

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

MUNICIPAL YEAR 2014-2015

**ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

14TH JULY 2014

**REPORT OF:
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND
DEMOCRATIC SERVICES**

Agenda Item No.5

**PREPARATION OF A WORK
PROGRAMME FOR THE
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SCRUTINY
COMMITTEE FOR 2014/15**

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(Tel No 01443 424098)**

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Members on issues for consideration when preparing a Work Programme for the Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:

2.1 Note the content of this report.

2.2 Agree on issues, for inclusion on the Committee's Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2014/15.

2.3 Agree that, the draft Work Programme be amended as necessary, to take on board Members' comments and be presented to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 There is a requirement to devise and publish a Work Programme for each of the Council's Scrutiny Committees as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution, (Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules). Each Committee is responsible for setting and agreeing its own Work Programme, although the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will ensure that there is no duplication of work and deliberate if necessary on any cross cutting issues.

3.2 The terms of reference for the Committee is to undertake the overview and scrutiny role in connection with Transportation, Environment and Highways and Waste Services, Leisure, Culture, Public Health and Protection, Environmental Health, Licensing and Trading Standards.

- 3.3 The Chair and vice chair of the Committee met with the Scrutiny Support Officer on 30th June 2014 along with the Service Director, Streetcare and Service Director, Public Health & Protection to discuss areas of work, and these along with the standard issues are set out in the next section. However, it is important that all Members have the opportunity to consider and put forward items for consideration and it should be noted that the draft work programme is only provided as a basis for discussion.

4. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 Before identifying any potential new areas of work the Committee will need to consider the inclusion of a number of standard items such as:

Financial and Performance Management – Each Scrutiny Committee receives quarterly ‘Exception Reports’ containing information which has been drawn from the Cabinet’s Performance and Resources Committee reports by the Scrutiny Performance Management Co-ordinator in conjunction with officers and with the agreement of the Chairs and Vice Chairs of each Committee.

In addition, the Committee will act as the ‘lead’ scrutiny committee for the following Outcome Agreement area:

- Welsh Homes Supporting People
- Safer Communities for All

Corporate Plan and Annual Delivery Plan – Working groups of each scrutiny committee will play a part in reviewing the Council’s Annual Delivery Report which is an assessment of performance for the previous financial year. This will take place in the autumn. Members will be aware that the scrutiny working groups met in May to provide feedback on the draft improvement priority action plans which form the Corporate Plan and subject to review this process will take place once again in the spring of 2015 in preparation for the 2015/16 Corporate Plan. The working group for the Environmental Service Scrutiny Committee reviewed the Action Plans in relation to StreetCare & Public Health & protection.

Budget Consultation Process – The Committee is involved in the annual Revenue Budget Strategy consultation process.

- 4.2 **Task & Finish Groups** - the Committee has no on-going working groups:
- 4.3 **Outstanding items** – During the 2013/14 Municipal Year Members agreed that the Committee should consider the following areas which have yet to be considered: - Land reclamation and Crematorium Visits.

- 4.4 At the meeting on the 30th June, the Chair and Vice Chair agreed that in order to better utilise officer time and resources, Committee meetings would be themed, to allow concentration of one area of the service at each meeting (when possible).
- 4.5 Suggestions for potential areas of work are listed below for the Committee's consideration.
- Housing Strategy – Housing Allocation Policy / Empty Properties
 - Work of the Special Projects Unit
 - Civil / Residential Parking Enforcement
 - Michael Sobell
 - Creative & Cultural Industry Initiative
 - Medium Term Financial Planning
 - Air quality Management / Noise nuisance
 - Arts Connect
 - North West Cardiff Rail Extension
 - Emergency Planning
- 4.9 In addition to the above considerations, the Committee could receive requests from the Executive or other committees e.g. Council or Audit Committee to consider a particular issue. The introduction of Councillor Calls for Action through the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 also has the potential to create additional work for the Committee. However, it should be noted that the Committee has not received any Councillor Calls for Action during the last two years.
- 4.10 The Council's Constitution requires that there is a minimum of eight meetings of the Committee each year. There have been 6 dates scheduled in the work programme which will allow the Committee some flexibility in arranging additional meetings.

