

Rother District Council

Report to	-	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Date	-	10 June 2019
Report of the	-	Executive Director
Subject	-	Annual Work Programme

Recommendation: It be **RESOLVED:** That the Committee set its Work Programme for the new Council year.

Introduction

1. In accordance with the Constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) will:
 - a) receive reports from the Leader after each annual Council meeting on the Executive's Priorities for the coming year and its performance in the previous year and, if the Leader so chooses, on the state of the District [Part 4, paragraph 1(c)(i)]; and
 - b) approve an annual OSC Work Programme, including the programme of any Sub-Committees it appoints so as to ensure that the Committee and Sub-Committees' time is effectively and efficiently utilised [Part 4, paragraph 1(c)(ii)].
2. The Work Programme attached at Appendix A was agreed at the Committee's last meeting held in previous civic year (29 April). As the make-up of the Committee has changed significantly following the local elections in May, it will be for the new Committee to consider and agree its work programme going forward.
3. In order to manage the Committee's workload and ensure that there is sufficient time to fully consider the issues arising, it is recommended that priorities are set. These priorities should take account of the time and resources each work item will require and the importance of that item to the Council's priorities.

Other Considerations

4. In establishing its Work Programme, the OSC needs to consider the terms of reference for each scrutiny or review item, who it wishes to involve and consult with and which key partners or expert witnesses it may wish to involve.
5. In all of these considerations the most important one that the OSC should bear in mind is how the outcome of the Committee's deliberations will have a positive effect on the well-being of residents and businesses of the area. The OSC also needs to consider how scrutiny can be used to engage with the community either directly or by giving a high profile to matters of concern to residents.

6. Members will need to consider these issues in tandem with the Executive Priorities as set out in the Corporate Plan 2014-21 when setting the Work Programme.

Issues on the Doorstep

7. At the Member's Induction Day held on 9 May 2019, Members reported a number of issues that had been raised by constituents on the doorstep whilst Members had been canvassing. The main comments received referred to a Town Council for Bexhill, car parking, planning and dissatisfaction with politics in general.
8. Attached at Appendix B is an abbreviated version that indicates which issues are currently being addressed and those which Members could feed into the OSC's Work Programme, should Members so chose.

Sub-Committees and Task and Finish Groups

9. In accordance with the Constitution, the OSC may appoint up to four formal Sub-Committees or four informal Task and Finish Groups which can include residents, experts or representatives from outside bodies in their membership at any one time. The only proviso being that the same Heads of Service or officers are not involved in more than one active Task and Finish Group at any one time.
10. For clarity, informal Task and Finish Groups are not usually open to the general public and are not subject to the same time constraints in terms of agenda publication / access to information regulations. This allows for in-depth scrutiny of a particular area in an informal, relaxed setting, with key officers and Members formulating their views and gathering evidence in an informal way; this approach has been very successful in fostering good working relationships between officers and Members and has produced some excellent work. Whereas formal Sub-Committee meetings are held in the public domain and are subject to access to information regulations; this can sometimes have a detrimental effect on the workings of the Sub-Committee as a more formal style of meeting protocol dictates.
11. In setting and agreeing the Work Programme, Members should consider whether to maintain the existing Groups or establish new Sub-Committees or Task and Finish Groups and, if so, to make appointments to them.
12. During the last municipal year, the OSC established one new Task and Finish Group: the Tourism Task and Finish Group (TT&FG). The Housing Issues Task and Finish Group (HIT&FG) was still on-going until it was dissolved in July 2018. The Public Realm Working Group did not meet during 2017/18 or 2018/19 and was dissolved in November 2018 having completed its Terms of Reference with the Public Realm Strategy being recommended to Cabinet in January 2019.

Tourism Task and Finish Group

13. The TT&FG was established to review the current support to the tourism sector, including a summary of available visitor research across the district; agree work within the four areas of Future Opportunities and Trends Within the Tourism Sector, Marketing, Events and Visitor Accommodation; consult

relevant identified partners and key stakeholders to inform discussions; and produce a draft revised visitor economy chapter within the Economic Regeneration Strategy. The desired outcomes of the group were to review and inform Rother's visitor economy chapter and present a draft revised visitor economy chapter to Cabinet within the Economic Regeneration Strategy following the review. The Group comprised of Councillors Mrs M. Barnes, K.P. Dixon (Chairman), Mrs D.C. Earl-Williams, S.D. Elford, G.F. Stevens and M.R. Watson whilst undertaking its Terms of Reference. Councillor Oliver attended the September meeting as a substitute for Councillor Mrs D.C. Earl-Williams and the Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Public Realm, Culture and Tourism and Environment, Councillor Mrs S. Hart, and Transport and Bexhill Town Centre, Councillor I.R. Hollidge, also attended most meetings as observers to their portfolios.

14. The TT&FG have met six times and representatives from several organisations have attended including Blue Sail Consultancy, Tourism South East, Brochure Connect, East Sussex County Council (ESCC), Battle Marketing Group, 1066 Country, HEM Events, 18 Hours, De La Warr Pavilion, Rye International Jazz Festival and Strand House Guest Accommodation. The Group's recommendations were presented to the OSC in April 2019 for onward recommendation to Cabinet in June.

