



Jonathan Geall
Head of Housing and Health *and*
Acting Head of Legal and Democratic
Services

MEETING : OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
VENUE : COUNCIL CHAMBER, WALLFIELDS, HERTFORD
DATE : TUESDAY 4 FEBRUARY 2020
TIME : 7.00 PM

PLEASE NOTE TIME AND VENUE

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Councillor John Wyllie (Chairman)

Councillors S Bell, M Brady, K Crofton, I Devonshire, H Drake, J Frecknall,
M Goldspink (Vice-Chairman), D Hollebon, J Ranger, D Snowdon,
M Stevenson, N Symonds and A Ward-Booth

Substitutes

Conservative Group: Councillors D Andrews, S Bull and C Rowley
Green: Councillor B Crystall
Labour: Councillor C Redfern

(Note: Substitution arrangements must be notified by the absent Member to Democratic Services 24 hours before the meeting)

CONTACT OFFICER:
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DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

1. A Member, present at a meeting of the Authority, or any committee, sub-committee, joint committee or joint sub-committee of the Authority, with a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI) in any matter to be considered or being considered at a meeting:
 - must not participate in any discussion of the matter at the meeting;
 - must not participate in any vote taken on the matter at the meeting;
 - must disclose the interest to the meeting, whether registered or not, subject to the provisions of section 32 of the Localism Act 2011;
 - if the interest is not registered and is not the subject of a pending notification, must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days;
 - must leave the room while any discussion or voting takes place.
2. A DPI is an interest of a Member or their partner (which means spouse or civil partner, a person with whom they are living as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were civil partners) within the descriptions as defined in the Localism Act 2011.
3. The Authority may grant a Member dispensation, but only in limited circumstances, to enable him/her to participate and vote on a matter in which they have a DPI.

4. It is a criminal offence to:

- fail to disclose a disclosable pecuniary interest at a meeting if it is not on the register;
- fail to notify the Monitoring Officer, within 28 days, of a DPI that is not on the register that a Member disclosed to a meeting;
- participate in any discussion or vote on a matter in which a Member has a DPI;
- knowingly or recklessly provide information that is false or misleading in notifying the Monitoring Officer of a DPI or in disclosing such interest to a meeting.

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AGENDA

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Minutes - 10 December 2019 (Pages 7 - 16)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 December 2019.

3. Chairman's Announcements

4. Declarations of Interest

To receive any Members' Declarations of Interest.

5. Review of Website Satisfaction Performance (Pages 17 - 32)

6. Task and Finish Group Update and Work Programme (Pages 33 - 56)

7. Urgent Items

To consider such other business as, in the opinion of the Chairman of the meeting, is of sufficient urgency to warrant consideration and is not likely to involve the disclosure of exempt information.

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MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE MEETING ROOM A AND B -
CHARRINGTONS HOUSE, BISHOP'S
STORTFORD ON TUESDAY 10 DECEMBER
2019, AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor J Wyllie (Chairman)
Councillors S Bell, M Brady, S Bull,
K Crofton, I Devonshire, H Drake,
M Goldspink, D Hollebon and D Snowdon

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Lorraine Blackburn	- Scrutiny Officer
Peter Mannings	- Democratic Services Officer
Ben Wood	- Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy

256 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Frecknall, J Ranger, M Stevenson and A Ward-Booth. It was noted that Councillor S Bull was substituting for Councillor A Ward-Booth. Councillor M Stevenson was present towards the end of the meeting. Councillor N Symonds arrived at the conclusion of the meeting.

257 MINUTES - 5 NOVEMBER 2019

Councillor K Crofton said that some of the narrative in

paragraph 5 of minute 215 on Waste Management was not fully reflective of his comments on failed bin collection rates. His comment had been that failed bin collection rates might be due to residents forgetting to put bins out on the correct collection day.

It was moved by Councillor M Goldspink and seconded by Councillor D Snowdon that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2019 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendment:

Minute 215 – Waste Management

In 5th paragraph, delete – ‘Councillor K Crofton commented on failed bin collection rates where collection days had changed within the new contract.’

Replace with – ‘Councillor K Crofton said that failed bin collection rates might have something to do with residents forgetting to put bins out on the correct collection day’.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

RESOLVED – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5 November 2019 as amended, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman, subject to the following amendments:

Minute 215 – Waste Management

In 5th paragraph, delete ‘...Councillor K Crofton

commented on failed bin collection rates where collection days had changed within the new contract.'

Replace with – 'Councillor K Crofton said that failed bin collection rates might have something to do with residents forgetting to put bins out on the correct collection day'.

258 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Following a comment from the Chairman, the Scrutiny Officer stated that the Democratic Services Manager was considering a way forward in respect of future arrangements in respect of public speaking.

259 FINAL REPORT OF THE PARKING TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Chairman of the Task and Finish Group, Councillor H Drake, submitted a report on the work of a Member Task and Finish Group established to review elements of East Herts District Council parking policy.

Councillor H Drake said that the Task and Finish Group had met 7 times and covered 3 of the 4 areas set out in their terms of reference. The last area, regarding parking within planning policy, had not been covered due to time constraints. Members were advised that input had been received from Ward and Town Councillors and the Business Improvement District (BID). Councillor H Drake said that contributions had been received from the villages and from representatives of Town and Parish Councillors specifically with regards to residents parking zones.

She stated over 1000 survey responses had been received and these were summarised at Essential Reference Paper 'C'. The principal findings and recommendations were summarised in the report and in greater detail in Essential Reference Paper 'B'.

Councillor M Goldspink commented on residents' parking zones (RPZs) being used by commercial users at certain hours. The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy said that the Chantry Lane mixed use scheme allowed business users to park between 8 am and 6 pm. This zone was not available for business users in the evenings or on Saturdays.

Following a further comment from Councillor M Goldspink, the Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy said that the Chantry Lane RPZ had been a trial to see what could be learnt from mixing business users with residential. The take up had been low partially because of not being able to park on Saturdays but also because annual payments were required upfront which was not easy for many people.

The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy confirmed to Councillor S Bull that the way forward could be to explore the principle of shared usage of residents parking zones on a case by case basis. He said that whenever a RPZ was considered for implementation, this would always be preceded by a consultation with residents. He answered a number of other questions from the Committee on mixed use parking schemes.

Councillor K Crofton raised the issue of the costs of

parking in Station Car Parks. The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy said that the Task and Finish Group had recommended that the Council write to rail operators to establish what could be done regarding the costs of station parking and subsequent commuter parking in residential streets, as commuters sought to avoid paying to park. Councillor H Drake confirmed that the cost of commuter parking was as high as £10 a day in Hertfordshire.

Councillor K Crofton said that Hertfordshire County Council did not wish to become an electrical provider by fitting lampposts with car charging facilities. Councillor J Wyllie commented on whether the power to a lamppost was sufficient to charge up an electric car.

