

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 10 DECEMBER 2019

REPORT BY CHAIRMAN OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

WARD(S) AFFECTED: None

Purpose/Summary of Report

- To review and determine Overview and Scrutiny Committee's future work programme.

RECOMMENDATION FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:

That

(A)	The draft work programme, going forward shown in Essential Reference Paper 'B', be agreed.
(B)	Members' comments be provided in terms of the detail they require for the key agenda items at the next meeting.

1.0 Background

1.1 Items previously required, identified or suggested for the Overview and Scrutiny (OS) work programme are set out in **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.

1.2 Scrutiny committees have the power of influence and are entitled to review and scrutinise the functions of the Council and the decisions of the Executive. The Committee serves as a 'critical friend' and is not a decision-making body but can make recommendations to the Executive and who must respond formally to recommendations within a given timeframe.

2.0 Report

- 2.1 The draft agenda for 2019/20 meetings of Overview and Scrutiny Committee is shown in **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**. The timing of some items shown may have to change depending on availability of essential data (eg. from central government) external sources and officers.
- 2.2 At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings on 11 June and 5 November, 2019 concerns were expressed by Members regarding the economic perspective of Hertford Town Centre and particularly with regard to the Bircherley Green site and the absence of any redevelopment. Members agreed at an earlier Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting that a Task and Finish Group be established to review the economic stability of Hertford Town Centre (and particularly from the perspective of Bircherley Green). Please see **Essential Reference Paper 'C'** for a summary in relation to Hertford Town Centre. While the planning application is a separate issue Members might want to consider what the Council can do in the interim to help with local issues?
- 2.3 At the meeting on 5 November 2019, Members also noted the inclusion of Cycle Storage provision following the submission of a Scoping Document from a Member and Climate Change within the Work Programme as potential items for scrutiny. Work is ongoing in the background to establish whether these are suitable subjects for scrutiny in terms of evidence gathering. The Scrutiny Officer will provide a summary at the meeting on these issues, as possible topics for Scrutiny.
- 2.4 The other key items on the 4 February 2020 Agenda will be an update in relation to Section 106 allocations. Members may be aware that there was a report to Performance Audit and Governance Oversight Committee on this subject in September 2019 when Members were provided with an update on the current position in relation to Section 106 contributions and actions taken by the Infrastructure

Contributions and Spend Manager. Members may wish to review this report from a scrutiny viewpoint. Additionally there will be a report from the Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy summarising Gov.Metric feedback in terms of customer satisfaction which depending on content, Members may wish to identify issues to scrutinise.

- 2.5 Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at its meeting on 5 November 2019, agreed to set up and Task and Finish Group to explore how the Council and Members could support tenants and improve service standards. It is anticipated that a meeting of the Task and Finish Group can be convened before the end of December to agree the specific lines of enquiry in order to progress these with Housing Associations and to aid the establishment of the two residents' events.
- 2.6 Members are welcome to submit a scrutiny proposal at any time by completing a Scrutiny Proposal Form (Available from the Scrutiny Officer) which will provide officers with sufficient information to assess it is appropriate for Scrutiny and to ensure their specific questions are addressed. The Scrutiny Officer will then liaise with officers and the Scrutiny Chairman to consider the best way to address the subject and complete a scoping document.
- 2.7 Members are also asked whether there is any training relevant to scrutiny or to the function and remit of the OS Committee that they wish to suggest.

Background Papers:

None

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