

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

**18 June 2024**

## **Refresh of the Work Programme 2024/25 for the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board**



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### **Report of Helen Bradley, Director of Legal and Democratic Services**

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

None

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

- 1 To provide the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board (COSMB) with the updated work programme for 2024/2025.

#### **Executive summary**

- 2 COSMB review their work programme each year to reflect the objectives and associated outcomes and actions identified within the Council Plan 2024-2028 and in the context of the County Durham Vision 2035.
- 3 The proposed COSMB work programme has been framed around the 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 Our Council theme in the refreshed Council plan.
- 4 The proposed work programme also reflects the refreshed Council Plan adopted by the County Council at its meeting on 28 February 2024.

#### **Recommendations**

- 5 COSMB is recommended to:
  - a) Receive and comment on the proposed COSMB work programme for 2024/25

Agree the COSMB work programme for 2024/2025 and the flexibility it offers to respond to emerging issues.

## **Background**

- 6 COSMB has a strong focus on the MTFP and service improvement and this will continue in 2024/25. The Board will also contribute to policy development where it can add value and insight.
- 7 The current overview and scrutiny committees work programmes are informed by:
  - County Durham Vision for 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
  - Local priorities
- 8 The County Durham Partnership agreed a Vision for County Durham 2035 which sets out our strategic direction and what we would like to achieve over the next 15 years. It was developed with partner organisations and the public. It is structured around three broad ambitions for the people of County Durham.
  - A place where there are more and better jobs
  - People live long, healthy and independent lives
  - Communities are well connected and supportive
- 9 Each ambition contains a number of objectives together with some council specific objectives. Following the refresh of the Council Plan in February 2024, it is now structured around five themes which reflect our contribution towards achieving the three ambitions within the Vision for County Durham as well as the council's own improvement agenda:
  - Our Economy
  - Our Environment
  - Our People
  - Our Communities
  - Our Council

## **Council Plan 2024 - 2028**

- 10 The Council Plan is the primary corporate planning document for the county council. It details Durham County Council's contribution towards achieving the objectives set out in the Vision for County Durham 2035 together with its own ambitious agenda. It provides a summary for members, partners and the public of our priorities for the county and the main programmes of work that we will undertake to help achieve these priorities. The Plan will now be refreshed each year to reflect the integration of corporate and financial planning.
- 11 Both the Vision for County Durham and the Council Plan are structured around the three ambitions for the county and our own improvement agenda. The 'our council' theme captures the corporate initiatives the council has identified and wants to undertake to achieve the ambitions within the vision:
- a) Our resources will be managed effectively
  - b) Create a workforce for the future
  - c) Design our services with service users
  - d) Use data and technology more effectively
  - e) We will build an inclusive and welcoming employee culture

## **Current Work Programme**

- 12 During 2023/2024, the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has undertaken review work on the Budget and MTFP process; exercised call in of Cabinet proposals in respect of home to school transport and scrutinised the outcome of the Council's Community Engagement Review and commented on the results of the consultation exercise and development of Local Networks.
- 13 Overview activity has included:-
- Monitoring the Council's applications for surveillance under the Regulation of Investigative Powers Act 2000 and reviewing the RIPA scheme to ensure it is fit for purpose.
  - Examination of the Council's updated Digital Strategy.
  - Approving the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23 and agreed its submission to Council.
  - Consideration of the [Key Decisions of cabinet](#)
  - Supported the Council's work in developing new ways of working via digital solutions.
  - Reviewed the Council's Statutory Representations report for 2022/23 and agreed its publication on the website.
  - Received updates in respect of the County Durham Pound Project and its role in promoting social value and wealth building.

- Agreed key priority actions and workplace initiatives following scrutiny of the results of the 2022 workplace survey.
- Examined the Poverty Action Steering Group Annual report 2022/23.
- Reviewed the refresh of the Council Plan 2024/2028.

14 Budgetary and performance monitoring:

- Quarterly budgetary monitoring for the Resources service grouping.
- Quarterly corporate performance monitoring overview for the whole Council.

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

- 15 COSMB are asked to agree the proposed work programme for next year and consider areas for further progress updates and review topics in light of the refreshed Council Plan and the Vision for County Durham 2035.
- 16 Scrutiny work programmes are designed to be flexible and can respond to items which arise during the year which require scrutiny input.
- 17 Appendix 2 of this report sets out a draft work programme for consideration.

### **Background papers**

- [Council Plan 2024-28](#)
- [County Durham Vision 2035](#)

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Legal Implications**

None

### **Finance**

None

### **Consultation**

None

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

None

### **Climate Change**

None

### **Human Rights**

None

### **Crime and Disorder**

None

### **Staffing**

None

### **Accommodation**

None

### **Risk**

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

### **Procurement**

None

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## **Appendix 2: COSMB Work Programme**

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Attached as a separate document.