

4 July 2018	Agenda Item 10
<b>Scrutiny Committee work programme 2018/19</b>	
Report author:	Bob Pullen – Policy and Performance Officer
<b>Recommendations</b>	
That the Committee considers which topics or services it should review during the course of the year.	

**1 Purpose of report**

1.1 This report is concerned with the Committee’s work programme for 2018/19. It considers how the Committee can exercise its terms of reference.

**2 Background**

2.1 Each year, the Committee decides which topics it should review and in what priority order.

2.2 The Committee’s amended terms of reference were approved by Council on 19 February 2014 and are reproduced at Appendix i. The terms of reference form part of the Council’s Constitution.

2.3 In summary, the purpose of the Committee is to exercise the statutory duties of overview and scrutiny for the Council by:

- reviewing or scrutinising decisions made, and performance of the Cabinet, or officers under delegated authority;
- reviewing or scrutinising the performance of the Council in relation to policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas;
- reviewing and scrutinising the performance of other public bodies in the area about their activities.

2.4 The Committee is also responsible for considering monitoring reports on finance and performance and each year the Committee considers the Cabinet’s draft Budget proposals.

2.5 The Committee also has certain formal powers which only it can exercise including:

- calling-in Cabinet decisions which have been taken but not yet implemented; and

- to act as the Council’s “Crime and Disorder Committee” in terms of reviewing and scrutinising decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the responsible authorities discharge of their Crime and Disorder functions.

### **3 Discussion**

- 3.1 It is traditional at the start of each new Municipal Year for overview and scrutiny committees to devise and agree a work programme to plan the committees work for the next twelve months.
- 3.2 If the Scrutiny Committee is to be effective and bring real value, it will need to focus on where it can make the biggest impact. This means basing decisions on what topics or services to review on hard evidence. Anecdotal evidence, such as Members own experiences, or feedback from residents, can also be valuable.
- 3.3 There are also likely to be incidences throughout the year when the Committee will be invited to consider one-off issues.
- 3.4 The schedule at Appendix II lists those reviews which were either instigated or started in 2017/18 or before.
- 3.6 Experience has shown that those reviews which have made the most impact have been those where:
- services have been under-performing; and/or
  - the Council’s or other local service providers’ operations are of concern to residents.
- 3.7 The Committee should also be mindful of the resources needed to undertake reviews given the pressures on Members, officers and partners time.

### **4 Conclusion**

- 4.1 That the Committee considers which topics or services it should review during the course of the year.

### **5 Officer contacts**

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### Terms of reference for the Scrutiny Committee

**Preamble:** the Scrutiny Committee satisfies the requirement under legislation (S.9F of the Local Government Act 2000 as inserted by the Localism Act 2011) to include provision for the appointment of one or more committees. The Scrutiny Committee plays a particular role in scrutinising the Executive's annual budget proposals as part of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules (Part 4.3 of the Constitution refers).

**General role:** within the terms of reference, the Committee will:

- (i) review or scrutinise decisions made, and performance of, the Cabinet and Committees and Council Officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time;
- (ii) review or scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas;
- (iii) require Members of the Cabinet and/or Committees and Chief Officers to attend before it to answer questions about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects;
- (iv) make recommendations to the Cabinet or appropriate Committee or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process – it is expected that reviews of policy arising out of the work of the Committee would be referred to the Policy Development and Review Committee;
- (v) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the Scrutiny Committee and local people about their activities and performance;
- (vi) make reports or recommendations to the authority or the executive with respect to any functions which are not the responsibility of the executive;
- (vii) make reports or recommendations to the authority or the executive on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of the area;
- (viii) exercise the right to call-in, for reconsideration, decisions made but not yet implemented by the executive;

- (ix) consider Councillor Call for Action requests in accordance with the Councillor Call for Action Protocol contained in Part 5 of this Constitution; and
- (x) in accordance with Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006, to act as the Council's "Crime and Disorder Committee" in terms of reviewing and scrutinising decisions made, or other actions taken, in connection with the responsible authorities discharge of their Crime and Disorder functions.

The Scrutiny Committee shall exercise overall responsibility for any finances made available to them.

Annual Report – the Scrutiny Committee must report annually to the full council on its work and make recommendations for amended working methods if appropriate.

## Appendix II

### Scrutiny Committee – Possible review activity 2018/19

Topic	Ongoing review/activity?	Commentary
<b>Standard monitoring/scrutiny items</b>		
1 - Financial monitoring	Yes	The Committee will continue to receive financial monitoring reports during the course of the year to review.
2 - Performance monitoring	Yes	The Committee will continue to receive performance monitoring reports during the course of the year to review.
3 - Council Budget	Yes	The annual review of the Cabinet's budget proposals for 2019/20 will take place at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 23 January 2019.
4 – Fees and charges	Yes	The annual review of the Cabinet's proposals for setting Fees and Charges for Council Services for the next financial year. This is likely to take place at the Scrutiny Committee meeting on 7 November 2018 or thereabouts.
<b>Ongoing reviews</b>		
5 – Development management	Yes	This review is being taken forward by a Task and Finish Group. Interim report on Officer Delegations submitted to Cabinet. Scrutiny Committee agreed revised membership of Task and Finish Group and to complete the remaining five strands of the review during 2018/19 (i.e. (i) reports from statutory consultees; (ii) role of parish and town councils in development management; (iii) member involvement in planning applications and S.106 agreements; (iv) adoption of parcels of land on new developments; and (v) planning appeals).

Topic	Ongoing review/activity?	Commentary
6 – Non-STC regeneration	Yes	A review plan was agreed in late 2017/18 and members appointed to a Task and Finish Group to undertake the review. The Group met twice before membership of the Scrutiny Committee changed following Annual Council. A revised membership of the Group was agreed by Scrutiny Committee on 7 June and they are due to have their first meeting on 21 June 2018.
<b>Follow-ups to previous activity</b>		
7 – Leisure and tourism	No	Cabinet response received. Visitor Economy Strategy was considered by Policy Development and Review Committee during 2017/18. Cabinet member and officers attended Scrutiny Committee on 7 June 2018 to provide updates on progress. Committee to undertake ongoing monitoring of implementation of those Scrutiny Committee recommendations accepted by Cabinet.
8 – Housing Services	No	Cabinet response received. Committee to undertake ongoing monitoring of implementation of those recommendations accepted by Cabinet. Cabinet member and officers invited to give an update to Scrutiny Committee on 4 July 2018.
<b>Updates</b>		
9 – Update on Sittingbourne Town Centre regeneration	Yes	Ongoing updates provided for the Committee on Sittingbourne Town Centre Regeneration – alternately by Cabinet Member and officers in person and in writing.
<b>Possible topics for review which the Committee have alluded to during the course of 2017/18</b>		
Residents Parking Permits	No	

Topic	Ongoing review/activity?	Commentary
Infrastructure for Swale's utilities	No	A review on this issue was prompted by the interruption to water supplies to the Sittingbourne area during the freezing weather conditions last winter and to the Isle of Sheppey several years ago.