

To the Chair and Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PLAN 2016/2017

Relevant Cabinet Member(s)	Wards Affected	Key Decision
The Mayor	All	None

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Committee is asked to agree an Overview and Scrutiny work programme for 2016/17.

EXEMPT REPORT

2. The report is not exempt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

3. The Committee is asked to
 - a) Approve a 2016/2017 work programme, a draft of which will be circulated to Members in advance of the meeting for consideration and approval.
 - b) Ensure the Overview and Scrutiny work programme takes account of best practice principles of Scrutiny work planning attached at Appendix A.
 - c) Request the Overview and Scrutiny Panels make the necessary arrangements to maintain an overview of relevant partnership activities.

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR THE CITIZENS OF DONCASTER?

4. Regular review of the overview and scrutiny work plan enables the Committee to ensure it remains relevant and is responding to important issues for citizens and the borough. The work plan update helps support openness, transparency and accountability as it summarises outcomes from overview and scrutiny activities. Citizens are able to contribute to the work of overview and scrutiny by attending meetings or contributing to reviews.

BACKGROUND

5. Overview and Scrutiny has a number of key roles which focus on:
 - Holding decision makers to account
 - Policy development and review

- Monitoring performance (both financial and non-financial)
 - Considering issues of wider public concern.
6. OSMC manages the work programmes for itself and the standing Panels except the Health and Adult Social Care Panel which manages its own work programme primarily because it has statutory responsibilities relating to Health Scrutiny.
 7. The Panels endeavor to deliver a more outcome focused Scrutiny function focusing on delivering evidence based recommendations whilst OSMC focus on effective Scrutiny and performance monitoring and co-ordination of the wider Overview and Scrutiny activities.
 8. The statutory responsibilities that Overview and Scrutiny must undertake include an annual review of the Community Safety Partnership, consultation on budget and policy framework issues and health scrutiny issues.
 9. OSMC and the standing Panels held work planning sessions during May and June 2016. It was recognised that the new Panels may wish to agree their own topics but it was felt the early meeting would provide time for officers to begin scoping out and making arrangements to consider issues that could be considered early in the municipal year.
 10. In drafting its future work programme the Committee will need to take account of the capacity of the Committee and the Panels to consider additional issues that may arise during the course of the year.
 11. The Committee will also need to ensure that it manages and co-ordinates the work of the Panels to ensure there is an even balance across the Scrutiny function, key issues are being considered and Chairs receive the advice and support to deliver their work plans. Scrutiny Chairs are asked to regularly report back to the Committee on the progress of their reviews. In developing its work programme the Committee is requested to take account of the best practice principles for developing the Overview and Scrutiny work plans attached at Appendix A.

Monitoring the Work Programme

12. An updated version of the work plan will be regularly presented to OSMC for consideration and this will include copies of correspondence and briefings in relation to recommendations resulting from Scrutiny Panel reviews. In this way Members will be able to see more clearly the progress and impact being made. The work of OSMC and the Panels will be reported annually to full Council and the progress of the standing Panels will be reported to OSMC where appropriate and to the Chairs and Vice Chairs Liaison Group.

Links with the local Partners

13. The Committee is asked to recommend that the Panels maintain an overview and understanding of partnership activities. As the delivery of Borough priorities relies on a partnership approach the Panels are requested to make the necessary arrangements to secure links with relevant partnership bodies. This may include attendance at meetings by a Panel Member to observe and feedback to the Panel. Alternatively this could include regular updates from

the relevant partnership body or via the Council's representative on that body if applicable. It is suggested that a flexible approach to working with partners will enable the identification of future work plan issues and help ensure Members gain a greater awareness of partnership activity.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

14. There are no specific options to consider within this report as it provides an opportunity for the Committee to develop a work plan for 2016/17.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDED OPTION

15. This report provides the committee with an opportunity to develop a work plan for 2016/17.

IMPACT ON THE COUNCIL'S KEY OUTCOMES

16.

	Outcomes	Implications
	<p>All people in Doncaster benefit from a thriving and resilient economy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Be a strong voice for our veterans</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> 	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny function has the potential to impact upon all of the council's key objectives by holding decision makers to account, reviewing performance and developing policy through robust recommendations, monitoring performance of council and external partners services and reviewing issues outside the remit of the council that have an impact on the residents of the borough.</p>
	<p>People live safe, healthy, active and independent lives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	
	<p>People in Doncaster benefit from a high quality built and natural environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Creating Jobs and Housing</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Safeguarding our Communities</i> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Bringing down the cost of living</i> 	
	<p>All families thrive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mayoral Priority: Protecting Doncaster's vital services</i> 	
	<p>Council services are modern and value for money.</p>	

	Working with our partners we will provide strong leadership and governance.	
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RISKS AND ASSUMPTIONS

- 17 To maximise the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny function it is important that the work plan devised is manageable and that it accurately reflects the broad range of issues within its remit. Failure to achieve this can reduce the overall impact of the function. Ensuring the work plan is developed with a key set of principles in mind e.g. holding to account, undertaking policy review and development and is focused strategically will help support the development of a robust work programme. National research has identified that over ambitious work plans that include too many items are a common cause of frustration for Scrutiny Members as they fail to achieve any outcomes. The work plan will be reviewed at each ordinary meeting and officers will advise on the capacity available to undertake any additional work. This will provide an opportunity to ensure work plans can be regularly monitored and reviewed.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

18. The Council's Constitution states that subject to matters being referred to it by the Full Council, or the Executive and any timetables laid down by those references Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee will determine its own Work Programme (Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 6a).

