taking photographs of them or using hidden cameras to record their movements.
- 3.4 RIPA stipulates that the person (Authorising Officer) granting an authorisation for directed surveillance must believe that the activities to be authorised are necessary on one or more statutory grounds. The members of the Corporate Management Team, identified in the Council's Policy and Procedure, consider all applications for authorisation. The Authorising Officer must ensure that there is satisfactory reason

for carrying out the surveillance, the covert nature of the investigation is necessary, proper consideration has been given to collateral intrusion, and the proposed length and extent of the surveillance is proportionate to the information being sought. This involves balancing the seriousness of the intrusion into the privacy of the subject of the operation against the need for the activity in investigative and operational terms. Following legislative changes, in addition to the aforementioned, the Council is required to obtain judicial approval prior to using covert techniques and the Councils use of directed surveillance under RIPA will be limited to the investigation of crimes which attract a six month or more custodial sentence.

3.5 The usage of RIPA during the period December 2014 to May 2015 has been nil. No authorisations have been requested or granted.

#### **4.0 Financial Implications**

4.1 None arising directly from this report.

#### **5.0 Corporate Implications**

5.1 The Council must act in accordance with recent legislative changes regarding the authorisation process and the surveillance crime threshold.

#### **6.0 Community Implications**

6.1 Covert surveillance is carried out in a manner calculated to ensure that the person subject to the surveillance is unaware of it taking place. The Council carries out directed surveillance which is covert, not intrusive, is not carried out in an immediate response to events, and is undertaken for the purpose of a specific investigation or operation in a manner likely to obtain private information about an individual.

6.2 Section 8 of the application form asks the applicant to supply details of any potential collateral intrusion and to detail why the intrusion is unavoidable. The idea behind collateral intrusion is to identify who else, apart from the subject of the surveillance, can be affected by the nature of the surveillance. Any application for authorisation should include an assessment of the risk of the collateral intrusion and this should be taken into account by the Authorising Officer when considering proportionality. The Authorising Officer needs to know by those carrying out the surveillance if the investigation or operation would unexpectedly interfere with the privacy of individuals not covered by the authorisation. An Authorising Officer must be made aware of any particular sensitivities in the local community.



**South  
Derbyshire**  
District Council

# Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2014/2015



**South  
Derbyshire  
District Council**

## **1. Background**

### **1.1 Purpose of the Report**

Overview and scrutiny plays an important and active part in local government's decision making process. It acts as a critical friend to Council by challenging decisions where appropriate, and helping to improve services through policy development, service reviews and working in alignment with the Council's performance management structure. The scrutiny function has helped the Council to continue to improve services for the local population, and continues do to so through these more challenging times.

This is the Annual Report to Council from Overview and Scrutiny, as required by Article 6 of the Council's Constitution.

The report outlines how the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has discharged its functions during the municipal year 2014/15 and details the current position and outcomes of its activities.

### **1.2 Composition of Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Committee consists of eight Members, being four Members of the Conservative Group and four Members of the Labour Group in accordance with the political balance of the Council. For 2014/15, the following Members were appointed to the Committee:-

**Conservative Group**

Councillor Mrs. Plenderleith (Chair), Councillor Atkin (Vice-Chair) Councillor Mrs. Hood and Councillor Mrs. Patten.

**Labour Group**

Councillor Bambrick, Councillor Mrs. Heath, Councillor Mrs. Mead and Councillor Pearson.

**1.3 Main Purposes of Committee**

The main purposes of the Committee are as follows:-

- (a) Write reports and/or make recommendations to Full Council, Policy Committees or Area Forums in connection with the formulation of Policy and the discharge of any functions.
- (b) Consider any matter affecting the District or its inhabitants.
- (c) Review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions.
- (d) Exercise the Call-In procedure in respect of decisions made, but not yet implemented, by any Policy Committee or Area Forum.
- (e) Oversee the Best Value process and report findings to the relevant Policy Committee.

#### **1.4 Officer Support**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is supported by four Heads of Service and two Democratic Services Officers. Other Officers attend meetings to contribute to specific reviews.

#### **1.5 Meetings**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee usually meets every six weeks, on Wednesday evenings at the Council's Civic Offices. Meetings are held in Open session, unless there are Exempt items for consideration. Additional task groups have taken place for certain review areas.

