

**Safer and Stronger Communities
Overview and Scrutiny Committee
22 September 2020**



**Refresh of the Work Programme
2020/21 for Safer and Stronger
Communities OSC**

Report of John Hewitt, Corporate Director of Resources

Electoral division(s) affected:

None

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (SSC OSC) with an updated work programme for 2020/21.

Executive summary

- 2 Overview and Scrutiny work programmes are designed to be flexible to accommodate items which may arise throughout the year. For 2020/21 this flexibility is essential to enable the scrutiny function to respond to the changing landscape of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 3 The proposed SSC OSC work programme has been framed around COVID-19 and in the context of the new shared County Durham vision 2035 which has been developed with partners around three strategic ambitions – ‘more and better jobs’, ‘long and independent lives’ and ‘connected communities’.
- 4 The SSC OSC work programme has been developed to reflect new powers which enable local government meetings to be held remotely during this period. Holding virtual meetings has prompted us to consider how best to carry out the scrutiny role in these new and challenging circumstances.

Recommendations

- 5 Members of the Safer and Stronger Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to:
 - a) Receive and comment on the proposed work programme for 2020/21.
 - b) Agree the work programme for 2020/21 as attached at appendix 2 and the flexibility it offers to respond to emerging issues.

Background

- 6 Scrutiny has adapted to the unprecedented situation of a global pandemic with a flexible and pragmatic approach to the 2020/21 work programme. New regulations enable committee meetings to be held remotely and formal scrutiny meetings will be held virtually for the foreseeable future.
- 7 To assist with the new approach to meetings we propose to keep agendas short to ensure meeting time is focussed on those matters which are the highest priority. Where agreed by the Committee, regular overview reports will instead be circulated separately via email for comment and information. We hope by doing so, we can help make progress of moving meetings on-line as smooth as possible and manage our workload efficiently and effectively.
- 8 As we all become more familiar with holding remote meetings, we will review our agendas and work programmes with the Chair and Vice Chair and make any necessary changes in consultation with the Committee.
- 9 This prioritisation of the work programme will enable the scrutiny function to operate flexibly and take into consideration any changing national, regional or local responses to COVID-19 pandemic.
- 10 The overview and scrutiny committee's work programmes are informed by:
 - County Durham Vision 2035
 - Council Plan
 - Cabinet's Notice of Key Decisions
 - Partnership Plans and Strategies
 - Performance and Budgetary control data
 - Changes in government legislation
 - Key questions for improving performance.
- 11 In addition, scrutiny work programmes are informed by the four priorities of Inspire, the Council's Transformation Programme:
 - Redesign our services to better meet the customer's need at reduced cost to the Council
 - Help communities become more resilient and self-reliant
 - To move our partnership working from good to great
 - To become renowned for our skilled and flexible workforce and our employee engagement.

Safer and Stronger Communities OSC

- 12 In addition to providing a scrutiny role for activity of the council, SSC OSC is the designated Crime and Disorder Committee for the purposes of Part 3 of the Police and Justice Act 2006. The Committee is therefore responsible for scrutinising the work of the Safe Durham Partnership.
- 13 At its meeting in January 2020, the Committee responded to consultation of the draft Safe Durham Partnership Plan. Following publication of the plan, the Committee's work programme is to accommodate associated actions within the plan.
- 14 During 2019/20 the Committee has undertaken review activity, systematic review of progress on recommendations from previous scrutiny reviews, responded to consultations, undertaken performance monitoring and considered overview presentations and reports in relation to the following areas:
 - (a) Scrutiny Review
 - (i) Road Safety Strategy
 - (ii) Children's Residential Care Homes (Joint review with Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee)
 - (b) Systematic review
 - (i) Recommendations contained in the Retail Support Scrutiny Review
 - (ii) Cybercrime
 - (c) Overview activity
 - (i) Domestic Abuse
 - (ii) Open Water Safety and City Safety Group
 - (iii) Alcohol and Drug Harm Reduction Strategy Group
 - (iv) County Durham Youth Justice Service – Youth Justice Plan 2019-2021
 - (v) Modern Slavery
 - (vi) Drug and Alcohol Recovery Service
 - (vii) Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015
 - (viii) Consumer Protection Enforcement and Intervention Activity
 - (ix) Quarterly Performance Reports
 - (x) Police and Crime Panel activity

(d) Consultations

- (i) County Durham and Darlington Fire and Rescue Services Integrated Risk Management Plan – Three Year Consultation
- (ii) Draft Safe Durham Partnership Plan 2020-2025
- (iii) County Durham and Darlington Road Safety Strategy

Police and Crime Panel

- 15 The Committee has a joint working arrangement with the Durham Police and Crime Panel (PCP) that is crucial to provide a communication between the PCP and the Committee. This arrangement includes receiving update reports from the PCP at each Committee meeting and prior to undertaking an in-depth study into a crime and disorder issue, discussion takes place between both the Chairs of the PCP and Committee and Secretariat to avoid duplication of effort and resources.

Areas for Consideration in the SSC OSC Work Programme

- 16 Members of the SSC OSC are asked to agree the proposed work programme for 2020/21 that has been prepared and is attached at appendix two. The work programme is very comprehensive drawing on topical areas across the remit of the committee and it should be noted that it is also flexible.
- 17 The work programme includes an indication of those reports which will be considered by SSC OSC at a remote meeting and those which will be circulated to members. The dates when reports are taken to SSC OSC or circulated may flex with the additional demands on and the capacity of services during the COVID-19 response period.

Main implications

Crime and Disorder

- 18 Information with this report aims to contribute to activity to reducing crime and disorder within the county.

Conclusion

- 19 The work programme identifies areas of work that fall within the remit of SSC OSC and is flexible in its delivery.

Background papers

- None

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

Not applicable

Finance

Not applicable

Consultation

Not applicable

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

Not applicable

Human Rights

Not applicable

Climate Change

Not applicable

Crime and Disorder

Information with this report aims to contribute to activity to reducing crime and disorder within the county.

Staffing

Not applicable

Accommodation

Not applicable

Risk

The Overview and Scrutiny work programme is an important element of the Council's governance and risk management arrangements.

Procurement

Not applicable