Councillor D Hollebon said that the provision of disabled bays was at the 6% level recommended by the Department for Transport. Councillor I Devonshire said that the benefits of electric cars were being undermined, as for every electric vehicle purchased, 37 Sports Utility Vehicles (SUVS) were purchased.

Councillor H Drake moved and Councillor S Bell seconded, a motion that the findings and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group, as detailed in paragraphs 2.2, 2.3, 2.7, 2.12, 2.16 and 2.17, be noted.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

Councillor H Drake moved and Councillor I Devonshire

seconded, a motion that the recommendations, as detailed, be supported and that these be forwarded to the Executive and Council as necessary.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

Councillor S Bell moved and Councillor H Drake seconded, a motion that the Committee recommends to Council via the Executive the adoption of the modified Resident Permit Zone Policy and Operational Guidance, as detailed in Essential Reference Papers 'D(i) and (ii)'.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED.

Councillor D Hollebon moved and Councillor I Devonshire seconded, a motion that the Members support the Task and Finish Group's recommendations as detailed, and that further scrutiny be undertaken in the areas identified in paragraph 2.18 to this report.

After being put to the meeting and a vote taken, this motion was declared CARRIED. The Executive be advised that Members support the recommendations as detailed, in the report submitted.

RESOLVED – that (A) the findings and recommendations of the Task and Finish Group, as detailed in in paragraphs 2.2, 2.3, 2.7, 2.12, 2.16 and 2.17, be noted;

(B) the support of the Committee for these

recommendations to the Executive, be confirmed;

(C) the Committee recommends to Council, via the Executive, the adoption of the modified Resident Permit Zone Policy and Operational Guidance, as detailed in Essential Reference Papers 'D(i) and (ii)'; and

(D) the Committee supports the Group's recommendation that it be requested to undertake further scrutiny in the areas identified in paragraph 2.18 to this report.

260 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE: DRAFT WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Officer provided Members with a draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme and Members' views were sought in relation to the items on the work programme. The Scrutiny Officer referred to the impact on Bircherley Green in terms of its redevelopment proposals and the public's perception on the decline of the area. She sought Members' views on what the Council might be able to do to ameliorate the situation in the interim.

The Scrutiny Officer reminded Members of a request for a scrutiny review of cycling provision. She explained that a meeting regarding cycle storage provision was scheduled for 17 December 2019 at the offices of Bishop's Stortford Town Council when she hoped to gain an insight into what reviews might have already been undertaken. The Scrutiny Officer advised that she would provide Members with an update

following that meeting.

Members were advised that a detailed report on Section 106 arrangements and allocations had been considered by Performance, Audit and Governance Oversight (PAGO) Committee on 24 September 2019. The Scrutiny Officer invited Members to let her know if they considered there were any issues in the report which required scrutiny.

The Scrutiny Officer said that the Gov.Metric report regarding website satisfaction would be submitted to 4 February 2020 meeting by the Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy.

The Scrutiny Officer explained her thoughts on a more proactive approach to Scrutiny, which could entail regularly reviewing the forward plan for items to be considered by the Executive over a three month period. She felt that the Forward Plan could be included on the Agenda as a standing item.

Councillor M Goldspink expressed her support for this idea. She pointed out that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had the option of calling in decisions to be taken by the Executive. Councillor D Hollebon was assured that feedback would be given to Members in respect of Gov.Metric.

The Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy commented on performance data in respect of customer satisfaction with the Council's website. Members supported the draft Work Programme, as amended.

RESOLVED - that the draft Work Programme as amended, be approved.

The meeting closed at 7.38 pm

Chairman
Date

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East Herts Council Report

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 4 February 2020

Report by: Executive Member for Corporate Services and Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Financial Sustainability

Report title: Review of Website Satisfaction Performance

Ward(s) affected: All

Summary

- In its first meeting of 2018/19 Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed all past performance data and identified issues and areas of concern that could be reviewed. Website satisfaction was identified as such an area and a paper was requested from the Head of Service.

RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION:

(a) Committee Members review performance and comment as appropriate

1.0 Proposal(s)

1.1 Committee Members review information presented and keep website satisfaction under review until sustained improvement is achieved.

2.0 Background

2.1 Website satisfaction is measured via the govmetric system. Anyone visiting the website will see this widget embedded at the bottom of the page and the words "how would you rate your online experience":



- 2.2 Clicking on a face (green for “good”, amber for “average” and red for “poor”) will then take the user to a pop up box where they are asked to provide any details via free text. The entire process takes 4 clicks from start to finish and can be over in a matter of seconds if the user wishes to leave no text.
- 2.3 There are currently around 630 pages on the East Herts Council website. The vast majority of these have the govmetric widget on them.
- 2.4 Satisfaction ratings are reported every month via the indicator, “overall percentage of good satisfaction ratings”. These are provided to the council’s leadership team, shared via the intranet will all staff, reported every quarter to the Performance, Audit and Governance Oversight Committee and Executive as part of the financial healthcheck document.
- 2.5 **Appendix A** contains performance information from the past two years. Good satisfaction ratings have been below target every month apart from a spike in the spring/ summer months of 2017 and the latest figures from December 2019. These correspond with a substantial refresh of website content in 2017 (when the satisfaction target was also increased from 35% to 50%) and the launching of brand new website in November 2019.
- 2.6 **Appendix A** also contains benchmarking data. The govmetric system is used by over 100 councils nationally and thus provides useful insight. The benchmarking measures are different to the indicator East Herts uses however it is worth noting that satisfaction ratings for East Herts are consistently well below the average. This is in stark contrast to face to face

feedback via the govmetric system where East Herts are consistently well above the average and indeed for the month of November 2019 we were ranked first of all councils using the system nationally.

2.7 Analysis

2.8 Govmetric is a powerful means to capture customer feedback and an important part of improving services. It is one of the few tools we have to gather insight on a regular basis. Customers are also able to provide feedback for any face to face interactions in the Wallfields and Charrington's House reception areas and we have recently launched the same option on any emails from customer services. It is worth noting that good ratings for face to face feedback always higher than website ratings (this reflects a national picture and is not peculiar to East Herts). Website ratings are therefore just one component of customer feedback data.

2.9 The website is a useful vehicle for customers to access information, report/ pay for something (eg. council tax) and raise service requests (eg. report a missed bin). The most commonly visited pages are:

- Council tax
- Bin collection and reporting missed bin
- Make, object or comment on a planning application
- Elections (due to the fact that we had 3 in 2019)

2.10 Other useful facts about the website include:

- 2.5m page views in the last 12 months
- Visits largely follow working week patterns (peaks are Monday & Tuesday)
- 85% of visits from 25-64 yrs, 12% 65+, just 3% from 18-24 yr olds
- 2/3rds of visits are via search engines (rest are from

referrals and direct

- 45% of visits are via mobile devices, 45% via desktop and 10% on a tablet

2.11 **Appendix B** contains a more detailed breakdown of feedback from customers. The govmetric system allows customers to provide feedback on specific pages which is useful in terms of analysis. Where appropriate the Communications Team will amend the content and/ or provide feedback to the relevant service.

