

Report to: People Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 17 November 2022

By: Assistant Chief Executive

Title: People Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Purpose: To review and discuss the People Scrutiny Committee's future work programme

RECOMMENDATIONS: The Committee is recommended to:

- 1) review and agree the latest work programme set out at Appendix 1;
 - 2) consider the update on school attendance data at Appendix 2; and
 - 3) review upcoming items on East Sussex County Council's Forward Plan as set out at Appendix 3 to identify any issues that may require more detailed scrutiny.
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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 consider 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 potential topics for review, Members can determine the priority of the work within the resources available to the Committee.

2 Supporting information

Work programme

2.1 The Committee's latest work programme is attached at Appendix 1. The Committee is asked to consider, discuss and agree any changes required.

School attendance data update

2.2 A Scoping Board of a potential People Scrutiny Review of School Attendance took place in March this year. At that meeting, the Board agreed although the subject was appropriate for a Scrutiny Review, as so much of the current situation regarding school absence rates in East Sussex was related to the ongoing impact of, and disruption from, the coronavirus pandemic, it was too early for the Committee to undertake a scrutiny review of school attendance. The Board agreed the review should commence in Spring 2023 when we were expected to have a clearer sense of the long-term impact of COVID on school absences. It was agreed that in the interim an update on school attendance data would be reported to the November 2022 Committee as part of the work programme update to support work programming of this planned Scrutiny Review. The Committee is asked to consider the update on school attendance data at Appendix 2 and work programming of this planned review.

2.3 When considering potential topics for inclusion in the work programme, the Committee is asked to consider a range of questions. These include:

- Is the topic relevant to the Council's Corporate Priorities?
- Is the issue of concern or of relevance to East Sussex residents?
- Can Scrutiny have an impact and add value by scrutinising this issue, service or policy?
- Is the issue one that the Committee can realistically influence?
- Are the resources needed to undertake the review available?

Scrutiny Reviews

Use of Digital and Technology in ASC

2.4 The Review of Use of Digital and Technology in ASC has continued to progress throughout the autumn, with three Review Board meetings held on Wednesday 21 September, Friday 7 October, Wednesday 2 November and a final evidence gathering session planned on Monday 14 November. The Review Board has started to draw conclusions and consider recommendations and the final report detailing the Review's findings will be reported back to the short People Scrutiny Committee meeting scheduled on Friday 16 December ahead of the Committee's 2022 RPPR Board.

2.5 Due to the focus on conducting the above review, work on delivery of the other two scrutiny reviews agreed at the Committee's July meeting – on Adult Social Care Equality and Inclusion and Use of Prevention in Children's Services – has been paused to make best use of available resources. Review Board meetings of these reviews will commence at the earliest opportunity and updated timetables for the reviews will be considered then.

2.6 Any suggestions for potential Scrutiny Review topics should be discussed with the Chair, or the Senior Policy and Scrutiny Adviser, in advance of the Committee meetings.

Forward Plan

2.7 A copy of the Council's Forward Plan of executive decisions for the period 1 November 2022 to 28 February 2023 is included at Appendix 3. The Committee is requested to review the forthcoming items on the Forward Plan to identify any issues within the remit of this Committee that may require more detailed scrutiny. The Forward Plan is revised and published on a monthly basis and Committee members should regularly review the Forward Plan.

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 An important part of managing the work of the People Scrutiny Committee is regularly reviewing its future work programme. This involves the Committee assessing its priorities, ensuring its ongoing reviews are completed in a timely fashion and identifying new areas for scrutiny.

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