

Report to: Place Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 12 March 2024

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 and agree 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;**
 - 4) Discuss and agree any training and development activities including the topics for 'bite size' training sessions; and**
 - 5) Agree to re-establish the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) Working Group to provide scrutiny input into an update of the corporate climate emergency action plan on behalf of the Committee as set out in section 5.4 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 is asked to review the items in the current work programme and discuss the future agenda items and other scrutiny work of the Committee for inclusion in the Committee's future work programme. Since the last meeting of the Committee, it has reviewed the items and priorities for the work programme. This included priorities for the next scrutiny review topic to be scoped by the Committee. A copy of an updated work programme is contained in appendix 1 of the report for consideration and agreement 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.

2.3 As part of the work prioritisation process, Committee members have indicated the priorities for the next scrutiny review topics as being:

1. Speed Limit Policy
2. Footway (Pavement) Maintenance
3. Highway Drainage
4. Climate Change – focussing on the Council's countywide work

2.4 The Committee is therefore asked to confirm the priorities for the scrutiny reviews to be undertaken by the Committee and agree to form a scoping board to undertake work on the first topic which is Speed Limit Policy. The Committee is also asked to agree the membership of the scoping board for this review.

2.5 In addition, as part of the work programme prioritisation exercise there have been a number of suggestions for additions to the work programme from members of the Committee. The suggested topics are:

- 1) **Parking policy** – How we manage highway space in relation to allowing vehicles to park on street: the rational, pricing, fairness and could it be revised for greater benefit. Relevance to Electric Vehicle charging. How we use any surplus and how can that be legally used under 2004 Traffic Management Act to fund other transport measures in areas where public expect ESCC to deliver and where we do not have funding. Also, how can parking policy influence or encourage to more Active Travel.
- 2) **The Keep** - A report on who uses the Keep, how it works and a possible visit. What are the costs of the service and how does it generate income?
- 3) **Funding bids and opportunities from Government.** Currently Bexhill and Rother have been allocated 3 different funding streams totalling £60million. Most of this will be spent in Bexhill. However, how can we ensure money likely to be managed by Government and Rother District Council improves Traffic Management, Movement and Access, Highway improvements and Public Realm all of which are ESCC's responsibility?
- 4) **Active Travel Ratings** – ESCC's is 1 whilst West Sussex is 0 and Brighton's 2. Suggest the Committee explore what ESCC has to do to ensure we do not go backwards and start aiming for a 3 rating: [Local authority active travel capability ratings \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#) There could be links to Public Health (which sits within the remit of the People Scrutiny Committee).

2.6 The Committee is asked to discuss and agree these suggestions and agree whether they should be added to the work programme and the preferred approach to each topic (e.g. report, potential review topic, briefing or site visit).

3. Forward Plan

3.1 A copy of the Council's Forward Plan of executive decisions for the period 1 March 2024 to 30 June 2024 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. Training and Development

4.1 As part of the Committee's ongoing training and development, the Committee is asked to discuss and agree any training or development activity that it would like to undertake, including identifying the topics for any 'bite size' training sessions (e.g. questioning skills etc.) or briefings it would like to receive.

5. Reference Group and Working Group Updates

Local Transport Plan (LTP) Reference Group

5.1 Since the last Committee meeting the LTP Reference Group has met to receive a briefing on the interim results for the public consultation and to consider modal strategies for rail and freight which support the overall transport strategy for the county. The Rail Strategy is an update of the Strategy developed in 2013 and the Freight Strategy is a new strategy. In its future work, the LTP Reference Group will consider a revised draft LTP once the public consultation on the draft LTP has been completed and analysed. The next meeting of the LTP Reference Group is planned for April or early May 2024.

The Economic Growth Strategy (EGS) Reference Group

5.2 The Economic Growth Strategy (EGS) Reference Group has held three meetings since the last Committee meeting. The EGS Reference Group has explored the key stages of the development of the new the Economic Growth Strategy for East Sussex including: examining the feedback from stakeholder engagement activities on the new Strategy and the evidence base; meeting with businesses representatives and other stakeholders to hear their views on what should be included in the Strategy and success measures; and a meeting in early March to consider the draft Economic Growth Strategy.

Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) Working Group

5.3 The current corporate Climate Emergency Action Plan is due to expire in March 2025 and a request has been made that the Committee re-establish the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) Working Group to provide scrutiny input into the update of the Action Plan. The suggestion is that the Working Group will work in a similar way to previously when it helped develop the current Action Plan through a number of meetings during June, July and September 2024. A draft terms of reference for the Working Group is attached in appendix 3 which provides more information and a timeline for the work.

5.4 The Committee is asked to agree to re-establish the CEAP Working Group in line with the draft terms of reference in appendix 3, and confirm the membership of the Group. The previous membership of the Working Group consisted of Cllr Hilton, Cllr Hollidge, Cllr Kirby-Green, Cllr Redstone (Chair) and Cllr Tutt. Membership of the Working Group is open to other Committee members should they wish to join this piece of scrutiny work, and existing members may wish to indicate whether they would wish to be included in the Working Group for this new piece of work.

6. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

6.1 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, agree any training activity, and re-establish the Climate Emergency Action Plan (CEAP) Working Group to provide scrutiny input into an update of the corporate Climate Emergency Action Plan, on behalf of the Committee.

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