

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

25 March 2021

Refresh of the Work Programme
2021/22



Report of Paul Darby, Corporate Director of Resources (Interim)

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 2021/2022.

Executive summary

- 2 The E&E OSC reviews its work programme each year to reflect the objectives and associated outcomes and actions identified within the Council Plan and is set in the context of the County Durham Vision 2035 which has been developed with partners around the three strategic ambitions of:
 - More and Better Jobs
 - People Live Long and Independent Lives; and
 - Connected Communities.
- 3 The report (paragraphs 10-13) provides information for members to note activity undertaken by the committee during 2020/21 and enables discussion to suggest areas for review activity or agenda items to be included in the committee's work programme for 2021/2022.

Recommendations

- 4 The E&E OSC is recommended to:
 - a) Note the proposed E&E OSC work programme in relation to the current Council Plan 2020 – 2023 (copy attached at appendix 2).
 - b) Note that a further report detailing the E&E OSC work programme for 2021/2022 will be submitted at its first meeting of the 2021/22 municipal year.

Background

- 5 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
 - County Durham Vision for 2035
 - Partnership plans and strategies
 - Performance and budgetary control data
 - Changes in government legislation

- 6 In October 2019, public, private and voluntary sector bodies that make up the County Durham Partnership jointly agreed a Vision for County Durham 2035. This vision was based on a strategic assessment of need using our intelligence platform Durham Insight and was developed following extensive consultation with the public. The vision document that was agreed sets out our strategic direction and what we would like to achieve over the next 15 years and is written around three broad ambitions for the people of County Durham:
 - More and better jobs
 - People live long and independent lives
 - Connected communities

- 7 As well as being of key importance to local people's long-term priorities, they remain key strategic ambitions in our response to the COVID-19 crisis, where key impacts relate to employment, health and wellbeing, and communities.

Council Plan 2020 - 2023

- 8 The Council Plan is the primary corporate planning document for the county council and details Durham County Council's contribution towards achieving the objectives set out in the Vision for County Durham 2035 together with its own change agenda. It aims to provide a readable and accessible summary for Members, partners and the public of our priorities for the county and the main programmes of work that we will undertake over the coming three years to help achieve these priorities.

- 9 Both the Vision for County Durham and the Council Plan are structured around three ambitions which are mentioned above. An additional ambition of an excellent council has been developed for the Council Plan to capture the corporate initiatives that the council has identified and that it wants to undertake to transform its operations and enable achievement of the ambitions within the vision.

a) More and Better Jobs

- Delivery of a range of accessible employment sites across the county
- A strong, competitive economy where County Durham will be a premier place in the North East to do business
- A broader experience for residents and visitors to the County
- Young people will have access to good quality education, training and employment
- Helping all people into rewarding work
- Fewer People will be affected by poverty and deprivation within the County

b) Connected Communities

- Standards will be maintained or improved across County Durham's housing stock
- Our towns and villages will be vibrant, well used, clean, attractive and safe
- People will have good access to workplaces, services, retail and leisure opportunities
- Delivery new high-quality housing which is accessible and meets the needs and aspirations of our residents

Current Work Programme

- 10 During 2020/21, the E&E OSC had to prioritise items to come to a reduced number of formal meetings and items to be electronically circulated as briefing reports due to the Coronavirus. However, although there was a reduced number of formal meetings linked to priorities within the County Durham Vision, Council Plan and COVID response, the committee has undertaken budgetary and performance monitoring and considered overview presentations:

Overview Activity

Delivery of a range of accessible employment sites across the county

- Strategic employment sites in the county – Briefing Report
- Business Durham - Meeting

A strong, competitive economy where County Durham will be a premier place in the North East to do business

- Digital Durham – Briefing Report
- Regional and local transport activity – Briefing report

A broader experience for residents and visitors to the County

- Visit County Durham - Meeting

Young people will have access to good quality education, training and employment and

- DurhamWorks Programme – Meeting

Helping all people into rewarding work

- NE Skills Advisory Panel – Briefing Report
- DurhamWorks Programme – Meeting

Fewer People will be affected by Poverty and deprivation in the County

- Homelessness Strategy – Meeting

Standards will be maintained or improved across County Durham's housing stock

- Housing Solutions Service - Meeting
- Selective Licensing Scheme - Meeting
- Housing Strategy – Meeting
- DCC's House Building Delivery Programme – Briefing report

Our towns and villages will be vibrant, well used, clean, attractive and safe

- Masterplans – Briefing Report

People will have good access to workplaces, services, retail and leisure opportunities

- Regional and local transport activity – Briefing Report

We will deliver new high-quality housing which is accessible and meets the needs and aspirations of our residents

- Housing Solutions Service – Meeting
- Selective Licensing Scheme – Meeting
- Housing Strategy – Meeting
- DCC's House Building Delivery Programme – Briefing Report

Performance Monitoring

- 11 The committee has considered and commented on quarterly budget and performance reports for the Regeneration, Economy and Growth Service Grouping.

Cross Cutting Areas

12 The E&E OSC has also considered the following areas which cut across all objectives within the Council Plan:

- County Durham Plan – Briefing Report
- County Durham Economic Partnership – Briefing Report
- EU and regional funding – Meeting
- Town and Village Centres Programme -Meeting
- Minerals and Waste Development Plan Document and the Parking and Accessibility Supplementary Planning Document – Briefing report
- Impact of COVID 19 on the Regeneration, Economy and Growth Service Grouping - Meeting
- North East COVID 19 Response Group – Briefing report

13 The E&E OSC has also considered the following areas which cut across objectives within the Council Plan or cut across the remit of other Overview and Scrutiny Committees:

- Response of Neighbourhoods and Climate Change to the pandemic – invite to Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 September 2020 and 25 March 2021
- Fuel Poverty – invite to Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 February 2021
- Highways Management - invite to Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 12 February 2021
- Carbon Emergency Response Plan – invite to Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 March 2021
- Management of DCC Fleet – Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Briefing report
- Heritage coast and the tourism offer – Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee Briefing report
- Stockton and Darlington Railway Bicentennial Celebrations - Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Briefing report
- Gala Theatre - Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Briefing report
- Libraries and Museums - Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Briefing report
- Leisure Centres Transformation – Environment and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Briefing report

- 14 Paragraphs 10 – 13 of this report identifies the activity undertaken by the committee during 2020/21. 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 2021/2022.
- 15 With regard to review activity members are invited to suggest potential topics for future review activity for 2021/2022.
- 16 The committee will receive a further report at its first meeting within the 2021/22 municipal year detailing the proposed work programme for 2021/2022 and subject to both meeting and service capacity will be asked to agree a topic for future review activity.

Conclusion

- 17 The report and attached appendices provide information for members to note and comment on activity undertaken during 2020/21 and request members to identify areas to consider for potential review activity or agenda items for inclusion within its work programme for 2021/22.

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

Not applicable.

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