2.12 General conclusions from **Appendix B** are as follows:

- The number of ratings provided are a relatively small proportion of the overall number of page views
- Ratings are a useful proxy but it is only where free text feedback is given that we can undertake proper analysis of any issues
- A reasonable proportion the feedback is unrelated to website content but more about the customer's general experience of the council (or in some cases about areas unrelated to council business)
- There is a general correlation between a poor rating and leaving feedback. In other words customers are more likely to leave feedback when they are unhappy
- The govmetric system is used by customers to make general service requests and complaints. However these cannot be acted upon unless highly specific details are included
- A reasonable amount of the feedback is useful in terms of finding out where content doesn't make sense, links aren't working etc. In this sense customer feedback is driving direct improvement in the website
- There is a consistent theme of customers wanting to speak directly to someone and not being able to find contact details. To some extent this is deliberate as the website is a means to provide people with relevant

information before they decide to contact us directly. Whilst we do not wish to actively discourage contact we have a general aim towards customer self-service and encouraging people to obtain information themselves where it is already available. In some cases more complex issues will require contact with a council officer but it is equally clear that in some cases customers do not wish to spend time reading web content. Comments about the accuracy and usefulness of content are kept under review but we are still minded to direct customers to the website in the first instance before calling us. In addition at the bottom of each web page there is a "contact us" link which takes customers through to the relevant details for doing so.

- There is variation of satisfaction scores within specific services. Pages related to planning and council tax tend to be less popular. Pages related to licensing, housing and waste tend to be more popular.
- Analysis of the comments related to planning are largely focused on the reliability of the website. It should be noted that this relates to the planning portal which is separate to East Herts Council's website (from which there is link through). However customers return to the East Herts pages to provide a poor rating when there are challenges. This skews the results and as a consequence the govmetric tool has been taken off this page. This has been replaced with an option to contact us regarding any reliability issues.
- Analysis of the comments related to council tax generally pick up on the limits of what can be done through the website in terms of obtaining information or completing online forms. This feedback is kept under review however in many cases direct contact with the council is needed to resolve issues.
- There aren't enough comments relating to licensing or housing to make conclusions on improving the content. Generally speaking customers rate their experience as

good.

- Analysis of feedback on the waste feedback indicates that most people are happy with the content and generally find what they are looking for.

2.13 Going forward

2.14 As well as continuing to report performance every quarter feedback will also continue to be shared within services.

2.15 We are confident that the new website launched in November 2019 will result in continued higher satisfaction scores beyond the one month's worth that is currently available. It has significantly improved the look and feel of the council's website and delivered a more intuitive user experience. It will be important to keep up this momentum to avoid this increase being a spike as per 2017.

2.16 It is suggested that satisfaction scores be kept under review by the Committee and an update provided in 12 months' time.

2.0 Reason(s)

3.1 N/A

3.0 Options

4.1 N/A

5.0 Risks

5.1 N/A

6.0 Implications/Consultations

6.1 No.

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No

Environmental Sustainability

No

Financial

No

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

No

Human Rights

No

Legal

No

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 **Appendix A:** Performance data

7.2 **Appendix B:** Detailed feedback data

Contact Members

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Geoff Williamson, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Financial Sustainability

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Contact Officer

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Report Author

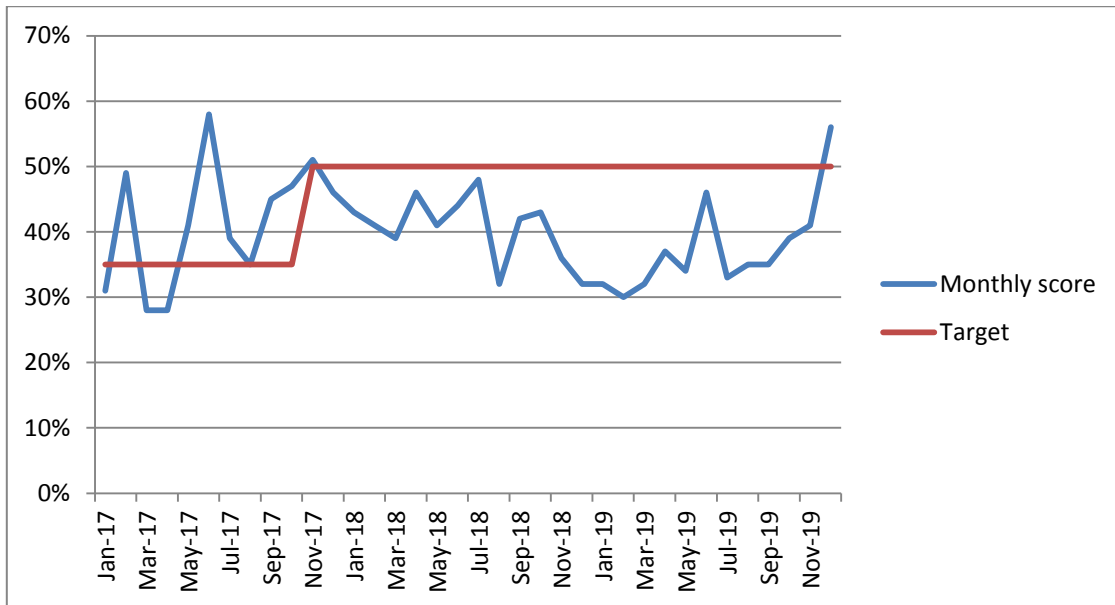
Benjamin Wood, Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy

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Review of Website Satisfaction – Appendix A

The following graph and table show monthly performance statistics for the indicate “overall percentage of good satisfaction ratings” for the council website every month over the past 2 years.



