

Report of:	Meeting	Date	Item No.
Marianne Hesketh, Service Director Performance and Innovation	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	6 February 2017	6

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2016/17 – update report

1. Recommendations

- 1.1 That the committee identifies any new work, and specifically scrutiny reviews, that it would like to undertake.
- 1.2 That the committee agrees whether and how it will respond to the Parliamentary Select Committee inquiry into overview and scrutiny in local government.

2. Current work

2.1 Domestic abuse task group

The domestic abuse task group has very nearly completed its review. A draft report is being prepared and will be considered by the group at their final meeting, when the Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder will also be in attendance. The task group's conclusions and draft representations will be presented and discussed.

It is anticipated that the task group's report will be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Monday 6 March 2017, prior to submission to the Cabinet.

2.3 Food hygiene task group

The task group has met three times and is drawing its work to a close.

The task group's conclusions and draft recommendations will be presented to the Health and Community Engagement Portfolio Holder on 13 February 2017, the report then being considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6 March 2017, before going to Cabinet.

3. Future task group work

3.1 The current arrangements for council's waste collection service have been in place since 2012. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee might wish to be involved in reviewing future service delivery by setting up a task group. Such a review would operate alongside an officer review of the waste collection service that will be taking place at the same time. The Service Director People and Places and the Portfolio Holder are aware that this issue will be under consideration by the committee and are pleased that non-Executive members will have an opportunity to play a role and make recommendations.

3.2 There is currently capacity for the committee to commission another task group. In the absence of a structured Work Programme for 2016/17 the committee is reminded of a list of potential task group topics that was considered by the committee on 6 June 2016, which is attached at Appendix 2.

4. Other issues

4.1 On Tuesday 24 January 2017 the Communities and Local Government Committee launched an inquiry into overview and scrutiny in local government. The Committee will consider whether overview and scrutiny arrangements in England are working effectively and whether local communities are able to contribute to and monitor the work of their councils (see Appendix 3).

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List of background papers:		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules	7 July 2016	Council's website

Appendices

Appendix 1	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme May 2016 – April 2017 – Summary
Appendix 2	Draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme topics 2016/17 (previously submitted to the O&S Committee on 6 June 2016).
Appendix 3	Parliamentary Select Committee inquiry into overview and scrutiny in local government

APPENDIX 1

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme May 2016 – April 2017 - Summary										Updated 25 January 2017			
	06-Jun	04-Jul	01-Aug	12-Sep	10-Oct	07-Nov	05-Dec	09-Jan	06-Feb	06-Mar	10-Apr		
Work Programme update report													
Community Safety Partnership (to include PCC)													
Performance review (quarterly)													
Local Plan progress report													
LCC Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee													
Holding the Exec to account for forthcoming decisions													
Leader (Strategic Narrative, Business Plan)													
Planning and Economic Development PH													
Task Groups Reporting to Committee													
Localised council tax support													
Libraries (consultation)													
Domestic abuse													
Food hygiene ratings													
Citizens advice													
Other work and reports to committee													
Food hygiene ratings													
Waste contract annual performance plan													
Council tax discounts													
LCC - supporting people consultations													
Fleetwood market													
Left Coast													
Fees & charges													
Head of Finance:VFM profiles; Treasury Management													
Review Engaging with Communities TG recs													
Shaping Your Neighbourhood review													
Review CCGs TG recs													
Review Town and Parish Councils TG recs													
Sport England grant funding / YMCA													
Changing energy suppliers													
Dementia in Wyre													
CCG - update													

DRAFT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME TOPICS 2016-17

TO BE INCLUDED AS TASK GROUPS	
Domestic violence	O&S Committee on 18 April 2016 agreed to set up task group. To commence in May/June 2016. Focus on a couple of very specific issues that relate to services in Wyre.
Food hygiene	Proposed by Cllr Jones. Supported by O&S Committee on 18 April 2016. Concern about 36 establishments in Wyre having 0-1 star. Food establishments need to be helped to improve their standards. Report to committee in June 2016. To commence in June/July 2016.
Citizens Advice Bureau	Review of current provision needs to be carried out in Oct/Nov for recommendation about further funding with effect from May 2017 (see scrutiny review report to Cabinet 21 January 2015).
Left Coast	Review the three years of the three-year agreement What were the objectives? What were the intended outcomes? Have these been achieved? What have we committed to by agreeing to continue to fund? What do we expect to get out of it? Start by requesting report to committee (July 2016?), and follow up with scrutiny review.
Review of resident parking permit scheme	Needs to be done as soon as there is sufficient data from new car parking machines and fobs. Plan to commence review six months after implementation of new machines.
Review of customer complaints process	See report to Cabinet, 15 June 2016

TO BE INCLUDED AS REPORTS TO COMMITTEE	
Review of council tax discounts and exemptions	Cllr Fail's proposal. Report to committee July 2016.
Audit report - safeguarding	Report awaited from Phil Threlfall. PF to check current progress and status with HR before requesting report to committee.
Review of council's treasury management arrangements	Statutory requirement. November/December 2016.
Budget scrutiny - fees and charges, capital growth bids	Annual consideration – likely to be considered by reports to committee in October/November 2016
Value for money profiles	Review of the comparative profiles previously produced by the Audit Commission. October/November 2016.

Revised 25 May 2016

Monday 6 February 2017

Parliamentary Select Committee inquiry into overview and scrutiny in local government

1 On Tuesday 24 January 2017 the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Committee launched an inquiry into overview and scrutiny in local government. The Committee will consider whether overview and scrutiny arrangements in England are working effectively and whether local communities are able to contribute to and monitor the work of their councils.

2 Overview and scrutiny arrangements were introduced by the Local Government Act in 2000 as a counterweight to increasing decision-making powers of Leaders and Cabinets or directly elected mayors. Shortcomings have been exposed, however, following a number of high profile cases.

3 Clive Betts MP, Chair of the Communities and Local Government Committee, said:

“This inquiry is long overdue. Local authority executives have more powers than ever before but there has not been any review about how effectively the current overview and scrutiny arrangements are working since they were introduced in 2000.

Local authorities have a considerable degree of discretion when it comes to overview and scrutiny. We will examine these arrangements and consider what changes may be needed to ensure decision-makers in councils and local services are better held to account.”

4 The Committee invites written evidence on:

- Whether scrutiny committees in local authorities in England are effective in holding decision-makers to account
- The extent to which scrutiny committees operate with political impartiality and independence from executives
- Whether scrutiny officers are independent of and separate from those being scrutinised
- How chairs and members are selected
- Whether powers to summon witnesses are adequate
- The potential for local authority scrutiny to act as a voice for local service users
- How topics for scrutiny are selected

- The support given to the scrutiny function by political leaders and senior officers, including the resources allocated (for example whether there is a designated officer team)
- What use is made of specialist external advisers
- The effectiveness and importance of local authority scrutiny of external organisations
- The role of scrutiny in devolution deals and the scrutiny models used in combined authorities
- Examples where scrutiny has worked well and not so well

The deadline for written submissions is Friday 10 March 2017.

5 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be advised about the inquiry at their meeting on 6 February 2017.

6 CMT is asked for their views about how best to compile and agree a response to the inquiry from Wyre Council.

Peter Foulsham
Scrutiny Officer
26 January 2017