

Report to: Place Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 26 September 2023

By: Assistant Chief Executive

Title: Place Scrutiny Committee future work programme

Purpose: To review and agree items for the Place Scrutiny Committee's future work programme and receive updates on previous work.

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Place Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- 1) Review the agenda items for the future Committee meetings, including items listed in the updated work programme in appendix 1;
 - 2) Review and agree topics for Scrutiny Reviews to be included in the Committee's future work programme;
 - 3) Review upcoming items on East Sussex County Council's (ESCC) Forward Plan in appendix 2 to identify any issues that may require more detailed scrutiny; and
 - 4) Note the updates from the Review Board, Working Group and Reference Groups contained in section 3 of the report.
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1. Background

1.1 The work programme is an important tool in ensuring the correct focus and best use of the Committee's time in scrutinising topics that are of importance to the residents of East Sussex, and the efficient and effective working of the Council. It also provides clarity for those who may be requested to give evidence to the Committee on the issues under review, and the questions the Committee requires answers to.

1.2 Discussion of the work programme provides the Committee with the opportunity to examine topics that it may be of value to scrutinise, and to decide whether further scoping work is required. This provides a basis for deciding the best way of scrutinising a topic, the timescale, and who from the Committee will be involved in carrying out the review work. If there are a number of topics for review, the Committee can determine the priority of the work within the resources available to the Committee.

2. Work programme and future scrutiny reviews

2.1 The Committee will review the items contained in the current work programme and discuss the future agenda items and other scrutiny work of the Committee in more detail at the Committee's Away Day, that will take place at the conclusion of the committee meeting. A copy of the current work programme is contained in appendix 1 of the report for consideration by the Committee.

2.2 The Committee is also asked to consider whether there are any potential topics for future scrutiny reviews, or agenda items for future meetings, that should be included in the work programme, including items contained the Council's Forward Plan of decisions. This can include any topics or issues identified through the Committee's work on the Reconciling Policy, Performance and Resources (RPPR) process discussed earlier in the agenda.

3. Forward Plan

3.1 A copy of the Council's Forward Plan of executive decisions for the period 1 September 2023 to 31 December 2023 is included in appendix 2. The Committee is requested to review the forthcoming items on the Forward Plan to identify any issues that may require scrutiny work. The Forward Plan is revised and published on a monthly basis, and Committee members should regularly review the Forward Plan.

4. Scrutiny review board, working group and reference group updates

Scrutiny Review of Pothole Management

4.1 The Review Board, which is comprised of Councillors Matthew Beaver, Julia Hilton, Ian Hollidge (Chair), Eleanor Kirby-Green and Philip Lunn, has met on five occasions since the date of the last Place Scrutiny Committee meeting. The Board has been undertaking evidence gathering for the review and has met with Balfour Beatty Living Partnerships (BBLP), who is the new Highways maintenance contractor, to examine their approach to defect reporting, pothole/defect repairs, quality assurance and innovation in operating the contract. The Review Board has also looked at the Council's policies and procedures for defects/pothole repairs; the asset management approach and targets for road condition; and the planned investment in highways maintenance. The Board plans to submit its report to the Place Scrutiny Committee for approval at the meeting scheduled to be held on 23 November 2023.

Climate Emergency Action Plan – Working Group

4.2 The Climate Emergency Action Plan Working Group, which is comprised of Councillors Julia Hilton, Ian Hollidge, Paul Redstone (Chair) and David Tutt reconvened and met on two occasions to consider and provide scrutiny input into the development of a draft carbon offset framework for the Council (which will form part of the corporate climate emergency action plan) and a draft updated corporate Environment Policy. The Working Group made detailed comments on both the draft carbon offset framework and the draft updated corporate Environment Policy. The comments made by the Working Group have been incorporated into the draft versions of these documents, which will be considered by the Lead Member for Resources and Climate Change for approval.

Local Transport Plan (LTP) Reference Group

4.3 The LTP Reference Group, which is comprised of Councillors Matthew Beaver, Chris Collier, Julia Hilton, Ian Hollidge, Philip Lunn, Paul Redstone (Chair), Stephen Shing and David Tutt, has met on two occasions since the last Committee meeting. The Reference Group has continued to provide scrutiny input into the development stages of the Local Transport Plan. This has involved stakeholder engagement work on the vision, key objectives, packages of interventions and the structure and content of the draft LTP document. The Reference Group has been informed that the draft LTP statutory guidance which was due to be published by the Department for Transport has been delayed, which may have implications for the project timetable. The Reference Group will meet again later in the year to consider the draft LTP document prior to the public consultation stage commencing.

East Sussex Economic Growth Strategy - Reference Group

4.4 The Economic Growth Strategy Reference Group, which is comprised of Councillors Chris Collier, Julia Hilton, Ian Hollidge, Paul Redstone and David Tutt, has been established to provide scrutiny input into the development of an Economic Growth Strategy for East Sussex. The Reference Group is planning to hold an initial meeting in late September or early October (date to be confirmed).

5. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

5.1 The Place Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider the work programme contained in appendix 1 and agree any further agenda items or topics for scrutiny reviews to be included in the future work programme. The Committee is also recommended to review the Council's Forward Plan of decisions to identify any issues that may require more detailed scrutiny and note the updates from the Review Board, Working Group and Reference Groups.

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BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

None.