Month	Good Satisfaction	Target
Jan-17	31%	35%
Feb-17	49%	35%
Mar-17	28%	35%
Apr-17	28%	35%
May-17	41%	35%
Jun-17	58%	35%
Jul-17	39%	35%
Aug-17	35%	35%
Sep-17	45%	35%
Oct-17	47%	35%
Nov-17	51%	50%
Dec-17	46%	50%
Jan-18	43%	50%

Feb-18	41%	50%
Mar-18	39%	50%
Apr-18	46%	50%
May-18	41%	50%
Jun-18	44%	50%
Jul-18	48%	50%
Aug-18	32%	50%
Sep-18	42%	50%
Oct-18	43%	50%
Nov-18	36%	50%
Dec-18	32%	50%
Jan-19	32%	50%
Feb-19	30%	50%
Mar-19	32%	50%
Apr-19	37%	50%
May-19	34%	50%
Jun-19	46%	50%
Jul-19	33%	50%
Aug-19	35%	50%
Sep-19	35%	50%
Oct-19	39%	50%
Nov-19	41%	50%
Dec-19	56%	50%

The following table shows benchmarking data for satisfaction ratings against the other council websites that use the govmetric system. Govmetric publish these on a monthly basis for the past year. It should be noted that the benchmarking data is net satisfaction as oppose to the indicator used by the council. Net satisfaction is calculated as an average score where each customer rating is attributed the following score:




Good = +1
Average = 0
Poor= -1

All scores are combined and the result divided by the total number of responses to provide a net satisfaction score, meaning that net satisfaction will always be within the range of +1 to -1. As over 100 councils use govmetric East Herts is compared to the mean average in the table below:

Month	East Herts net satisfaction	Average net satisfaction
Jan-19	-0.19	-0.09
Feb-19	-0.26	-0.06
Mar-19	-0.19	-0.05
Apr-19	-0.11	-0.05
May-19	-0.17	-0.02
Jun-19	-0.1	-0.04
Jul-19	-0.16	-0.03
Aug-19	-0.14	-0.03
Sep-19	-0.16	-0.02
Oct-19	-0.14	-0.03
Nov-19	No data yet	No data yet
Dec-19	No data yet	No data yet

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Analysis of govmetric results from December 2018 - December 2019

Web pages	No. of Page views	No of ratings	Rating (%)			Sample of free text comments left by customers
						
<p>Planning Most rated page is object, comment or view on a planning application.</p>	160585	252	19.8	7.9	72.2	<p>Was this designed by a muppet wanted to comment on line about a planning application but found no info Planning Application would not open despite trying correct address and also trying with correct planning application number. Having received a letter about a neighbour's planning application I was unable to view the copy, online, using the supplied application reference. This site useless. No help whatsoever to the uninitiated The link to object,comment or view would not open! The page does not load - waited for over 5 minutes Page won't load, seems to be down the page advises to call the duty planning officer, but no phone number is provided. Often it is not possible to access planning pages due to IT issues. Easy search tool. Only problem is the map search takes too long to load and often fails. Excellent web site, simple and quick to use</p>
<p>Council Tax Most rated pages are council tax bands/ amounts, how to pay your council tax, moving in/ out and change of circumstances</p>	105917	275	22.9	11.6	65.5	<p>Customer service staff are very rude and patronizing. Called the council to speak to council tax and got told "well we are customer services". Well yeah I get that but if I call the council and you are the first point of contact is that the kind of service you would provide to your customers? Then got given a number to call as Alexander would not even transfer me to the right place. After being asked to be connected to that department and hearing a sigh I was put through to HR!! Disappointed in the service but please at least teach your staff some telephone manners it does not cater for landlord tenant changes. Can?t see all the council tax bands, I needed to see band g I AM TRYING TO TELL YOU THAT I HAVE MOVED OUT OF EAST HERTS COUNCIL AREA AND MOVED TO UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL AREA ON 13TH AUGUST 2019. I AM UNABLE TO TELEPHONE YOU AS IT IS ALWAYS TOO BUSY AND I CANT SEEM TO FIND ANYWHERE ON LINE IF IT HAVE MOVED OUT OF THE AREA. PLEASE HELP ME AS I HAVE ALREADY OVERPAID ONE MONTH'S CPUNCILTAX TO YOUR COUNCIL. I have moved to the district but cannot set up an account. I'm trying to do a simple change of address and the system is rubbish. inputting the solicitor info and it keeps indicating a piece of information is not there but it is all there. rubbish, ehd council, sort it out, I want a phone number! AS A LANDLORD DIFFICULT TO ENTER FORWARDING ADDRESS OF TENANT MOVING OUT There isn?t a phone number to call. I keep receiving council tax bills even though I?ve been numerous times down the council offices and told them I?m not responsible for bills and to have my name erased. Couldn't find a section on exemption following a death/empty property! We live in great Ashby in stevenage, it doesn't show this on your list I have a summons and its says on that i can pay on the website, the website doesnt have anywhere obvious to go</p>
<p>Waste Most rated pages are find your collection day, report a missed bin, bulky goods collection, order a replacement bin and report a fly</p>	90405	301	65.1	7.9	26.9	<p>We ordered bins for a new build on the 6/11/19 and received acknowledgement that we would get them by end nov. We are yet to receive any bins. Ref no: 155152 A little more information required on the collection and replacement process when bins are damaged. If you have to collect and remove a bin, do you need it to be empty? It would be preferable to identify the location on a map, e.g. google maps, as in the FixMyStreet app. It is not possible to report flytips that are in the EHDC area using FixMyStreet, but it is if they are in other district council areas. Why is this? I need a telephone number to contact, or is that too much trouble very nice and user friendly site. Very quick to respond. Very easy to fill in.</p>

						<p>The dustman are out in all weathers and never moan It did what I thought it would do and that was to give me the advice and information that I was looking for. Thank you. I tried to report my bin collection being missed online but when you get through to add the date it was missed the calendar appears and it won't let you select any date from it! Very expensive to have bulky items collected.</p>
<p>Elections Most rated pages are local elections, EU elections, general elections, how to vote, register to vote and election results</p>	119042	360	35.8	9.4	54.7	<p>I was looking for information about assisting at a general election polling station ,given the proposal for a December election I would imagine many people will be very busy ,I have no dependants at home and would be available ,the website explained there are no vacancies and showed the job spec so answered my question clearly, the only thing that would be helpful would be the ability to show your interest in the future should a vacancy become available. Showed when, where and who is standing. All I can ask for as election information. I shall be abroad on the Polling day and have postal voting but need to know when the papers will be sent, I leave UK on 29 November and return after 14 December I just wanted to find my electoral number....not as easy as it sounds. Where's NE Herts candidates? Rubbish - going round in circles to find out if I'm actually registered to vote!! Who are the candidates and which party? Their views and standpoints? The address on where to send an application to vote by post is not clear. It says to look at the contact us page but that doesn't tell you either. Thank you. I have been written to asking to register to vote. I am not eligible to vote and there isn't a form that allows me to put that. not clear how to respond with east herts check who is eligible to register to vote. the letter says easiest way to complete the form. It is not as no information on line. We live in a hideously criminal autocracy</p>
<p>Parking Most rated pages are pay/ challenge a pcn, dispensations, hertford/ ware/ stortford car parks, residents permits FAQs, parking permits information and easipermits applications</p>	77008	268	33.5	9.4	57.1	<p>which car parks have motorcycle bays ????</p> <p>If I park in Gascoyne Way multi- storey car park at 6pm will the free 30 minutes carry me to 6.30pm when free parking commences? In other words can I park free from 6pm?</p> <p>Make your office more easy to contact</p> <p>So glad to see a phone number next to the service I needed to apply for - most websites hide their phone number as deep as possible so you don't contact them! A simple phone call direct to the person I needed - job done.</p> <p>I would like a contact email address for Parking department</p> <p>The guidance notes on visitor parking did not correspond to that on screen when I tried to apply, so could not apply for visitor parking on line. Quite ridiculous.</p> <p>i'm trying to book a visitor on my permits and i cant see how many hrs i have left or how to add more money?</p> <p>What do i pay to park from 19:15 until 22:45 on Wednesday's</p> <p>The online purchase of visitor permits is very unclear to me. Gives no option to purchase a particular voucher, only automatically gives 50hours...</p> <p>The information is totally confusing and you should always remember the elderly who may not have access to a PC. What was wrong with paper vouchers for parking?</p> <p>Your website is slow and clunky on iPhone - eg it took me several seconds to see this box at the other end of the page - off screen. Some of your ratepayers/ residents have no access to the internet. Why are you sending out letters without contact names/addresses and phone numbers to these isolated individuals offering no clear means of continued parking on their own streets. It is cruel inhumane and criminally thoughtless. These people pay your salaries.</p>
<p>Housing Most rated pages include apply for housing, housing and homelessness advice and housing options</p>	76120	112	51.8	9.8	38.4	<p>Why does this information not cover social housing/housing association residents? Seems strange that it's so easy to find for private tenants but not for Council tenants</p> <p>Paragraphed and very well thought and laid out</p> <p>The information was clear ad precise. My questions were addressed.</p> <p>Very good explaining every aspect,thanks</p> <p>Wanted to know about grants for disabled people the page went to housing and applying for housing. Not what I wanted</p> <p>Sheltered housing is the only option that covers old people, you need to included information about care homes as sheltered housing doesn't meet the needs of a 99 year old.</p> <p>why are there no details on this page on how to contact the council to make a homelessness application</p>