#### **1.6 Call-In of Policy Committee Decisions**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the power to determine 'call-in' requests of any policy committee decision made but not implemented. During the year 2014/2015, the Committee was not required to deal with any 'called in' decisions or requests from Policy Committees for specific investigations. This meant that the Committee was able to focus on the coordination of work across the overview and scrutiny function within the Council and the wider community.

## **2. Specific Areas of Activity and Achievements**

### **2.1 The Annual Report**

In March 2015 the Committee considered the draft Annual Report for the 2014/15 Local Government Year which looks at each of the priorities in turn and provides an overview of some of the outcomes achieved by the Committee and how it has discharged its function

## **2.2 Setting the Committee Work Programme**

The Committee received a report in May 2014 outlining suggestions on how the Committee might identify and agree possible issues to form the basis of its Work Programme during the new Local Government Year. Members considered a range of possible topics for the Committee to consider, the Councillors responsible for each initial scoping exercise and in particular what lines of enquiry they would like to cover. The key issues that the Committee looked at were:

- Co-operating with Other Scrutiny Bodies
- Individual Electoral Registration
- NHS Dental Service Provision
- Customer Services & Payment Facilities
- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA) 2000
- Review on Leisure Services
- Housing Revenue Account Budget
- Cemetery Provision

*A short summary of the Committee's work during the year is set out below*

## **2.3 Co-operating with Other Scrutiny Bodies**

The Committee met with an officer from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) who helped to set out the role of different agencies in holding to account various public service providers. It was discussed how joint projects could be organised that would be mutually beneficial to various scrutiny bodies.

#### **2.4 Individual Electoral Registration**

The Committee looked into the new IER system (Individual Electoral Registration), and what work had been undertaken in the district. The key change with IER is that Electors were now able to register online, which is a straight forward procedure that has been proven successful, and over 1,300,000 applications nationally had so far been made this way. South Derbyshire had achieved a match rate of 91% (IER records matching the information held by DWP and the Council) and were hoping that with the use of the IER online option numbers would increase.

An IER campaign had been launched with articles in Burton Mail, Swadlincote Times and Swadlincote Post , leaflets and posters sent to local businesses such as Toyota, Colleges, Doctor's Surgeries and Housing Associations. There is also a link on the two computers in the reception area at the Civic Offices for the public to use.

#### **2.5 NHS Dental Service Provision**

The Committee had been made aware how people in the district had been forced to travel some distance to reach a dentist as they were unable to register with a local dentist. The Committee resolved that they would send a formal letter to Derbyshire County Council, passing on the findings asking for a response on why there had been no commissioning since 2006.



## **2.6 Customer Services & Payment Facilities**

The Committee had been asked to undertake a review of payment facilities in the Civic Offices, together with a review of the Customer Services operation to enable people to pay bills and money owing to the Council. A task and finish group was set up to visit Derby City Council where this service is being offered, and also spent time with the Customer Service team at South Derbyshire District Council, speaking with team members and customers alike to gauge their impressions of the current facilities. The Committee suggested that the Council should consider the need to provide a better experience for people contacting the Council and visiting the offices with queries and looking for information.

## **2.7 Regulation Of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA)**

The Committee had been asked to review, and approved the report regarding the Council's Inspection by the Office of Surveillance Commissioners and the Council's Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 Policy and Guidance document.

## **2.8 Review of Leisure Services**

The Committee reviewed Leisure Services Provision in the District on current facility provision. There were commercially driven programmes with local objectives built on a Needs Surveys and a good level of Outreach Provision with items such as, 'Get Active In The Forest', 'Village Games', 'Playschemes', 'Sport and Health' and 'Active Nation', however the Council would make efforts to try and involve elderly people more in the future. A Survey will be conducted with both elderly and young people that will drive the new 2015 Leisure Provision Programme.

## **2.9 Housing Revenue Account Budget**

The Committee had a specific role to assist the Finance and Management Committee with the Business Plan for the HRA (Housing Revenue Account budget) and subjected it to a detailed review. This was to consider the resources available for 'New Build Housing' and to update the financial projection following the first 2 years of "self-financing" together with the impact of changes to the national rent setting guidelines, which are to be implemented in April 2015.

