

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL 17 MARCH 2016

DEVELOPING AN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Purpose of the Meeting

1. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:
 - (a) Consider the programme agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board (OSPB) for developing the 2016/17 Work Programme; and
 - (b) Consider suggestions for inclusion in the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2016/17.

Background

2. Each Overview and Scrutiny Panel is required to have a Work Programme that details the activities that the Panel will be undertaking during the year. Members are reminded that Panel Work Programmes should be living documents that are able to adapt and change throughout the year to meet the demands and needs that best serve the people of Worcestershire.
3. The current Scrutiny Work Programme was developed in the Spring of 2015. Suggestions for future topics were sought from Members and discussed with Directors and other relevant officers. The resulting proposed Work Programme was considered and agreed by the OSPB on 23 April 2015 and Council on 14 May 2015.
4. At the last meeting of OSPB, it was agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programmes for 2016/17 would benefit from greater consultation with various groups and stakeholders. The consultation would hopefully raise the profile of the Overview and Scrutiny function and make the Work Programmes more relevant to the people of Worcestershire.
5. OSPB agreed that a consultation exercise would be undertaken that would involve seeking suggestions for inclusion in the Work Programmes from:
 - a) Business Community
 - b) Partners and Stakeholders
 - c) Non-Executive Members and Overview and Scrutiny Panels
 - d) Cabinet
 - e) Officers of the County Council
 - f) The Public
6. At its April 2016 meeting OSPB will agree a Work Programme Report to be sent for consideration to the County Council, this Report will detail the consultation

responses by category listed above as well as the Work Programme suggestions made by the Budget Scrutiny Process and a list of topics that were included in the 2015/16 Work Programmes but remain incomplete or have not begun.

7. The County Council will then be better informed of the issues and topics that Worcestershire business, residents, partners and Members would like Overview and Scrutiny to get involved in.

Developing the 2016/17 Work Programme

8. Elected Member Consultation - Overview and Scrutiny is a Member-led process, it is therefore important that the views of Members are taken into account in determining the content of the Work Programme, particularly as Members are community champions and most likely to be aware of issues of concern to the public.

9. OSPB has agreed that the views of Members be sought via the following groups:

- Overview and Scrutiny Panels
- Non-Executive Members
- Cabinet

10. Overview and Scrutiny Panels – OSPB has agreed that each Panel be consulted with to put forward suggestions of topics that the Panel believes should be included in its Work Programme for 2016/17.

11. Non-Executive Members – OSPB has agreed that Non-Executive County Councillors be consulted directly in addition to the Panel consultation so that they have the opportunity to suggest topics for inclusion in all the Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programmes.

12. Cabinet – OSPB has agreed that Cabinet be consulted directly to provide suggestions for inclusion in the Work Programme from an Executive perspective.

Overview and Scrutiny Panel Consultation

13. OSPB has agreed that each Overview and Scrutiny Panel be consulted directly to provide suggestions for inclusion in that Panel's 2016/17 Work Programme.

14. The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to discuss and consider what topics and issues it would like to put forward for inclusion in the 2016/17 Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme and be prepared to discuss and put forward suggestions at the meeting.

Guidance

15. The Panel is reminded that it has agreed to use criteria listed below to help determine its Work Programme. A topic does not necessarily need to meet all of these criteria in order to be included, but the criteria is intended to help guide the Board in prioritising topics for inclusion. The criteria is as follows:

- Is the issue a priority area for the Council and for the County?
- Is it a key issue for local people?
- Will it be practicable to implement the outcomes of the scrutiny?
- Are improvements for local people likely?
- Does it examine a poor performing service?
- Will it result in improvements to the way the Council and/or its partners operate?
- Is it related to new Government guidance or legislation?

16. Panel Members are reminded that a good Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme will:

- Complement the priorities and work of the council and its partners
- Reflect the concerns of local communities, and
- Identify those issues where scrutiny can make most impact

17. Similarly the Panel may wish to consider the following criteria in identifying issues and topics that are **not** suitable for inclusion in the Work Programme:

- The issue is already being examined by another body.
- The matter relates to a specific case falling within the complaints procedure.
- The issue relates to an individual disciplinary matter or grievance

Supporting Information

Appendix A - OSPB Work Programme Report – available on the Council's website [here](#)

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

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Specific Contact Points for this report

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Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

- Agenda and minutes of Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board held on 24 February 2016
- Agenda and minutes of Council meeting held on 14 May 2015
- [All agendas and minutes are available on the Council's website here.](#)