<p>Contact us, general enquiries, compliments/ complaints, data protection and FOI request</p>	75033	97	40.2	19.5	40.2	<p>Everything I needed Great new website What are your office opening hours as they are missing, Are you open Saturdays?? I wanted to ask question using the contact format it doesn't tell you where to get to it! Please include a phone number if it needs to be an immediate situation such as confirming eligibility to vote Data is is kept in accordance to your retention policy, but I cannot find this.</p>
<p>Licensing Most rated pages include become a licenced taxi driver, vehicle requirements for taxi licensing and apply for a temporary event notice</p>	28397	85	49.5	10.5	40	<p>this is very confusing Cannot download a form that it says it downloadbale I?m trying to raise a complaint as every weekend I have been out in town and tried to get a taxi home from an official taxi rank and given my address which is local and in Hertford I have been sent down the wrong way which is very concerning being as I am a lone female . I have been sent towards the A10 . How or why do you allow mini cab drivers that do not have a clue where they are going ??? . This is not a one off it happens frequently very concerned female . Please sort this before something serious happens in east Herts Lazy counsel who we do all the work for and pay the money Have a nice day! Do not licence any more taxi drivers,there are too many in Bishops Stortford</p>
<p>Unallocated A large number of ratings cannot be attributed to individual pages. This is being investigated with govmetric as there are a significant number</p>		1172	37.8	29	33.1	<p>You don't say if you recycle flowerpots Easy and quick to use. John G please ignore my previous downgrade - I now see the file has been extended by a few months to cover the gap from November to February. sorry about that. I like this site My house stinks of smoke , I had to rush out of the house and retrieve washing off of the line early Monday evening! The info on the page is different to what I was told on the phone to your offices Not easy to find dates of council meetings - deliberate? No real information of any use I just need to speak to someone It would seem that at discretion Chairman can close down public comment to just one 3 mins speaker even on a major planning application . This would be undemocratic And stifle debate When you provide a website link in your letter make sure it works. I logged on to find there no such page wasting my time</p>

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East Herts Council Report

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 4 February 2020

Report by: Scrutiny Officer

Report title: Task and Finish Group Update and Work Programme

Ward(s) affected: All

Summary

- This report reviews actions included in the committee's existing Work Programme and proposes amendments to the ongoing Work Programme.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, that:

- (A) the proposed Work Programme, as included in Appendix A, be approved, which has been amended in line with progress on:**
- (i) the Task and Finish Group (Parking);**
 - (ii) consideration of issues relating to Hertford Town Centre and Bircherley Green, Hertford**
 - (iii) implementation of the Committee's previous recommendation to establish an Environmental and Climate Forum**
 - (iv) consideration of cycle storage provision in Bishop's Stortford**

(v) the Task and Finish Group (Social Housing)

(B) scrutiny of Section 106 allocations be removed from the Work Programme as it was considered in detail at a previous Committee meeting.

1.0 Proposal(s)

1.1 The purpose of this report to consider an update in on what action has been taken in relation to OS requests for Task and Finish Groups to review / research scrutiny proposals and the action taken.

1.2 The report also seeks Members' views on items for inclusion in the ongoing draft of the Overview and Scrutiny work programme.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme is a continually updated programme. The latest update, in draft form, is presented at **Appendix A** for consideration. Any Member wishing to include an item on the Work Programme is required to submit their request via a Scrutiny Proposal Form which is evaluated against the Scrutiny Flow Chart (**Appendix B**).

2.2 Members are reminded that for a topic to be valid for Scrutiny it needs to be relevant to the work of the council and impact on a number of residents / or the wider area. In addition, there needs to be evidence, whether readily quantifiable or anecdotal, that this is an issue requiring investigation.

2.3 The following paragraphs provide updates on work to date on items in the Work Programme.

2.4 Task and Finish Group (Parking)

- 2.5 Members will recall that a Task and Finish Group (Parking) submitted a detailed report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10 December 2019 with a number of recommendations. The Head of Operations will be reporting on these recommendations and other related matters to the Executive on 11 February 2020 and then to the next ordinary meeting of Council for decision.
- 2.6 **Hertford Town Centre / Bircherley Green Hertford**
- 2.7 Concerns were raised by a Member at a previous meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee about the economic viability of Hertford Town Centre (HTC) / Bircherley Green. A review of two independent reports on the areas showed that HTC was economically stable, there are no empty shops and there is general praise for the area. Therefore, although there remain concerns about progress at Bircherley Green, as summarised in **Appendix C**, it has been determined not to scrutinise this matter further at this stage; the new owners of the Bircherley Green site will be given time to bring forward their proposals.
- 2.8 **Implementation of Climate Change**
- 2.9 Council on 24 July 2019 made a Climate Change Declaration and agreed to a range of climate change actions. Following on from this, the council has established an East Herts Environmental and Climate Forum to drive forward and oversee action on Climate Change locally. The first meeting of this group was held on 15 January at Fletchers Lea in Ware with over 120 people attending. Further Forum meetings will be held throughout 2020/21 at locations across the district.
- 2.10 Establishment of the Forum derives directly from the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group. Reports from, and issues raised by, the Forum will be presented to future Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings.