## **2.10 Cemetery Service and Provision of Cemetery Space**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee initially became interested in cemetery provision due to the reduction in cemetery space in the urban core and Gresley cemetery in particular. Initial exploration was done into the availability of Council owned land but problems were encountered with size, access, legal issues, cost and alternative uses that meant nothing suitable could be found. After the initial work and on the back of local intelligence from outside the urban core, the Committee decided additional work was required to ascertain the scale of the issue across the whole of the district. The Council do not have a statutory duty to make provision for burials, but it became apparent that this was a service that was expected.

## **2.11 Budget Proposals 2014/15 and Financial Plan to 2020**

The Committee had a specific role to assist the Finance and Management Committee to develop the budget proposals. The Committee considered the budget at two of its meetings, in January and February 2015, looking at the General Fund, Capital, the proposals for Council Tax and the Housing Revenue Account. Members

of Overview and Scrutiny were also invited to attend the policy committee meetings and Area Forums, where detailed presentations were provided on each aspect of the budget. The Committee was satisfied with all recommendations made as part of the budget response and that the level of Council Rent be increased by 2.2% and Council Tax be frozen for 2015/16.

### **3. Concluding Comments and Acknowledgements**

This report had aimed to demonstrate the tangible effect that Overview and Scrutiny can make towards improving and delivering quality services to the residents of South Derbyshire. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recognised and appreciated immensely the valuable contribution that elected Members, Officers and representatives from partner organisations make towards its work and acknowledges that without this support and co-operation, it could not fulfil its aim to improve services for the benefit of South Derbyshire residents.

Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Members  
of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
March 2015

## Obtaining alternative versions of this document

If you would like this document in another language, or if you require the services of an interpreter, please contact us. This information is also available in large print, Braille or audio format upon request.

**Phone: 01283 595795**

**email:customer.services@south-derbys.gov.uk**

Jeśli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać ten dokument w innym języku lub potrzebują Państwo usług tłumacza, prosimy o kontakt. Informacje te są również dostępne na życzenie w wydaniu dużym drukiem, w alfabecie brajla lub w wersji audio.

如果你需要这份文件的中文翻译·或者需要传译员的帮助·请联系我们。这些数据也各有大字体印本·盲人点字和录音带，欢迎索取。

ほかの言語でこの文書をご希望の場合、もしくは通訳サービスをご希望の場合にご連絡ください。またこの情報は、ご要望により大きなプリント、点字版、また音声形式でも承っております。

यदि आपको ये दस्तावेज किसी दूसरी भाषा में चाहिये, या किसी दुभाषिये की सेवाओं की जरूरत है तो हमें सम्पर्क की कृपया करें। ये जानकारी माँग करने पर बड़े अक्षरों, ब्रेल या आडिओ के रूप में भी उपलब्ध करवाई जा सकती है।

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੂਸਰੀ ਭਾਸ਼ਾ ਵਿੱਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਜਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਦੁਭਾਸ਼ੀਏ ਦੀਆਂ ਸੇਵਾਵਾਂ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਸਾਡੇ ਨਾਲ ਸੰਪਰਕ ਕਰਨ ਦੀ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਮੰਗ ਕਰਨ ਤੇ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ, ਬ੍ਰੇਅਲ ਜਾਂ ਆਡਿਊ ਦੇ ਰੂਪ ਵਿੱਚ ਵੀ ਉਪਲੱਬਧ ਕਰਵਾਈ ਜਾ ਸਕਦੀ ਹੈ।

اگر آپ یہ ڈاکیومنٹ کسی اور زبان میں چاہتے ہیں، یا اگر آپ کو کسی ترجمان کی خدمات درکار ہوں، تو براہ کرم ہم سے رابطہ کریں۔ درخواست کرنے پر یہ معلومات بڑے پرنٹ، بریل یا آڈیو فارمیٹ میں بھی دستیاب ہیں۔

---

<b>REPORT TO:</b>	<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>AGENDA ITEM: 8</b>
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	<b>24<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2015</b>	<b>CATEGORY: DELEGATED</b>
<b>REPORT FROM:</b>	<b>CHIEF EXECUTIVE</b>	<b>OPEN PARAGRAPH NO: N/A</b>
<b>MEMBERS' CONTACT POINT:</b>	<b>TOVE CECILIA LINDGREN tove.lindgren@south-derbys.gov.uk (EXT: 5848)</b>	<b>DOC:</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>SETTING THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME 2015-16</b>	<b>REF: N/A</b>
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	<b>ALL</b>	

---

## **1.0 Recommendations**

1.1 To consider and agree the Committee's work programme for the year.

## **2.0 Purpose of the report**

**2.1 To set out a possible approach to setting the work programme for members to consider, along with the possible next steps for finalising it.**

## **3.0. Background**

3.1 the Overview & Scrutiny Committee has been given a clear remit by the Council to scrutinise and hold to account those who are responsible for providing services used by people in the district – both those services provided by the Council itself and other agencies. This is explained in the Council's constitution. The relevant section is attached to this report.

