



Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Board **Date:** 8 July 2015

Wards Affected: All wards

Report Title: Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme

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1. Purpose and Introduction

1.1 Each year, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is required to agree a Work Programme. The Programme needs to be robust and realistic but also flexible enough to enable emerging issues of concern to be addressed. This will help to ensure that overview and scrutiny is driving service improvement and playing a key role in the policy development process. A successful scrutiny function would have a positive impact on our customers as the community would be involved in the work being undertaken and the outcomes of that work would be focused on the community's needs.

2. Proposed Decision

2.1 That the outline Work Programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Board, as set out in Appendix 1 to this report, be agreed but that it be noted that additions may be made to the programme pending the outcome of the current call-in of the Mayor's decision in relation to the establishment of policy development groups.

2.2 Reason for Decision

To ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny Board sets a robust Work Programme for the coming year.

Supporting Information

3. Position

3.1 The Constitution requires that each year the Overview and Scrutiny Board will coordinate the production of a Work Programme for the function as a whole.

3.2 As the Board is aware, the major challenge facing Torbay Council in the coming year is identifying the savings required to meet the continuing reducing amount of public sector finance. As part of the processes around fair decision making, robust

proposals must be developed which include appropriate consultation and assessment of the impacts.

- 3.3 The Board is also aware that, at the meeting of the Council held on 26 February 2015, a set of principles was adopted which included that “the Council as a whole need to focus on the matters that really matter” and that the relationship between overview and scrutiny and the executive should seek to complement each other.
- 3.4 To this end, following the Local Elections in May 2015, it was proposed that the work programmes of both overview and scrutiny (in relation to its policy development role) and the executive should be merged and managed through the reconstituted Policy Development Groups. However, the decision of the Mayor to establish two Policy Development Groups and to agree the operational guidance for those Groups is currently subject to call-in with the matter due to be debated by the Council at its meeting on 23 July 2015.
- 3.5 At this stage, it does not seem appropriate to agree the policy development (or overview) part of the overview and scrutiny work programme. Issues which the Board had identified during the course of its work in 2014/2015 included:
- Future operating models for:
 - Library Services
 - CCTV
 - Connections
 - Review of car parking
 - Effectiveness of the Integrated Care Organisation as an “agent for change”
- 3.5 The Overview and Scrutiny Board had also previously identified that the Corporate Plan should also be used as a basis for determining its Work Programme and, to this end, the Mayor and Executive Leads have been invited to attend the Board to discuss their plans for the delivery of the draft Corporate Plan.
- 3.6 The proposed scrutiny elements of the work programme are listed in Appendix 1 with a focus on holding decision makers to account for their performance (which will be monitored in accordance with the themes within the draft Corporate Plan).
- 3.6 The Board is scheduled to meet in the week prior to each meeting of the Council which will enable it to review any issues due to be considered by Council if members so wish although it is hoped that, in accordance with the principles adopted by the Council on 26 February 2015, items will be placed in the Forward Plan earlier than has previously been the case to enable more informal discussions about future decisions due to be taken by the Council.
- 3.7 In terms of the Board’s statutory responsibility to health scrutiny, it is proposed that task-and-finish groups be established to review specific issues of concern with any proposals for substantial variations to service being considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Board itself.

3.8 Overview and Scrutiny Lead Members are also planning to meet informally with Executive Leads and members of the Senior Leadership Team on a regular basis to ensure they are kept up to date on emerging issues within their areas of responsibility. Any issues which are felt to be worthy of more detailed discussion will be included on future agendas for the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

3.9 Once the Mayor publishes his timetable for consulting on his proposed budget, the Overview and Scrutiny Board will need to determine how it wishes to review the proposals (either through a series of Priorities and Resources Review Panels or by another means).

4. Possibilities and Options

4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Board are free to determine its own Work Programme. However, regard should be given to the resources available within service departments of the Council to provide information to the Board which is not in line with broad themes work already being undertaken.

5. Fair Decision Making

5.1 The proposals in this report do not have a major community impact. However, if the proposals are accepted the reviews of the Overview and Scrutiny Board would form part of the fair decision process for the emerging proposals.

6. Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012

6.1 The proposals in this report not require any procurement and so the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 does not need to be applied.

7. Consultation

7.1 No public consultation has been carried out in formulating this report.

8. Risks

8.1 The exact nature and timing of the reviews identified will need to be agreed by members through the scoping process. In order to deliver successful reviews, members will need to ensure that they are clear about what they wish to review (and indeed what they will be excluding from the review). The timings of each review will also be critical to ensure that as little 'bunching' as possible occurs. The timeline for each individual review should be adhered to – this will help ensure that all the reviews can be delivered within the resources available.

8.2 A critical success factor will be members' commitment to these reviews –members need to be sure that these issues are matters which can make a difference to the community of Torbay and that they are willing to commit time and energy into

identifying consultees and key questions, meeting and discussing issues with other members, officers and consultees, reading and challenging the information presented to them and, finally, drawing conclusions, considering options appraisals and risk assessments, and formulating evidence based recommendations.

- 8.3 Members also need to receive support from officers within service departments and within relevant partners. Whilst the Scrutiny Support Team can provide day-to-day support (including research, consultation and analysis), detailed information will need to be provided through Executive Heads especially at the scoping, options appraisal, and risk assessment stages.
- 8.4 If members are not committed to the topics within the proposed Work Programme and to making overview and scrutiny a worthwhile mechanism to improve the lives of the community of Torbay (and if they do not receive adequate support from service departments), then there is a risk that no or few positive outcomes can be shown to have been achieved by Overview and Scrutiny.
- 8.5 Co-ordination with the various work programmes of the Council's Policy Development Groups is necessary to ensure there is not duplication of Overview and Scrutiny's role and workstreams and vice versa.

Appendices

Appendix 1 Draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

Additional Information

None