



RHONDDA CYNON TAF COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE & PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 4th November 2019

SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMMES

REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES & COMMUNICATIONS

1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is seek members proposals to develop a forward work programme for the next six months. Members are asked to consider the draft forward work programme (attached as Appendix 1) and determine whether the items included (particularly from January 2020 –March 2020) are relevant and in line with the terms of reference of the Finance & Performance Committee.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee:-

- 2.1 Review and agree the draft Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee Work Programme for the Municipal Year 2019/20 (which now includes work programme topics from January to April 2020);
- 2.2 Identify any additional items Members wish to consider including in the forward work programme; and
- 2.3 Consider any training requirements that will assist Members in their role.
- 2.4 Consider providing the necessary flexibility to accommodate pre-scrutiny opportunities and early engagement in policy development; Members should also consider providing the opportunity for consideration of items generated through future public engagement.

3 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Members will recall that at the previous meeting of the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee, held on the 8th July 2019, a report was

presented by the Service Director of Democratic Services & Communications, which outlined a number of changes to the Scrutiny arrangements in Rhondda Cynon Taf.

- 3.2 One of the improvements included the development of a more streamlined forward work programme, which contained less items for consideration at each committee meeting to allow for more in depth review of topics and potential referrals from Council, Audit Committee and other sources.
- 3.3 Initially, the scrutiny work programmes were developed on a six monthly basis (up until December 2019) so as to give each individual scrutiny committee the opportunity to take stock and review their respective programmes going forward. The attached draft work programme contains items for consideration for the remaining Municipal Year, from January 2020 to March 2020.
- 3.4 The attached draft work programme has been compiled from current business identified and matters relating to the Council's Corporate Performance themes and priorities.
- 3.5 When setting their work programme members are asked to consider and acknowledge their role relating to the Well-being of Future Generations Act goals and the importance of ensuring that the decisions of the Council are progressed through the lenses of the Act.
- 3.6 The proposed work programme also incorporates matters previously identified by Scrutiny members such as:-
 - The Council's Employment and Skills Strategy and Action Plan 2020-2022;
 - Understanding the Council's 2019/20 Budget;
 - The Council's Digital Strategy; and,
 - The Council's Corporate & Service Self Assessments for 2020.
- 3.7 A series of Cabinet/Scrutiny engagement sessions were held throughout October between the Scrutiny Chairs, Vice Chairs, respective Cabinet Members and Senior Leadership Officers, which supported the Scrutiny arrangements going forward and also informed the respective forward work programmes.

4. TRAINING

- 4.1 To assist Scrutiny Members in fulfilling their role a training session was arranged for all RCT scrutiny members and co-opted members on Friday, 25th October 2019 (9.30am-12.30pm). The session was facilitated by Dr Dave McKenna, a dedicated scrutiny practitioner with ten years' experience including as Manager of Swansea Council scrutiny team. He has presented at national conferences

in Wales and hosted workshops at three Centre for Public Scrutiny annual conferences.

- 4.2 The scrutiny training session was solution focussed and asked Members to consider what works well in their own local authority and what Members are looking to improve by using good practice ideas. One of the key aims of the session was to explore how scrutiny in RCT can have more impact through improved questioning.
- 4.3 Further to the Scrutiny training session, ongoing training requirements are a key consideration and therefore Members are asked to identify any other gaps in their development particularly in relation to undertaking scrutiny of the items listed on the forward work programme.
- 4.4 It is important for all members of scrutiny to engage in the training opportunities provided to support their role.

5. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

- 5.1 The Council continues to progress opportunities for the public to engage in the scrutiny process. Further enhancements are underway to provide better access to the business of scrutiny online. This includes providing more user-friendly information to support the public engaging in this important element of the Council's democratic processes and overall governance functions.
- 5.2 Members are asked to consider the Council's Scrutiny Public Engagement Protocol, agreed by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the [13th December 2018](#).
- 5.3 The Overview & Scrutiny Committee will shortly consider subject areas to be promoted through social media, for the public, to select as matters for scrutiny to explore and consider. Members are asked to provide flexibility in their work programmes to allow sufficient opportunity for scrutiny of these areas, where they fall within the remit of the committee.

6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 Determining its own work programme and deciding on what evidence to seek to fulfil its scrutiny role; asking relevant and timely questions at meetings and participating in activities that the Committee has agreed to pursue outside of its formal meetings are all key to effective scrutiny.
- 6.2 The Council is continuing its work to strengthen its scrutiny arrangements and these enhancements support the council in responding to the findings arising from the recent WAO report and will further strengthen governance and accountability arrangements.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising from this report and no Equality Impact Assessment is deemed necessary for the purposes of this report.

