

## **Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**

**20 April 2021**

### **Refresh of the Work Programme**



---

### **Report of Paul Darby Interim Corporate Director of Resources**

#### **Electoral division(s) affected:**

None

#### **Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To provide the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (COSMB) with the opportunity to review and refresh the work programme for 2021/2022.

#### **Executive summary**

- 2 COSMB review their work programme each year to reflect the objectives and associated outcomes and actions identified within the Council Plan and in the context of the County Durham Vision 2035.
- 3 The proposed COSMB work programme has been framed around COVID-19 and in the context of the new shared County Durham Vision 2035 based on the three strategic ambitions of 'more and better jobs', 'long and independent lives' and 'connected communities'. COSMB's work programme also reflects the fourth ambition which captures our organisational transformation agenda and the ambition to be an excellent council.
- 4 This report provides information for members to note activity undertaken by the committee during 2020/21 and enable discussion to suggest areas for review activity or agenda items to be included in the committee's work programme for 2021/2022.

#### **Recommendations**

- 5 COSMB is recommended to:

- a) Note and comment on the proposed COSMB work programme in relation to the Council Plan 2020 – 2023 (copy attached at appendix 2).
- b) Note that a further report to agree the COSMB work programme for 2021/2022 will be submitted to the 18 June 2021 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
  - County Durham Vision for 2035
  - Partnership plans and strategies
  - Performance and budgetary control data
  - Changes in government legislation
  - Local priorities
- 7 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
- 8 These remain the 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**

- 9 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.

- 10 Both the Vision for County Durham and the Council Plan are structured around the 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 wants to undertake to transform its operations and enable achievement of the ambitions within the vision.

### **An excellent council**

- a) Our resources will be managed effectively
- b) We will create a workforce for the future
- c) We will design our services with service users
- d) We will use data and technology more effectively
- e) We will actively performance manage our services

### **Current Work Programme**

- 11 During 2020/2021, COSMB prioritised items to be considered at a reduced number of formal meetings due to the coronavirus pandemic. Reports on other items were then circulated via email to members. However, although there was a reduced number of formal meetings the committee has undertaken budgetary and performance monitoring, scrutiny review work and overview presentations.

In depth and light touch scrutiny reviews including updates were:

- Budget and MTFP process

#### **Overview Activity**

- Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000
- Customer Feedback: Complaints, Compliments and Suggestions Reports
- Overview of partnership work including the County Durham Partnership and Area Action Partnerships

- Transformation Programme
  - Digital Strategy and Current ICT and Digital Developments (Jan 2020)
  - Integrated Customer Service Programme (Dec 2020)
  - Workplace Transformation: Enabling Smarter Working (Jan 21)

Budgetary and performance monitoring:

- Quarterly budgetary monitoring for Resources and the former Transformation and Partnerships service grouping.
- Quarterly corporate performance monitoring overview for the whole Council.

COSMB also considered a comprehensive COVID-19 planning and response report summarising the actions the council had taken working with partners to respond to the pandemic and its framework for recovery planning.

### **Areas for consideration in the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board Work Programme**

- 12 Paragraph 11 of this report identifies the activity undertaken by the committee during 2020/21. The committee is asked to consider areas for further progress updates and review topics to be included in the work programme for 2021/2022 in light of the current Council Plan and the Vision for County Durham 2035. Appendix 2 of this report sets out a draft work programme for consideration.
- 13 The committee will receive a further report to its meeting on 18 June 2021 where members will be asked to discuss and finalise its work programme and will be asked to agree a topic for review activity.

### **Background papers**

- [Council Plan 2020 - 2023](#)
- [A Vision for County Durham 2035](#)

Contact: Jenny Haworth

Tel :03000 268071

