

Local Members' Interest
N/a

## **Safe and Strong Staffordshire Select Committee – 13 June 2017**

### **Work Programme Planning 2017/18**

#### **Recommendation**

1. That the Safe and Strong Staffordshire Select Committee consider and agree an initial list of priorities to form the basis of the work programme for 2017/18.

#### **Report of the Scrutiny and Support Manager**

#### **Summary**

2. The revised scrutiny structures have been designed to ensure effective accountability for the delivery against the Council's key outcomes set out in Staffordshire County Council's Strategic Plan 2014-2018. The Safe and Strong Communities Select Committee is responsible for scrutiny of:

Children and adults' safeguarding  
Community safety  
Localism

3. In developing a work programme the Committee is encouraged to identify issues that are a current priority for local people and communities and/or are a priority for the Council and partners. If a matter is a recurring issue for the people you collectively as Councillors represent then the likelihood is that it is something the Committee should spend time on. The more relevant the issue is to local communities then the greater the likelihood of engaging those communities in the scrutiny process and of producing outcomes that will be visible to those communities. Members are encouraged to raise and discuss issues that should form the basis of the work programme and review these periodically throughout the year to ensure they remain relevant and will add value to what the Council and partners are doing.

#### **Report**

#### **Remit of the Safe and Strong Staffordshire Select Committee**

4. The Committee will lead on ensuring effective accountability of safeguards in place to protect adults and children and young people whilst scrutinising the wider community safety and localism priorities. The Committee is the designated crime and disorder committee. This is distinct from the role of the Police and Crime Panel, who are responsible for scrutinising the decisions of the Police and Crime Commissioner, but to whom it may refer matters. Full details of the role of Police and Crime Panel are available here:

## Developing the Work Programme

5. This meeting is an opportunity for the Committee to begin to identify and prioritise what it wishes to scrutinise during the current municipal year. Cabinet Members and officers will be present at the meeting to deliver a presentation regarding the County Council's responsibilities in relation to safeguarding and public protection and localism. The Cabinet Members have also been invited to contribute to the discussion to highlight some of the key priorities they are focussing on this year.
6. When agreeing matters for your work programme you are encouraged to ask the following questions:
  - Is the matter of particular concern to local people? You may wish to reflect on topics raised with you when canvassing.
  - Is the issue an identified priority for the County Council or partners?
  - Does the issue relate to an area of service with a trend in weak performance? For example, has this issue been identified by external auditors or inspectors?
  - What difference could scrutiny make?
  - What would happen if you did not look at this issue?

## Matters Arising from Last Year's Work Programme

7. The Committee met nine times during the last municipal year. The following matters were scrutinised and it was agreed to scrutinise them again this year. Members are asked to consider if they wish to take these matters forward into their Work Programme.

**Child Sexual Exploitation.** A key focus on previous year's Work Programmes has been scrutiny of child sexual exploitation. The Committee has been working closely with Stoke City Council on this matter and the Chair has attended the Children and Young People's Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Stoke City Council, and this arrangement has been reciprocated. It was agreed by the predecessor Committee to continue to scrutinise this matter on a six monthly basis.

**Modern Slavery.** The Committee received an initial report on 6 March 2016 and a further update on 12 December 2016. Members requested that details of the number of modern slavery prosecutions be forwarded to the Committee; b) post the January Task and Finish Group meeting the action plan timescales be shared with the Select Committee, with details of the roles and responsibilities of contributors; and c) the Select Committee receive regular updates on the number of reported cases and prosecutions in relation to modern slavery.

**Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS).** Members considered this item on 9 November 2016. Members were told that the anticipated backlog of referrals should

be cleared by June/July 2017. The Committee agreed to monitor and review this matter.

**An update on Executive Response to Review on Low Level Neglect.** Last year the Committee completed a scrutiny review of Low Level Neglect and reported their findings to the Cabinet Member who provided the Committee with an initial verbal response on 8 July 2016 and then written response on 6 March 2017. It was agreed to monitor the action plan on a six monthly exemption basis until all recommendations had been completed.

**Adult Social Care Peer Review – Findings and Action Planning.** The Chairman and Councillor Mark Olszewski met with members of the Peer Review Team on 10 February. There has been no formal presentation to the Committee of the Peer Review Team's findings. Members may wish to consider how to deal with this matter.

A draft Work Programme is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

### **Matters arising on Forward Plan of Key Decisions**

8. A decision is due to be taken by Cabinet on 21 June on the **Children's and Families System Transformation (Cabinet Member for Children and Young People (Mark Sutton))** - Agreement to proposals for changes to working practices across the children and families system. The Committee received an initial report on the Transformation Programme on 8 June and then updates on the pilot projects on 8 July 2016 and 16 January 2017.