2.11 Cycle Storage Provision in Bishop's Stortford (in particular around the railway station)

2.12 A Member raised the issue of the lack of storage for cycles at the Bishop's Stortford railway station and more generally in the town and beyond. As a result, the issue has been raised with Greater Anglia and a number of partner organisations including Bishop's Stortford Town Council and Hertfordshire County Council. A range of options for improving cycle storage were identified with partners leading on implementation. The Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability had also been involved in research in relation to cycle storage and provision.

2.13 Members may be interested to learn that Greater Anglia explained there had been difficulties with the software used to operate the fobs at the station which was compromising access to the 200 storage spaces available. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman felt that there was sufficient evidence on cycle storage and provision in the area and that a Task and Finish Group was not needed.

2.14 Social Housing Event

2.15 Members will recall that a Task and Finish Group was requested to explore the relationship between the council and registered providers of social housing, often referred to as housing associations. The Task and Finish Group met on 19 December 2019. Members agreed an approach to the investigation and, with Officers' assistance, articulated a series of questions to be posed to tenants and senior Officers of the main register providers operating in the district. Meetings with tenants and Officers are currently being arranged.

2.16 Update on Section 106 Allocation

2.17 At the meeting of OS Committee (10 December 2019)

Members noted that Performance Audit and Governance Oversight Committee (24 September 2019) had received a detailed report on allocations in relation to the current position of Section 106 contributions and actions taken. Members agreed to take no further action. Members' agreement is sought to remove this report from the current work plan.

3.0 Reason(s)

3.1 This report provides an update on the current situation in relation to issues raised by Members.

3.2 Para 4E (1.1.4) provides that Scrutiny Committee *"may appoint a task and finish group which shall be given a brief to consider a specified subject area and report back to Committee on a regular basis"*.

4.0 Options

4.1 Retain the existing Work Programme – NOT RECOMMENDED as this will not enable the committee to take forward the issues previously identified by Members.

4.2 The Work Programme will be kept under review by the committee throughout the coming year.

5.0 Risks

5.1 The establishment of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee is enshrined in the Local Government Act 2000 (section 9). The 2000 Act obliges local authorities to adopt political management systems with a separate Executive. Various sub sections (of the 2000 Act), set out the powers and duties for Overview and Scrutiny Committees including the right to investigate and make recommendations on anything which is the responsibility of the Executive. Legislative provisions can also be found in the Localism Act 2011 (Schedule 2) with

options to retain or re-adopt a “committee system” (section 9B).

- 5.2 Potential risks arise for the council if policies and strategies are developed and/or enacted without sufficient scrutiny. Approval of an updated Work Programme contributes to the mitigation of this risk by ensuring key activities of the council are scrutinised.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

- 6.1 Scrutiny is an important part of the local democratic process and represents the interests of residents. It holds the Executive to account on behalf of residents and helps review and improve services and functions run by the Council and its local partners.
- 6.2 The proposed Work Programme has implications for Members’ time and the resources of the council devoted to scrutinizing the issues included. The work can be accommodated within the council’s existing budgets.

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

Yes – scrutiny of the services provided by registered providers of social housing will investigate how some of the most vulnerable people in the district, including those with protected characteristics, receive housing services.

Environmental Sustainability

Yes – although not subject to a further Task and Finish Group, the proposed Work Programme envisages the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receiving reports on the progress of the council’s

Environmental and Climate Forum.

Financial

No

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

No

Human Rights

No

Legal

Yes - scrutiny is enshrined in Statute and the Work Programme will ensure robust scrutiny of the council's work.

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

7.1 Appendix A – Draft Work Programme

7.2 Appendix B - Scrutiny Flow Chart

7.3 Appendix C – Task and Finish Document : Update

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Report Author: Lorraine Blackburn, Scrutiny Officer
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Overview and Scrutiny (OS) Committee Work Programme 2019/20 – DRAFT

[Please note: This is a working document and will be subject to regular amendment].

The items below represent key topics of enquiry by the scrutiny committee

Meeting Date	Topic	Lead Member and Lead Officer	Notes
11 June 2019	Agree draft work plan		
	Agree T&FG ToR and Membership		
	Discuss questions for Service updates on waste and website on 17/9		
17 September 2019 cancelled	Waste KPIs	Head of Operations <u>Urbaser Rep and Exec Member</u>	
	Website customer Satisfaction	Head of Communications, Strategy and Policy	
	Progress report on T&F		
	Discuss questions for Service updates on 05/11		
	Work Programme		

Meeting Date	Topic	Lead Member and Lead Officer	Notes
5 November 2019 (Deadline for reports 24 October)	Waste Management	Head of Operations	
	Agree ToR and membership for Social Housing Scrutiny event in 2020)	Discussion by members led by Scrutiny officer	Head of Housing and Health
	IT - Value for Money	ICT Manager, Helen Standon, Exec Member	Value for money of the Shared relation IT Service
	Update from the T&F Group (Parking)	Head of Operations	
	Work Programme		
10 December 2019 (Deadline for reports 1 December)	Progress Update on Implementation of Climate change recommendations	David Thorogood & Cllr Graham McAndrew Update on progress since Task and finish group report in Dec 2018.	Scrutiny Officer to update following feedback from the EHDC Environment and Climate change Forum meeting which was to have been held on 4 Dec but cancelled because of Purdah.
	Consider ToR for Cycle storage provision T&FGs	Discussion by members led by Scrutiny officer	Meeting arranged (17 Dec) with B/S Town Council to establish what provision there is in the town. It is anticipated that this meeting will help form the key lines of enquiry.
	Final report and	Head of Comms, and	

Meeting Date	Topic	Lead Member and Lead Officer	Notes
	Recommendations of T&FG (Parking)	Councillor H Drake	
	Work Programme	Scrutiny Officer	
4 February 2020 (Deadline for reports 22 January 2019)	Update on Section 106 allocation etc	Infrastructure Contributions and Spend Manager	Report to PAGO on 24 September on allocations in relation to the current position of Section 106 contributions and actions taken. Members agreed Dec 2019 to take no further action.
	Updates from T&FGs		
	Pre-Planning Advice	Head of Planning	Head of Planning to review the pre planning advice process and charges at the start of the year. It suggested that this be reviewed 20/20 -20/21 once that has been in place for 6 months and had a chance to imbed.
	Work Programme Update		
	Website customer Satisfaction	Head of Comms, Strategy and Policy	Feedback in terms of customer satisfaction. Possibly a subject for scrutiny?
31 March 2020	Final report from T&FG Social Housing	Head of Housing and Health	Scrutiny Officer to feedback on two events

Meeting Date	Topic	Lead Member and Lead Officer	Notes
	Final report from T&FG Cycle storage		
	Carry forward items to 2020/21		

