

**Environment and
Sustainable Communities
Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

5 April 2019

**Refresh of the Work
Programme**



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

Electoral division(s) affected:

None

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (ESE OSC) with the opportunity to review and refresh the work programme for 2019/20.

Executive summary

- 2 The ESC OSC review their work programme each year to reflect the objectives and associated outcomes and actions identified within the Council Plan for the Council's Altogether Greener 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 9-11) 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 ESCOSC is recommended to:

- a) Note the proposed ESCOSC work programme in relation to the current Council Plan 2016 – 2019 Altogether Greener theme. (copy attached at appendix 2)
- b) Note that a further report detailing the ESCOSC work programme for 2019/2020 will be submitted to the July meeting.

Background

- 6 The current overview and scrutiny committees' work programmes 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 a 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 version 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 three objectives within the Altogether Greener elements of the Council Plan, underpinned by eight outcomes.

Deliver a clean, attractive and sustainable environment

- Reduced environmental crime
- A sustainable approach to waste management
- Improved land and air quality
- Well maintained and accessible parks and public spaces

Maximise the value and benefits of Durham's natural environment

- Natural assets are valued and conserved

Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change

- Communities are more aware and resilient to the impact of extreme weather events
- The Council, homes and businesses are more energy efficient
- Improved infrastructure to support sustainable transport

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 Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undertaken budgetary and performance monitoring, systematic 6 monthly reviews of progress against recommendations and overview presentations in relation to the following areas:

In Depth Scrutiny Review

- Review of DCC Allotment Management Policy – Maximise the benefits of Durham's natural environment.

Systematic Review

- Management of the Woodland Estate Owned by Durham County Council – Maximise the benefits of Durham's natural environment .

Overview Activity

- **Deliver a clean, attractive and sustainable environment**
 - Air Quality in County Durham - Improved land and air quality
 - Environmental Campaigns and Fly Tipping - A sustainable approach to waste management
 - Single Use Plastics - A sustainable approach to waste management
 - Gala Theatre - Well maintained and accessible parks and public spaces
 - Community Action Team - Reduced environmental crime
 - Stockton to Darlington Bicentennial Celebrations - Well maintained and accessible parks and public spaces
- **Maximise the value and benefits of Durham's natural environment**
 - Heritage Coast - Natural assets are valued and conserved

- Tree Management Policy - Natural assets are valued and conserved
- **Reduce carbon emissions and adapt to the impact of climate change**
 - Winter Maintenance - Communities are more aware and resilient to the impact of extreme weather events
 - Fuel Poverty Campaigns - The Council, homes and businesses are more energy efficient
 - Flood Risk Management Authorities for County Durham - Communities are more aware and resilient to the impact of extreme weather events
 - Highways Maintenance - Improved infrastructure to support sustainable transport
 - EU funding and other funding of carbon projects - The Council, homes and businesses are more energy efficient
 - Sustainable Heating - The Council, homes and businesses are more energy efficient
 - Climate Change Strategy & Delivery Plan - The Council, homes and businesses are more energy efficient
 - Carbon Management Plan - The Council, homes and businesses are more energy efficient

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 Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has also considered the following areas which cut across all objectives within the Council Plan's Altogether Greener priority theme:
- Overview of the work of the Environment Partnership – (Covers all objectives and outcomes)

Areas for consideration in the Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

- 13 Paragraphs 9-11 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, work continues on the Management of DCC Allotments with work expected to be complete in the autumn 2019. 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 12 July, 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

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Appendix 1: Implications

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