5. WALES AUDIT OFFICE (WAO) SCRUTINY IMPROVEMENT STUDY

- 5.1 Members may recall the WAO scrutiny improvement study which began in the Autumn of 2012 and involved each council undertaking a self assessment process and forming a peer learning exchange team to visit other authorities.
- 5.2 The WAO has now published its report arising from the study "Good Scrutiny? Good Question!" which makes a number of recommendations aimed at improving the recognition, effectiveness, and impact of scrutiny. Amongst its recommendations, the report recommends that councils should further develop scrutiny forward work programmes to:
- provide a clear rationale for topic selection;
 - be outcome focussed;
 - ensure that the method of scrutiny is best suited to the topic area and the outcome desired;

- align scrutiny programmes with the council's performance management, self evaluation and improvement arrangements.

5.3 At the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on 9th June 2014, it was agreed that a working group be formed to consider how best to take forward the recommendations within the report and the results of this work will be fed through to the service scrutiny committees in due course. A copy of this report is attached for information purposes only. (Appendix 2)

6. **CONCLUSION**

6.1 Attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration is a draft work programme based on the issues discussed at paragraph 4. Members are asked to consider whether they are in agreement with the suggestions put forward and whether there are other issues which they would like included on the work programme. If the Committee feels that it is unable to deal adequately with all the issues put forward, it may be necessary to prioritise.

6.2 It should also be noted that whilst it is useful to have a plan of work for the Committee, it must also be appreciated that work programmes need to be flexible to respond to changing priorities.

6.3 The draft work programme will be amended based on Members' comments and brought back to the next scheduled meeting of the Committee.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

as amended by

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985

RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

14TH JULY 2014

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

PREPARATION OF A WORK PROGRAMME

Freestanding Matter

(Officer to Contact: Emma Coates, Scrutiny Support Officer – Telephone No. 01443 424098)

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Environmental Services Scrutiny Work Programme 2014/15

Mon 14th July 2014	Mon 8th Sept 2014	Mon 6th Oct 2014	Nov-14	Mon 1st Dec 2014	Mon 26th Jan 2015	Mar-15	Mon 20th April 2015
Committee 5pm	Committee 5pm	Committee 5pm		Committee 5pm	Committee 5pm		Committee 5pm
	THEME: Housing'	THEME: HT&SP				THEME: CULTURAL SERVICES	THEME: HT& SP
Draft Work Programme	Finalise Work Programme	Budget & Performance Exception report (inc. Outcome Agreement)	<i>Michael Sobell visit</i>	Budget & Performance Exception report (inc. Outcome Agreement)	Phase 2 Budget Consultation	<i>Arts Connect</i>	Budget & Performance Exception report (inc. Outcome Agreement)
Land Reclamation	HMO update	<i>Special Projects Unit</i>	<i>Creative & Cultural Industry Initiative</i>	Phase 1 Budget Consultation	<i>Air quality management / noise nuisance</i>		<i>North West Cardiff Rail Extension</i>
<i>Energy Efficiency Measures</i>	<i>Housing Allocation Policy</i>	<i>Civil Parking Enforcement Updates</i>	Medium Term financial Planning		<i>Streetcare Update</i>		<i>Emergency Planning</i>
	<i>Empty Properties</i>						

SUGGESTED SCRUTINY (added in italics within programme)

Crematorium Visit

Michael Sobell

Arts Connect

Creative & Cultural Industry initiatives

North West Cardiff Rail Extension

Street Care

Housing - HMO /Housing Allocation policy / Empty properties

Civil / Residential Parking Enforcement

Air Quality Management

Work of the Special Projects Unit

Emergency Planning

Noise Nuisance Management

Energy Efficiency Measures

**** ESG Updates to be delivered when appropriate***

Theme: HT&SP = Highways, Transportation & Strategic projects

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