Specific legal implications and advice will be given with any reports when Overview and Scrutiny have received them as items for consideration.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

19. There are no specific financial implications associated with this report.

HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

20. There are no specific human resources issues associated with this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

21. There are no specific technological implications resources issues associated with this report.

EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

22. There are no specific equality issues associated with this report. Equality issues are considered by Overview and Scrutiny when it considers individual work plan issues.

CONSULTATION

23. During May and June 2016, OSMC and the standing Panels held work planning sessions to identify issues for consideration during 2016/2017.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

24. Agenda, guidance and draft work plan produced following OSMC work planning events held during May and June 2016.

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PLANNING GUIDANCE

1. In terms of undertaking effective Overview and Scrutiny, Members are asked to agree a small number of manageable issues for consideration for each of the standing Panels and OSMC that can be accommodated within the schedule of OSMC meetings.
2. Setting the Committee's forward work plan is an important task for Members. Done correctly it will allow Overview and Scrutiny to contribute to effective decision making and improved delivery of services. Done badly it can end up wasting time and resources on issues where the impact of any work done is likely to be minimal. This short briefing provides some key principles of effective work planning.

Remit of OSMC

3. When identifying topics for OSMC to consider Members should note that the remit of OSMC is slightly different from the Standing Panels as it needs to maintain an overarching view of O&S and a focus on corporate services and finance. Its remit includes the following:
 - i. **Ensuring co-ordination and management of Overview and Scrutiny activities** by setting Panel work plans, receiving progress reports, receiving recommendations.
 - ii. Consideration of issues for Overview and Scrutiny i.e. pre decision scrutiny, policy review, finance and performance monitoring across all Council and partner activity (except Health).
 - iii. **Reviewing the Council's corporate health** via regular consideration of budget and performance information and value for money services.
 - v. **Considering key corporate policies** in their draft form to allow the Committee to contribute to their development prior to approval.
 - vi. Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny's role in the **budget setting process**
 - viii. **Developing the Scrutiny function** by co-ordinating, managing and promoting good practice within Overview and Scrutiny e.g. protocols, Action Plan etc.
 - ix. **Considering the Call In** of any relevant decisions and holding decision makers to account.
4. Overview and Scrutiny work plans should incorporate issues that include the following:
 - i. **Holding the Executive to account** (e.g. Call in, reviewing performance and impact of any decisions or policies, Cabinet Members, pre decision Scrutiny)
 - ii. **Contributing to performance monitoring/service improvements** (ensuring that effective performance and service improvement takes place by effectively challenging the Executive, Officers and Partners.
 - iii. **Policy development and review** – Proposing evidence based recommendations to influence future policy e.g. short reviews (Select Committee style) or in depth reviews.
 - iv. **External Scrutiny** – Scrutiny of partners and other external bodies.

Key Principles of Effective Work Planning

5. Best practice has shown us that Overview and Scrutiny is most effective when:
 - i. It is strategic in nature with topics relating directly to supporting the delivery of borough wide priorities.
 - ii. It is focused on reviewing a small number of issues in detail, rather than trying to review everything (the quality not quantity principle).
 - iii. It is forward looking. The real impact of Scrutiny lies in shaping and influencing future policy/decisions through evidence based review.
 - iv. Work plans and outcomes and impact of any recommendations are regularly reviewed
 - v. Topics are carefully selected they should seek to add value to the organisation and the delivery of public services
 - vi. There is a clear understanding of the aims and objectives when undertaking Overview and Scrutiny of a specific issue.
 - vii. The process is Member led, taking account of advice from officers, partners etc.

Criteria for Inclusion on the Work Plan

6. The Attached Annex “Ingredients For An Effective Review” contains principles that should be taken into account in considering issues for review by the standing Panels.

Prioritisation

7. Effective work plans should be focused and manageable. There is always the potential that the Committee may develop a shopping list of issues to look at in case something is “missed”. This is unlikely to achieve any significant value as Scrutiny becomes nothing more than an information giving forum with little focus and no opportunity to look at issues in any real depth.
8. There is however a need for Members to build up knowledge on certain issues but in many cases this can be undertaken outside the formal meeting setting. Detailed below are some of the ways in which O&S can review issues identified on its work plan.
 - i. **Written briefing, Workshops, Seminars and Presentations** – This enables Members to gain an understanding of an issue and identify whether any further Scrutiny work should be undertaken. There may be occasions where small groups of Members may wish to investigate an issue and feed back to the Panel.
 - ii. **Report** – formal report considered at an O&S meeting at which the Panel would look to formally consider a specific issue. Clarity should be given on the aspect which the Committee/Panel wishes to review.
 - iii. **Working Groups** – established to gather evidence, look at an issue and report back to the Committee with its findings and put forward evidence based recommendations.

- iv. **In depth/Minor review** – to undertake a more in depth study of an issue where partners, stakeholders, public, are invited to give evidence etc.
- v. **Evidence gathering/consultation** - site visits, drop in sessions, questionnaires, social media, meetings in community to gauge views on a specific issue etc.

Capacity/Resources

- 9. The work plan should allow for urgent /unexpected issues to be considered. Time will also need to be set aside to undertake any briefings, workshops, site visits or other activities that may support OSMC's work e.g. budget review. The work plan should therefore be seen as a live document which should be regularly reviewed and updated at each formal meeting.