

**TITLE OF REPORT:** Annual Work Programme Review and Forward Plan

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## Summary

This report is set out in two parts. The first part highlights how this Committee has influenced / shaped the development of policy /decision making during 2017-18 and the second part details proposals for the development of the work programme for Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) and sets out the provisional work programme for the Communities and Place OSC for the municipal year 2018-19.

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## Background

1. On 18 July 2017 Cabinet agreed to pilot a number of changes to Overview and Scrutiny in Gateshead aimed at ensuring that Overview and Scrutiny in Gateshead:-
  - Is first and foremost member led.
  - Enhances the leadership role of OSC Chairs and Vice Chairs in driving forward, directing and shaping individual OSC work.
  - Enhances engagement and involvement with OSC members in shaping the focus of the work of specific OSCs.
  - creates stronger relationships/linkages with the Executive.
  - Enables Overview and Scrutiny to better understand and track how it is influencing Cabinet Policy / Decision making going forwards.

## Annual Review

2. The pilot changes to Overview and Scrutiny commenced in September 2018 and this is the first review of the work programme following those changes.
3. During 2017-18 the OSC has sought to influence and shape policy development / decision making via a number of routes.
4. During this period the OSC's recommendations relating to the OSC's Review of the Impact of Gambling on the Borough have been implemented. The OSC monitored progress on the implementation of these recommendations at its meeting on 11 September 2017. At that stage, a meeting between the Council and Gambling Commission was in the process of being arranged for October 2017. The meeting to focus on the Council's approach to gambling matters, including inspection and enforcement and the issues councillors are concerned about, as well as the work plan for the next year, in particular the review of the statement of Gambling Principles. The Council was also in discussions with Newcastle University about a project involving research around gambling which would explore what area based vulnerability to gambling related harm might look like.

5. The OSC indicated at that time that it was satisfied with the level of progress made. The OSC will consider a further report in relation to progress against its recommendations at its meeting today.
6. The OSC has also been carrying out a Review of the Council's Approach to Roads and Highways. The OSC will consider and agree its final report and recommendations at the beginning of its 2018-19 work programme and, subject to these recommendations then being approved by Cabinet, the OSC will monitor the implementation of these recommendations during the remainder of its 2018-19 work programme.
7. The OSC has monitored Council performance generally, in those areas falling within its remit, at its meetings on 19 June 2017 and 4 December 2017, and Cabinet has had regard to the OSC's views when considering Council performance overall.
8. The OSC has also monitored progress in relation to the following specific areas of performance (and the OSC's comments have been fed into the improvement work progressed by relevant service areas and fed back to relevant partners?)
  - The Flood and Water Management Act 2010: Annual Progress Report.
  - Reducing Carbon Emissions.
  - Housing Growth.
  - Development/Extension of Quality Bus Partnership.
  - Tourism in the West of the Borough/the Land of Oak and Iron.
9. The OSC is due to consider specific progress on Environmental Enforcement and Place Shaping for Wellbeing and TWAMS at the OSC meeting today.

### **Development of 2018-19 Work Programme**

10. Every year each Overview and Scrutiny Committee draws up a work programme based on the Council's policy framework which is then agreed by the Council as part of the policy planning process.
11. The Committee's work programme is a rolling programme which sets the agenda for its six weekly meetings. It is the means by which it can address the interests of the local community, focus on improving services and seek to reduce inequalities in service provision and access to services.
12. Under the Council's constitution the issues which will be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees come from a number of sources:
  - During the year the Committee may choose to scrutinise decisions made by the Cabinet to ensure decisions are taken properly;
  - The Committee may be requested by the Cabinet to carry out reviews of particular issues in accordance with the Council's policy priorities;
  - The Committee will receive six-monthly reports on performance for comment to Cabinet;
  - The Committee will receive reports on relevant service improvement reviews at key stages of development to confirm to Cabinet that reviews are progressing appropriately;

- Section 119 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and Section 126 of the Police and Criminal Justice Act 2006 enable any member of the Council to refer to a relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee any local government matter and any crime and disorder matter which affects their ward or constituents
  - Members of the Committee may identify particular issues for consideration;
  - Members may also examine issues in the Council's Forward Plan; and
  - In addition, where the Committee has reasonable concerns about a particular executive decision the call-in mechanism is available.
13. This year the changes piloted included enhanced engagement and involvement with OSC members in shaping the focus of the work of specific OSCs via a specific work programme event held on 9 February 2018. At that event councillors had regard to the key issues/challenges/legislative changes affecting the work of the Council within the forthcoming twelve months which fall within the specific remits of each OSC and the 5 pledges under the Thrive agenda:-
- Put people and families at the heart of everything that we do
  - Tackle inequality so people have a fair chance
  - Support our communities to support themselves and each other
  - Invest in our economy to provide sustainable opportunities for employment, innovation and growth across the borough.
  - Work together and fight for a better future for Gateshead
14. Subsequently, the Council has consulted partner organisations on the emerging themes for each OSC for 2018-19.
15. Details of the emerging issues / areas for potential review and the feedback from partners are set out at Appendix 2.
16. The attached provisional work programme (Appendix 1) has therefore taken account of the following:-
- Six-monthly performance reporting
  - The Thrive agenda and the Council Plan and partnership work generally
  - Current issues referred to Committees
  - Details of potential review topics/case studies
  - Legislative provisions and guidance on the Councillor Call for Action
17. The work programme remains provisional as:-
- Cabinet has not had the opportunity to fully review its work programme and it may wish to refer further issues to Overview and Scrutiny Committees for further consideration;
  - It does not take account of new policy issues which may be identified during the year, which Cabinet may refer to Overview and Scrutiny; and
  - It does not include issues identified by members of committees on an ongoing basis during the year as a result of scrutiny of decisions, call – in and councillor call for action.

## **Next Steps**

The OSC Co-ordinator will carry out further work with OSC lead officers across all of the OSCs to consider what future improvements can be made to the process of tracking how OSCs are influencing policy development and decision making with a view to strengthening the annual review process going forwards.

## **Recommendations**

18. The Committee is asked to:-

- a) Note the information contained in the annual review and provide any comments.
- b) Agree the emerging issues for 2018-19, having considered the proposals outlined at Appendix 2.
- c) Endorse the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's provisional work programme for 2018 -19 attached at Appendix 1, and refer it to Council on 24 May 2018 for agreement.
- d) Note that further reports will be brought to the Committee to identify any additional issues which the Committee may be asked to consider.