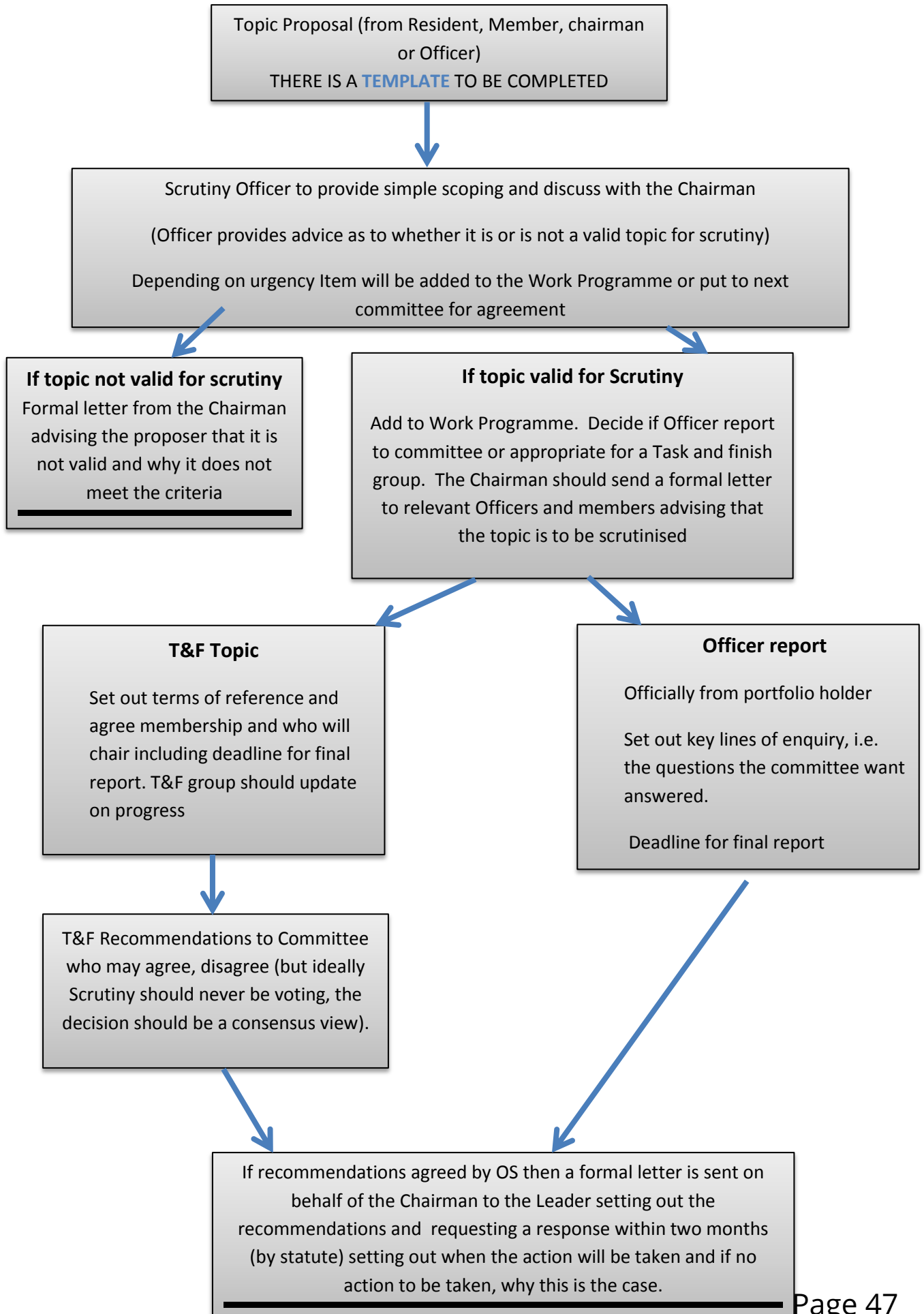
Task and Finish Groups

Member Scrutiny Proposals - update

Other items for 2019/20:

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**SCRUTINY TOPIC
INITIAL SCOPING to FINAL REPORT**



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Scoping document - Update Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Title of proposal	Description of Problem/issue	Evidence for Problem	Approach	Timing	Partner organisations	Update
Hertford Town Centre /Bircherley Green	Economic Stability	<p>Raised by Cllr Stevenson</p> <p>Further evidence?</p> <p>Two independent reports on the area showed that HTC was economically stable / no empty shops and general praise for the area. There were concerns about Bircherley Green and its lack of redevelopment and the public negative perception of the area.</p>	Head of Service	Originally 10 Dec (Mtg)	<p>Hertford Town Council</p> <p>Local Businesses</p> <p>Police</p>	<p>Following a review of the two independent reports it was established that Bircherley Green appeared to be the crux of the problem. The site had been bought and would be developed by the new owners (Chase Homes) and that a Planning Application would be submitted in Jan/Feb 2020.</p> <p>Chase Homes held an exhibition / public engagement exercise on 27 November 2019. The event was well attended. Chase provided detailed illustrations and designs of their anticipated development proposals. A planning application was submitted pre-Christmas 2019.</p> <p>Chairman and VC felt that owners should be given time to move this along.</p>

Title of proposal	Description of Problem/issue	Evidence for Problem	Approach	Timing	Partner organisations	Update
Progress Update on Implementation of Climate Change recommendations	Update	Raised as a Member’s Question at Council in July 2019	Head of Housing and Health. David Thorogood	Originally 10 Dec (Mtg)		<p>David Thorogood advised that following Council in July 2019 an Environment Sustainability Forum and that there was the possibility of a duplication of effort. A Meeting was arranged for early Dec 2019 but then cancelled because of Purdah. The Forum was due to meet on 15 Feb 2020 .</p> <p>In consultation with the Chairman and VC they agreed that there was little value in moving this forward as a T&FG if there was the possibility of the work being duplicate. Results from ESF will be fed back to OS Committee as an update and then OS can decide its next approach.</p>
Cycle Storage provision for T&FGs (ToR)	Lack of Storage facilities at BS Rail Station	Raised by Cllr Ward-Booth	HoS	10 Dec	Bishop’s Stortford Town Council, Greater Anglia, Principal Rail Liaison Officer (HCC)	Scrutiny Officer invited to a meeting with BSTC (12 Dec); officers identified a range of approaches being led by the Town Council and a strategic document by HCC in relation to what cycleway provision and storage provision within the town itself and those planned for areas outside of the Town.

