

WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

24TH JANUARY 2023

Title: Work Programme

Head of Service: Stephen Rix, Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Key Decision: No

Access: Public

1. Purpose and summary

- 1.1 The Work Programme informs the Committee about the progress and responses to its previous recommendations and resolutions and also gives Committee members an opportunity to give input on the upcoming items that the Committee intends to bring to future meetings.
- 1.2 This report also deals with a request from the Committee's last meeting, on November 22, 2022, for a review of those recommendations that have not been accepted. Details of the two sets of recommendations which were not accepted are set out below.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee consider their work programme and make any comments and/or amendments they consider necessary, including suggestions for any additional topics that the Committee may wish to add to its work.
- 2.2 The Committee note the information in para 4.4-4.8 and annexe 2 about past recommendations and decline to make any follow-up recommendations related to them at this stage.
- 2.3 That the Committee change the status of recommendation S22-06-21-8.2 recorded in Part 1 of the Committee Work Programme, suggesting that the draft Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan be amended to "*highlight which aspects of the policy and action plan reflect current practice and which are new*", be changed from "rejected" to "implemented".

3. Reason for the recommendation

- 3.1 To ensure the Committee is cognisant of the responses to its recommendations and to maintain a dialogue with those committees and partner organisations to whom it makes recommendations (especially the Executive).

- 3.2 To ensure that the work programme for future meetings reflects the interests and priorities of all Committee members.
- 3.3 As of the time of writing, none of the subjects covered by recommendations, which were not accepted has developed to a sufficient extent that resubmission of a related recommendation would be likely to lead to a different outcome. This is discussed in greater detail in para 4.4-4.8 and Annexe 2.
- 3.4 As outlined in annexe 2, the Biodiversity Action Plan did eventually include a mechanism for indicating which aspects were pre-existing. Therefore, it is most accurate to describe the response to recommendation S22-06-21-8.2 as “implemented”.

4. **Background**

- 4.1 Part 4.5, section 2 of the Waverley Borough Council constitution states that: *“The Overview and Scrutiny Committees will be responsible for setting their own work programme within the overall framework set by the Council and the inclusion of matters referred by the Leader/Executive/Portfolio Holders. In doing so they shall consider the wishes of members on that committee who are not members of the largest political group on the Council.”*
- 4.2 A draft work programme is included as annexe 1 of this report. Part 1 sets out the response to recommendations made by the committee, Part 2 sets out the current status of any other resolutions made, Part 3 provides an indicative timetable for future items, and Part 4 details current or recently active Scrutiny Working Task and Finish Groups commissioned by the Committee.
- 4.3 In reviewing the forward programme, the Policy Officer (Scrutiny) has identified some additional current subject areas that the Committee may like to consider in the coming year.
- Travel in Waverley: As a rural area, Waverley is [heavily reliant on private motor vehicles as a means of transport](#). However, there are significant groups for whom it is not possible to drive. Examples, include people under 17, those with serious visual impairments, and some people with epilepsy. There are also financial barriers to driving. [Only 35% of households in the lowest 10% of households by income own a car, compared to 93% of households in the highest 10%.](#) Therefore, there might be a case to investigate the transport options available to Waverley residents unable to drive. Such an investigation could also be timely to assess the impact [the £2 cap on single fares on certain bus routes](#) has. Transport is primarily the responsibility of upper-tier authorities and any scrutiny would require input from Surrey County Council. However, given Waverley Borough Council’s responsibilities for planning, economic development, and commissioning services from the voluntary and community sector, a district-level perspective would also be valuable.
 - International migration to Waverley: Relative to its size, [Waverley has taken amongst the highest number of people under the Homes for Ukraine](#)

scheme. Though there are not equivalent figures for arrivals from Hong Kong, [both Guildford and South-West London have been identified as desired locations](#) by those intending to leave Hong Kong for the UK. It is reasonable to suppose migration levels to this borough will also be above average. At the previous meeting, the Committee passed a resolution asking the Communities Service to provide an update on the local situation regarding Homes for Ukraine and with Ukrainian refugees more generally. This was circulated by email. The Committee might wish to use the information contained within to decide whether it wants to have an agenda item to either look at Homes for Ukraine specifically or the local situation with international migration more generally.

- The impact of the Cost of Living crisis on residents: Whilst there is currently an Executive Working Group on this subject there may be some specific areas that the Services O&S Committee might like to explore.

4.4 At the Committee's meeting on November 22, 2022, a resolution was made to ask for a review of those recommendations that had not been accepted to be brought to the next meeting. Two sets of recommendations have been identified which were not accepted.

4.5 At the Committee's meeting on December 13, 2021, an item was considered on an Addendum to the Pre-submission version of Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2). Amongst the recommendations made to the Executive was one to "*consider developing an equestrian policy to protect the unique quality of Waverley's rural settlements*". The Executive responded at its meeting on December 14, 2021 that "*such a policy would ... most appropriately be added when the plan is reviewed*" and agreed to revisit it at an appropriate stage.

4.6 The Planning Policy Team advise that reports are currently being prepared for the Council to consider whether a review of LPP1 is necessary. However, the work currently ongoing is principles-based and the opportunity to revisit the details of local plans will only present itself later in the process.

4.7 At the Committee's meeting on June 21, 2022, an item on the draft Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan was discussed. The Committee recommended a number of changes be made before the plan was implemented. At their meeting on July 5, 2022, the Executive accepted 3, partially accepted 1, and rejected 6.

4.8 Annexe 2 sets out the advice provided by the Greenspaces team on the 1 partially accepted and 6 rejected recommendations referenced in para 4.8.

5. Relationship to the Corporate Strategy and Service Plan

5.1 Overview and scrutiny is an independent, Member led function that facilitates and achieves democratic accountability for public services. As such, it seeks to ensure that the work of the Council fully meets the Council's corporate priorities.

6. Implications of decision

6.1 Resource (Finance, procurement, staffing, IT)

The Committee is supported by the Policy Officer (Scrutiny) and a member of the Democratic Services Team. The suggestions in para 4.3 would require support from the relevant service areas and partner organisations. Therefore, discussion with them would be necessary before these suggestions could be taken forward.

6.2 Risk management

None

6.3 Legal

There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6.4 Equality, diversity and inclusion

None

6.5 Climate emergency declaration

These recommendations do not have direct climate emergency implications.

7. Consultation and engagement

None

8. Other options considered

8.1 Other options, where they exist, are dealt with in the report.

9. Governance journey

The Committee is not a decision-making body and therefore must make recommendations to a decision-making body which is generally the Executive. The Executive has a recurring item to formally receive and respond to recommendations from the Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Annexes:

Annexe 1 – Draft Services Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme – January 2023 iteration

Annexe 2 – Annexe 2: Further responses to recommendations on Biodiversity Policy and Action Plan

Background Papers

There are no background papers, as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972).

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