8 CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The considerations and comments of Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs have been sought in respect of the forward work programmes and it will be for the Members of the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Committee to review and agree its own work programme at its meeting on the 4th November 2019.

9 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no financial implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

10 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OR LEGISLATION CONSIDERED

- 10.1 There are no legal implications as a result of the recommendations set out in the report.

11 LINKS TO CORPORATE AND NATIONAL PRIORITIES AND THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS ACT

- 11.1 The proposals to address the WAO report proposals includes arrangements to strengthen the Council's consideration and scrutiny of its work, through 'the lens of the requirements of the Well-being of Future Generations Act'. These arrangements will be embedded into the business of the Council as set out in the Policy Statement agreed by Cabinet [on 2 November 2016](#).
- 11.2 The proposals outlined within the report will work to ensure a sustainable and robust scrutiny structure is in place, which will effectively challenge policy decisions taken forward.

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMMES **FINANCE & PERFORMANCE**

'Holding the Executive to account in respect of all three priorities within the Council's Corporate Plan....Economy (Building a strong economy), People (Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone), Place (Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live and work) as well as its key principle Living within our Means'.'

Each of the Council's Scrutiny Committees is responsible for setting and agreeing its own work programme by identifying a list of themes and topics which fall under the remit of each individual Scrutiny Committee. Following discussion with the Chair, Vice Chair and Scrutiny Members a practical, realistic and timetabled programme can then be developed.

The scrutiny forward work programmes should provide a clear rationale as to why particular issues have been selected; 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.

Throughout the year, there are a number of ways in which additional issues can be considered for inclusion in the Scrutiny Work Programme and ideas for inclusion may come from a number of sources such as:-

- Individual Councillors;
- Performance or budget monitoring information;
- Inspection reports;
- Referrals from Council (such as Notices of Motion), Cabinet/Audit or other scrutiny committees;
- Service users; and
- Monitoring the implementation of recommendations previously made by the Committee.
- Local Residents

The Cabinet is also required to produce forward work programmes and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee keeps abreast of forthcoming items or topics which may enable scrutiny to be involved in the development of Council policy prior to its formal consideration by Cabinet. It is important to bear in mind that an element of flexibility is applied to each individual work programme that provides Committees with the capacity to scrutinise new / urgent issues that arise during the year. For this reason the Scrutiny Work Programmes will be published for a 6 month period and reviewed every quarter.

FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Date/Time	Overarching Item	Officer	Cabinet Member	Invited/ In attendance	Scrutiny Focus
<p>Monday, 8th of July 2019, Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale</p>	<p><u>Special Meeting:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pre-scrutiny of the Corporate Performance Report 	<p>The Chief Executive</p> <p>Group Director of Community and Children Services.</p> <p>Group Director of Prosperity, Development and Frontline Services.</p> <p>Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services</p>			<p>Scrutiny & Challenge – Scrutiny will undertake pre scrutiny of the Corporate Performance Report.</p>
<p>Tuesday, 23rd of July 2019 Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Qtr 4 Performance Report (2018/19) ➤ 2019/20 Work Programme 	<p>Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services</p> <p>Service Director- Democratic Services & Communications</p> <p>Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services</p> <p>Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services</p>			<p>For Committee Members to consider the Council's Qtr 4 Performance Report (2018/19).</p> <p>Scrutiny & Challenge – For Members to consider the work programme for the 2019/2020 Municipal year.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 2019-20 target setting ➤ Pre-scrutiny Destination Management Plan Workshop. 	Director of Prosperity and Development.		<p>To provide Committee Members with the opportunity to consider which performance indicator targets be reviewed in more detail during the 2019-20 Municipal year.</p> <p>Scrutiny & Challenge – Scrutiny will undertake pre scrutiny of the Destination Management Plan.</p>
<p>Thursday, 26th of September 2019 Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Treasury Management Training Session ➤ Treasury Management Annual Report ➤ Food Register Working Group update ➤ How the Council consults 	<p>External Trainers</p> <p>Head of Finance: Education and Financial Reporting.</p> <p>Health Protection and Licencing Manager.</p> <p>Corporate Policy and Consultation Manager.</p>		<p>All Elected Members to have the opportunity to undergo training in respect of Treasury Management</p> <p>For Committee Members to consider the Council's Treasury Management Annual Report</p> <p>To provide Committee Members with an update in respect of the Food Register Working Group.</p> <p>To consider how the Council consults and receive an overview of the Council's approach to the Revenue Budget Consultation process.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Community Infrastructure Levy Annual Monitoring Report ➤ Workless households & Community based employment support; <p>(INFORMATION ONLY)</p>	<p>Director of Prosperity and Development</p>		<p>Scrutiny & Challenge Scrutiny will undertake pre scrutiny of the Community Infrastructure Levy Annual Monitoring Report</p>
<p>Monday, 4th of November 2019 Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Training for all Elected Members ➤ Understanding the Council's 2019/20 Budget ➤ Qtr 1 Performance Report (2019/20) 	<p>Director of Prosperity and Development</p> <p>Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services</p> <p>Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services</p>		<p>All Elected Members to have the opportunity to undergo training in respect of Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)</p> <p>To provide an overview of the Council's 2019/20 Revenue Budget and 3-year Capital Programme</p> <p>For Committee Members to consider the Council's Qtr 1 Performance Report (2019/20).</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 'Rhondda Cynon Taf's Employment and Skills Strategy and Action Plan 2020 - 2022.' ➤ Quarterly review of the 2019/20 Finance and Performance Scrutiny Work Programme. 	<p>Head of Community Services</p> <p>Service Director- Democratic Services & Communication and Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services</p>		<p>Scrutiny & Challenge Scrutiny will undertake pre scrutiny of the 'Rhondda Cynon Taf's Employment and Skills Strategy and Action Plan 2020 - 2022.'</p> <p>Scrutiny and Challenge.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Is the Work Programme suitable and relevant to the Terms of Reference? •Does the Work Programme illustrate clear outcomes and objectives? <p>Members of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Committee to provide comment in relation to the Work Programme and to consider the remaining 2019/20 F&P Work Programme.</p>
<p>Wednesday, 11th of December 2019 Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Qtr 2 Performance Report ➤ Budget Consultation 	<p>Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services</p> <p>Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services</p>		<p>For Committee Members to consider the Council's Qtr 2 Performance Report.</p> <p>For Committee Members to feedback their views as part of the 2020/21 Revenue Budget Consultation process.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Digital Strategy Work Programme ➤ Corporate Asset Management Plan – FOR INFORMATION (Exempt Item) ➤ Cabinet & Scrutiny Engagement Session (Enterprise Development and Housing) 	<p>Service Director, Digital & ICT</p> <p>Director of Corporate Estates</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Enterprise Development and Housing</p>	<p>For Committee Members to review the work undertaken to deliver the Council's Digital Strategy (Digital RCT – Our 2020 Digital Vision) and for the Committee's feedback to be taken account of as part of developing a new draft Digital Strategy</p> <p>For Committee Members to consider an interim update of the Corporate Asset Management Plan</p> <p>√ Scrutiny & Challenge – Consider the progress made in advancing the portfolio responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Enterprise Development and Housing</p>
<p>Wednesday, 29th January 2020, Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pre-Scrutiny of the new draft Digital Strategy 	<p>Service Director Digital & ICT</p>		<p>Scrutiny & Challenge To undertake pre scrutiny of the Council's new draft Digital Strategy as part of developing a final draft Strategy for consideration by Cabinet.</p> <p>Scrutiny & Challenge</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pre Scrutiny of the 2020/21 Revenue Budget Strategy ➤ Treasury Management Mid-Year Stewardship Report ➤ Cabinet & Scrutiny Engagement Session (Corporate Services) 	<p>Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services</p> <p>Head of Finance: Education and Financial Reporting</p> <p>Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services Service Director Democratic Services & Communications</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Corporate Services</p>	<p>√</p>	<p>To undertake pre scrutiny of the proposals in relation to the Council's draft 2020/21 Revenue Budget Strategy (to include feedback from the public consultation exercise)</p> <p>To consider the 2019/20 Mid-Year Treasury Management Stewardship Report</p> <p>Scrutiny & Challenge – Consider the progress made in advancing the portfolio responsibilities of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services)</p>
<p>Tuesday, 24th March 2020, Committee Room 1, Clydach Vale</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Qtr 3 Performance Report ➤ Council Corporate & Service Self Assessments 	<p>Service Director – Finance & Improvement Services</p> <p>Service Director Democratic Services & Communications</p>			<p>For Committee Members to consider the Council's Qtr 3 Performance Report.</p> <p>For Members to receive the corporate and service self-assessments of the Council for 2020.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Tourism Strategy; Consultation Responses 	Director of Prosperity and Development			An opportunity for Members to consider the consultation responses in respect of the Council's Destination Management Plan.
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Training Requirements:-

To be considered at the first Scrutiny Committee in July

Scrutiny Training Session – 25th July 2019 (9.30-12.30pm) Council Offices, Clydach Vale

Scrutiny Working Groups:-

Food Register Working Group.

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