

**26 March 2019**

**Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee Refresh of the Work Programme**

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**Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Director of Transformation and  
Partnerships**

**Electoral division(s) affected:**

None

**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To provide the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee (E&E OSC) with the opportunity to review and refresh the work programme for 2019/20.

**Executive summary**

- 2 The E&E OSC review their work programme each year to reflect the five objectives and associated outcomes and actions identified within the Council Plan for the Council's Altogether Wealthier priority theme.
- 3 The Council Plan is set in the context of the Sustainable Community Strategy which is undergoing a refresh process. This report reflects the current Council Plan but recognises that a key priority in both the current and the new Plan will be the Transformation Programme.
- 4 The report (paragraphs 10-12) provides information for members to note activity undertaken by the committee during 2018/19 and enable discussion to suggest areas for review activity or agenda items to be included in the committee's work programme for 2019/2020.

**Recommendations**

- 5 The E&E OSC is recommended to:
  - (a) Note the proposed E&E OSC work programme in relation to the current Council Plan 2016-2019 Altogether Wealthier theme (copy attached at Appendix 2)
  - (b) Note that a further report detailing the E&E OSC work programme for 2019/20 will be submitted to the June 2019 meeting.

## Background

- 6 The current overview and scrutiny committees work programme focus on the priority areas identified within the context of the:
- Council Plan
  - Cabinet's Notice of Key Decisions
  - Sustainable Community Strategy
  - Partnership plans and strategies
  - Performance and budgetary control data
  - Changes in government legislation
- 7 This year there is change underway in the policy context of the Council as work is taking place to refresh the Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS). This is being undertaken because the SCS is now almost ten years old. The new vision is expected to be in place in the summer and will inform final versions of scrutiny work programmes. The current Council Plan was developed in the context of the SCS and there will be a chance for update once the new vision is agreed. However the current Council Plan still applies.

## Council Plan 2016 – 2019

- 8 To help improve the performance of the Council, there are currently five objectives within the Altogether Wealthier elements of the Council Plan, underpinned by 11 outcomes:
- **Thriving Durham City**
    - Improved retail, business and tourism in Durham City and its immediate locality.
    - Increased developer interest in key sites.
    - Improved infrastructure to support economic growth.
  - **Vibrant and successful towns**
    - Improved retail, business and tourism in major town centres.
    - Increased developer interest in key housing sites.
    - Improved infrastructure to support economic growth.
  - **Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities**
    - Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham.
    - Improved infrastructure to support economic growth in rural areas.

- **Competitive and successful people**
  - Increased numbers of people in employment and training.
- **A top location for business**
  - Increased business creation.
  - Development of existing businesses and safeguarding employment.

9 Looking ahead to a new Council Plan, the key emerging issue to be considered alongside it is the Council's Transformation Programme which supports progress on many of the objectives above.

## **Current Work Programme**

10 During 2018/19, the Economic and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undertaken budgetary and performance monitoring, in depth Scrutiny Reviews, systematic 6 monthly reviews of progress against recommendations and overview presentations in relation to the following areas:

### **In Depth Scrutiny Reviews**

#### **Thriving Durham City, Vibrant and successful towns, A top location for business and competitive and successful people**

- Support provided to the retail sector by DCC – Improved retail, business and tourism in Durham City and its immediate locality; Improved retail, business and tourism in major towns; Increased business creation; Development of existing businesses and safeguarding employment and Increased numbers of people in employment and training.

### **Systematic Review**

#### **Competitive and successful people**

- Skills Development supported by DCC within County Durham - Increased numbers of people in employment and training.

### **Areas of overview activity**

#### **A Thriving Durham City**

- Digital Durham Programme – Improved Infrastructure to support economic growth.

- Regional and local transport – Improved infrastructure to support economic growth.

### **Vibrant and successful towns**

- Visit County Durham – Improved retail, business and tourism in major town centres.

### **Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities**

- Homelessness Strategy – Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham.
- Housing Strategy - Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham.
- Private rented housing sector - Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham.
- Selective Licensing - Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham.
- Tackling empty properties Initiative - Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham.

### **Competitive and successful people**

- Skills strategy – Increased numbers of people in employment and training.
- DurhamWorks Programme – Increased numbers of people in employment and training

### **A top location for business**

- Local Industrial Strategy - Increased business creation; Development of existing businesses and safeguarding employment.
- Business Durham – Increased business creation; - Development of existing businesses and safeguarding employment.
- Investment pipeline in County Durham - Increased business creation; development of existing businesses and safeguarding employment.

## **Performance Monitoring**

- 11 The committee has considered and commented on quarterly budget and performance reports for the Real Service Grouping.

## **Cross Cutting Areas**

- 12 The Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee has also considered the following areas which cut across all objectives within the Council Plan's Altogether Wealthier priority theme:
- County Durham Plan – 2 Workshops (Covers all objectives and outcomes).
  - Regional Funding – (Covers all objectives and outcomes).
  - European Funding Programme (Covers all objectives and outcomes).
  - Overview of the work of the County Durham Economic Partnership – (Covers all objectives and outcomes).

## **Areas for consideration in the E&E OSC**

- 13 Paragraphs 10-12 of this report identifies the activity undertaken by the committee during 2018/19. The committee has identified a number of these areas for further progress updates and will need be included in the committee's work programme for 2019/2020.
- 14 With regard to review activity, the retail support provided by DCC review has now been completed and considered by Cabinet. In addition, the committee has held two workshops which have resulted in formal responses submitted by Overview and Scrutiny in relation to the County Durham Plan and the Housing Strategy. Looking ahead, members are invited to suggest potential topics for future review activity for 2019/2020.
- 15 The committee will receive a further report at its meeting on the 27 June, 2019 detailing the proposed work programme for 2019/2020 and will be asked to agree a topic for future review activity following today's discussion.

## **Conclusion**

- 16 The report and appendix 2 provide information for members to note and comment on activity undertaken during 2018/19 and suggest areas to consider for review activity or agenda items within its work programme for 2019/2020.

## Background papers

- Council Plan 2016 -19 – Cabinet report – March 2016
- Economy and Enterprise OSC - Refresh of work programme – 5 April 2018

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

Not applicable

### **Finance**

The Council Plan sets out the corporate priorities of the Council for the next three years. The Medium Term Financial Plan aligns revenue and capital investment to priorities within the Council Plan.

### **Consultation**

Not applicable

### **Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty**

A full impact assessment has previously been undertaken for the Council Plan. The actions underpinning the Council Plan include specific issues relating to equality and aim to improve the equality of life for those with protected characteristics. The Plan has been influenced by consultation and monitoring to include equality issues. There is no evidence of negative impact for particular groups.

### **Human Rights**

Not applicable

### **Crime and Disorder**

The Altogether Safer section of the Council Plan sets out the Council's contributions to tackling crime and disorder.

### **Staffing**

The Council's strategies are being aligned to achievement of the corporate priorities contained within the Council Plan.

### **Accommodation**

The council's Accommodation Programme is a key corporate programme contained within the Council Plan.

### **Risk**

Consideration of risk is undertaken in the preparation of the Council Plan and Service Plans. The Overview and Scrutiny work programme is an important element of the Council's governance and risk management arrangements.

### **Procurement**

Not applicable