Scoping document - Update Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Title of proposal	Description of Problem/issue	Evidence for Problem	Approach	Timing	Partner organisations	Update
						<p>Additionally the Network Liaison Officer explained that there had been a soft ware /fob problem first of all at the station but that this had been resolved. There were approximately 220 storage spaces at the station.</p> <p>Chairman and VC agreed that a T&FG was not felt to be appropriate given the approaches led by the Town Council, HCC and the considerable information already available and that the Member be informed accordingly.</p>
Report and recommendations of T&FG (Parking)	Overview and Scrutiny (11 June 2019) Committee elected to examine elements of East Herts Council's current parking policies as part of its work programme for the 2019/20 civic year		Ben Wood Andrew Pulham	OS – 10 Dec 2019 Executive – Feb 2020 Council – March 2020		Recommendations submitted to OS Committee and approved December 2019. Recommendations will be submitted to Executive (Feb 2020) and then to Council (March 2020)

Title of proposal	Description of Problem/issue	Evidence for Problem	Approach	Timing	Partner organisations	Update
Social Housing Event	To explore relationship of Council with Registered Providers	To be determined?	Task and Finish Group established and held on 19 December (Wyllie, Goldspink, Brady and Symonds). Agreed that there should be a meeting with tenants (3) from RPs the results of which will feed into a "higher" level meeting of Senior Officers from the three registered providers	OS 4 February 2020	Senior Officers from key providers (Clarion, and Network Homes) will be asked a number of prepared questions and will be invited to OS February 2020	<p>Notes circulated to Members of the Task and Finish group and the approach agreed.</p> <p>Questions agreed to be posed to Key officers from Housing providers. These questions will be posed via a telephone conferencing arrangement.</p> <p>Questions agreed to be posed to tenants' representatives at a planned meeting with tenants.</p> <p>Information awaited from the housing associations.</p>

Criteria

Weak Scrutiny

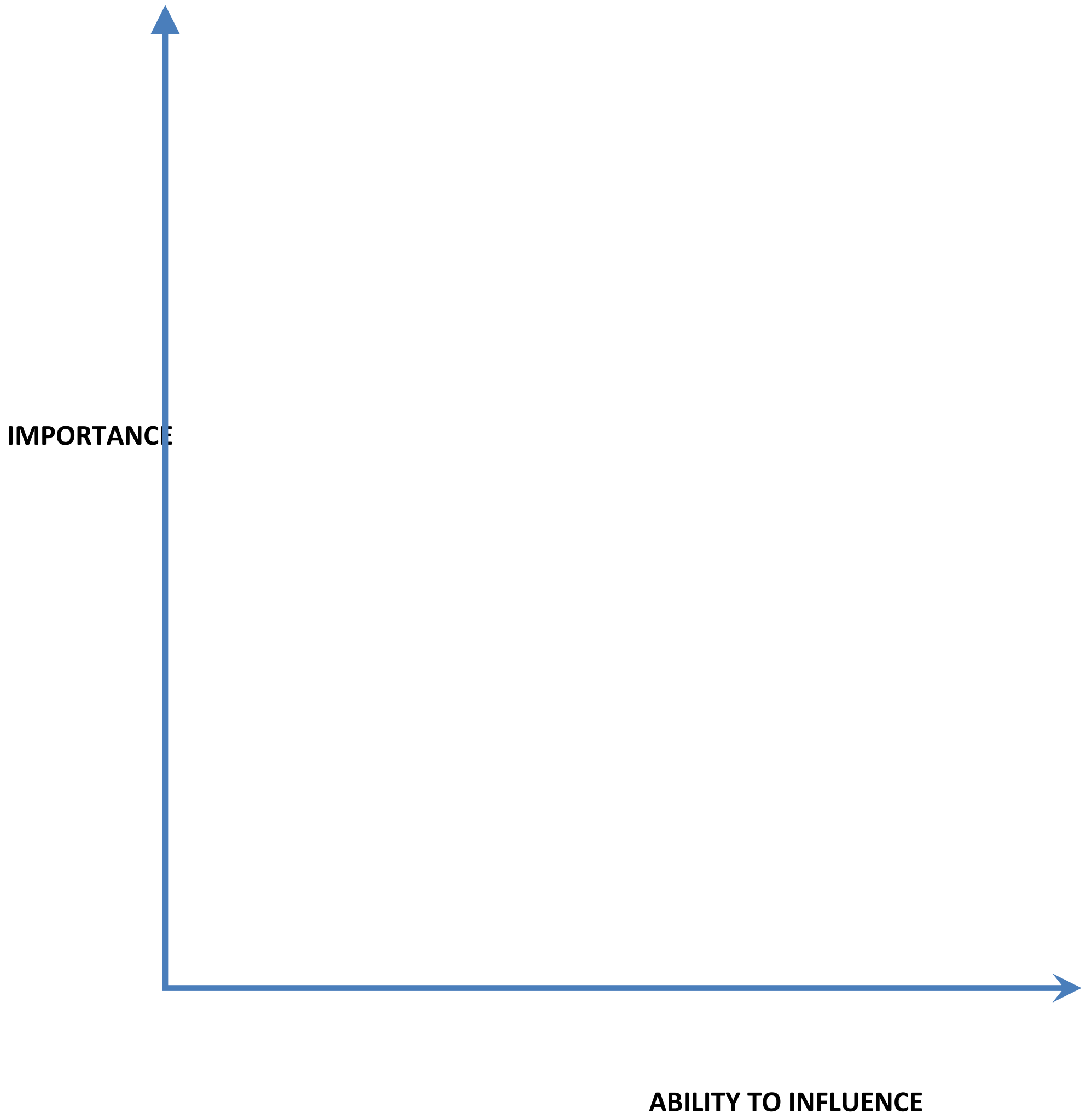
Strong scrutiny

			Letter to local newspapers News
Resident Radar			
Evidence for Problem/Issue:	Circumstantial/anecdotal	data for parts of district	year on year data/several relevant indicators/benchmarking
Ambition for Outcome of scrutiny – impact on residents	Indirect/HARD TO LINK benefits to some residents	Measurable direct benefits to some, indirect benefits to more	Direct measurable benefits for all residents/resolving inequalities in delivery
Member/officer/resources?	Raw quantitative Data collection necessary	Qualitative data required/focus groups etc	Data readily available in required locus and demographic
Partner organisations	Solely within the gift of organisations other than East Herts DC	EHDC has a role in coordination with other partners	EHDC is sole service provider

Typically the criteria for what constitutes a scrutiny topic are:

- i. The degree to which the topic resonates with residents concerns: *This can be determined from residents' surveys, complaints, members own door to door intelligence, letters to local newspapers*
- ii. Whether a member/s of the public has proposed the scrutiny topic (Note C);
- iii. The scale and breadth of the problem geographically and demographically in the district;
- iv. The performance of the service/s that impact upon the topic in question;
- v. The availability of evidence;
- vi. The potential opportunity for improvements that residents would recognise; and
- vii. The degree to which the council (members, the executive, LT and officers) can influence the implementation of recommendations made.

NPS/OS/2019-20/10 December 2019/Scoping Document



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