3.2. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee has carried out an extensive programme of activities over the years and this has allowed it to make a significant contribution to the life of the Council and South Derbyshire as a whole. The report summarising the work of the Committee during the 2014-15 local government year was considered by members earlier on the agenda for today's meeting.

## **4.1 How we have set the work programme in the past.**

4.1 The Committee has, in previous years has met as a focus group to identify potential issues to form its core work programme. However, before taking a firm decision on this It

has also consulted a range of other stakeholders, both within the Council and the wider community, such as the parish councils, to find out what they think should be scrutinised.

4.2 This approach to setting the work programme does have advantages. In particular, it is inclusive and can help to ensure that there is wider ownership of and support the Committee's work than might otherwise have been the case.

4.3 However, there are also potential drawbacks. Perhaps the most important of these is that the work programme that the Committee finally agrees on will not necessarily be based on or adequately address the Council's corporate objectives. In other words, there is no guarantee that what the Committee decides to look at will genuinely 'add value' to the Council or rather that what it looks at will add the *most* value. Given the limited member and officer capacity which the Committee has to carry out its work programme, it is important that we do this.

## **5. Setting the work programme for 2015/16**

5.1 The most practical way in which the Committee can help to focus on the right issues would be by deciding in advance what criteria it is going to use in order to choose what issues it is going to scrutinise during the year. Members may want to consider adopting something along the following lines. It is offered at this stage as the basis for further discussion.

**First:** The work programme ought to be based on what is important for the Council and to its partners. We should focus on the key goals and objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Plan

**Second:** The programme should focus on performance to see whether we (and our partners) are actually delivering on the key goals and objectives set out in the Corporate Plan.

**Third:** The work programme should result in tangible and practical recommendations for action – rather than make sweeping suggestions that are undeliverable (for example, because of the costs involved).

**Fourth:** The programme should be proportionate to the capacity of both members and officers to carry it out. We need to be clear about who is going to do what.

## **6.0 Using the corporate plan action plan to decide on the work topics (the Corporate Action Plan 2015 – 2019 is currently being drafted)**

6.1 It would be helpful if the Committee could consider potential topics for its work programme based around the Corporate Plan themes once they become available.

## **7.0. The next steps**

7.1 Once members have made a preliminary decision about what issues they would like to include in the work programme, the officers can then pull together some specific proposals for investigations for the Committee to consider. These could then form the basis for a consultation exercise with both internal and external stakeholders. The aim of this

consultation exercise would be to determine: (a) whether they support the proposed programme of investigations or (b) if there were any alternative enquiries, related to the Council's corporate objectives, which the committee ought to carry out.

7.2 We would seek to fast track this process, so that the Committee was able to finalise and endorse its work programme at its June meeting and, with the agreement of the Chair, begin its first investigation at this meeting also.

7.3 Whatever lines of enquiry which the Committee does ultimately include in its work programme will need to be properly planned to ensure that they are effectively delivered. For example, we will need to be clear about what are we hoping to achieve from the investigation, what the key questions we would like to explore, who should be invited to give evidence to the Committee etc.

7.4 It is important that elected members can play a full part in any investigations. But this means being realistic about what they can do and how much capacity that they have to take part in Overview & Scrutiny. We also need to take into account the impact which any Overview & Scrutiny investigations might have on the wider organisation - both in those departments required to provide evidence / information and also on the Chief Executive's staff who provide governance and support to the Committee. Ultimately, there is no point in trying to carry out investigations that are so broad in their scope that neither elected members nor officers are able to deliver them.

## **8.0 Financial Implications**

8.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report

## **9.0 Corporate Implications**

9.1 None directly arising from this report

## **10.0 Background Papers**

10.1 Scoping documents for reviews and previous committee reports

## **11.0 Attachments**

11.1 NONE