Bexhill Town Centre Steering Group

15. The Bexhill Town Centre Steering Group (BTCSG) has been established by Cabinet to deliver the vision and objectives of the Bexhill Town Centre Strategy June 2013; the Strategy seeks to collaborate with key groups and agencies in the area in its delivery plan.
16. The membership agreed by Cabinet in December 2018 is made up of the following: Portfolio Holder for Bexhill Town Centre (who acts as Chairman), Leader of Rother District Council (RDC), RDC Members for Bexhill Central Ward, Chairman of RDC Planning Committee, two business representatives to be nominated by the Chairman, Inward Investment – Locate East Sussex, ESCC Portfolio Holder for Transport and the Environment, one representative from the Bexhill Town Team / Coastal Community Team and Chief Executive Officer of the De La Warr Pavilion.
17. The overarching aims of the town centre strategy are to achieve enhanced commercial vitality; to reduce levels of deprivation and to maintain and enhance the quality of the built environment and public realm. In carrying out its purpose the BTCSG will engage fully with town centre communities and drive collaboration between the key agencies with responsibilities in this area.
18. The BTCSG continues to meet as and when required and reports directly to Cabinet however, the OSC has the ability to request an update from the Steering Group. In April 2017, Cabinet agreed the revised Terms of Reference.

Crime and Disorder Committee

19. In 2009, the Scrutiny Committee was designated as the Council's 'Crime and Disorder Committee' under section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006. This is not a separate working or steering group; it simply means that on an

annual basis, as part of their regular Scrutiny business, the OSC reviews the work of the Safer Rother Partnership (SRP) as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee.

20. The Committee receives an annual report from the SRP. Members of the OSC can then decide whether there are any specific decisions or actions of the SRP that they believe require further scrutiny.

Conclusion

21. Members need to consider, set and agree the Committee's Work Programme for the year, taking into account the various issues set out within the report. The Work Programme should be flexible to accommodate any changes in priorities and circumstances, which may emerge during the year.

Dr Anthony Leonard
Executive Director

Risk Assessment Statement

Failure to set a realistic and achievable Work Programme which supports the Council's Aims and Executive's Priorities may result in the Council losing opportunities for the development of an effective overview and scrutiny function.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

WORK PROGRAMME 2019 – 2020		
DATE OF MEETING	SUBJECT – MAIN ITEM (Capitalised)	Cabinet Portfolio Holder
10.06.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Work Programme • Performance Progress Report: Year End and Fourth Quarter 2018/19 • Housing Allocations Policy • Review of Voluntary Sector Service Level Agreements 	Oliver Clark
22.07.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of Formal Substitute System for Committees • Colonnade Review 	Oliver
9.9.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Progress Report: First Quarter 2019/20 • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring to July 2019 	Oliver
14.10.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 to 2023/24 	Oliver
25.11.19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Progress Report: Second Quarter 2019/20 • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring to September 2019 	Oliver
27.01.20	DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET PROPOSALS 2020/21 KEY PERFORMANCE TARGETS 2020/21	Oliver
16.03.20	CRIME AND DISORDER COMMITTEE: TO RECEIVE AN REPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Progress Report: Third Quarter 2019/20 • Revenue Budget and Capital Programme Monitoring to January 2020 	Brewerton Oliver
27.04.20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call-in and Urgency Procedures • Draft Annual Report to Council • Review of Task and Finish Groups / Outcomes 	Oliver
ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION		
Presentation by 1066 Country Marketing [Minute OSC18/52 – 29 April] Tourism Review [Minute OSC18/52 – 29 April]		

Issues on the Doorstep April / May 2019

Induction Day – 9 May 2019

Points noted:

Rother District Council

<http://www.rother.gov.uk/residents>

- Residents feel disconnected to RDC
- Raising awareness of RDC and what we do.
- Making meetings more accessible – live streaming of meetings?
- Dissatisfied with politics in general – wanting change and difficult to discuss local issues.
- More focus on environmental issues and climate change.
- More affordable housing.
- Affordable Housing – should be built on larger plots to enable extensions as families grow.
- Queries over enforcement matters and length of time taken.
- RDC mapping system not that great.
- More support for local businesses.
- Bexhill Town Centre looking “tired”.
- Website not clear and easy to use.
- Protection of the High Weald AONB.
- Overdevelopment.
- Planning issues, out of hours service at RDC.
- Social deprivation and foodbanks.
- Condition of rented properties.
- Low level anti-social behaviour, potentially related to lack of facilities in the area.
- Motor homes on the seafront.
- Light pollution in the rural areas.
- Concerns over sheltered housing
- Unable to access foodbanks etc.
- Food recycling.
- Recreational facilities in Bexhill.

East Sussex County Council (ESCC) related matters

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/>

- Clarity of understanding regarding the car parking issue and introduction of CPE
- Potholes.
- Access to public transport after 6.30pm.
- Speeding in rural villages.

Sussex Police related matters

<https://www.sussex.police.uk/>

- Speeding in rural villages.

Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) related matters

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-work-pensions>

- Delays in benefit payments (Universal Credit).