### **Recurring Work Programme Items**

#### **Complaints and Representations Annual Report – Children's Services.**

Children's services are required to submit an annual report on complaints and representations to the relevant County Council Committee. Trends in complaints are used to inform the Select Committee's work programme.

**Complaints and Representations Annual Report – Adults' Services.** There is not a statutory obligation for Adults' Services to submit a report to a County Council Committee. However, the 'safeguarding' scrutiny committee has scrutinised this report on an annual basis. Trends in complaints are used to inform the Select Committee's work programme.

#### **Annual Report of the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Safeguarding**

**Vulnerable Adults' Partnership.** The Committee has received this report on an annual basis for comment. Last year this resulted in the Chairman writing to the Leader of the Council requesting additional resources for adult safeguarding.

**Staffordshire Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report.** The Committee has received this report on an annual basis for comment.

**Outcomes from inspections.** Adults and children's services are subject to a programme of announced/unannounced inspections throughout the year. The Committee will be updated on the outcomes from inspections and Members may be required to contribute to them.

**Meeting with the Police and Crime Commissioner.** The Committee has the opportunity to scrutinise the work of the Commissioner specifically in regard to community safety. The Chairman is copied into the agenda and minutes of the Police and Crime Panel and every effort is made to ensure that the Committee is not duplicating the work of the Panel.

### **Training and development**

9. Member and Democratic Services ran two induction sessions on an Introduction to Overview and Scrutiny on 30 May and 1 June 2017. Further training and development sessions will be run for Members as required. Members are invited to make any suggestions for development to the Chair, Scrutiny and Support Manager or Lynne Coates, Member Development and ICT Officer.

### **Method of Scrutiny**

10. Once Members have identified the matters they wish to scrutinise, consideration needs to be given to the most appropriate timing and method of scrutiny for that issue. Members may wish to:
  - consider an item at a single meeting;
  - consider an item over a series of meetings;
  - allocate the work to a small group of Members to look at over a period of 2-3 months; or undertake an inquiry day
  - Undertake joint scrutiny with members of another Select Committee.
11. The choice of method will depend in part on the scope of the matter, capacity and the opportunity for locality working and community engagement in the review. Experience suggests that single issue meetings and small task groups tend to deliver better recommendations and outcomes, than having a lengthy agenda item at scheduled committee meetings. A scoping report will be produced for new items that Members wish to consider. This will contain background research on the matter and will assist Members in decide how to take the proposal to scrutinise forward.
12. Members can request more information on a subject to assist them in deciding whether or not additional scrutiny is required. A Briefing Note is requested and circulated to Members in advance of the meeting and then Members are asked if they consider additional scrutiny is required.

### **All Party Member Groups**

13. The County Council has agreed to establish All Member Party Groups. These groups will be tasked with supporting the Council's long term policy ambitions putting forward proposals of how public services in Staffordshire could address community issues that will arise over the medium to long term. There will be four All Party Member Groups focussed around Innovation; Improvement; Community and External Relationships. They will be chaired by Cabinet Support Members.

## **Reviewing the Work Programme**

14. There will be an opportunity to review the work programme at every Committee meeting. Members are encouraged to raise issues at any point during the year and this can be done by:
  - completing the proposal form for work programme items (on line or in hard copy);
  - talking to the Chair/Vice Chair and Scrutiny and Support Team;
  - raising items under the 'Work Programme' item on the meeting agenda.
15. In developing a work programme, Members do not need to set in stone the work programme for a full year. It is important to plan items for the next two to three meetings. Time needs to be allowed for officers to prepare reports and for the Cabinet Member(s), officers and witnesses to diary their attendance at meetings. It is possible that new issues may arise that need to be given priority; hence it is advisable to review the work programme quarterly and treat it as a dynamic document. This way the Committee will be better able to respond to community concerns as and when they arise.

## **Link to Strategic Plan**

16. The remits of the Council's Select Committees link to the strategic priorities set out in the County Council Strategic Plan 2014-18. Work programmes should link to community priorities or strategic outcomes if they are to deliver noticeable outcomes for local communities and the organisation.

## **Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity**

17. Select Committees are encouraged to identify whether any of the issues for their work programmes are 'cross cutting' and would benefit from joint working.

## **Equalities and Legal Implications**

18. The County Council has a responsibility to undertake adequate Equality Impact Assessments to ensure services do not have a negative impact on any one section of the community and the scrutiny committees have a role in ensuring that this responsibility is fulfilled, particularly in regard to health impact. Scrutiny as a function must also comply with the relevant legislation. When considering work programme items, especially when undertaking reviews of policy, the scrutiny committees must always consider whether their recommendations may impact differently on various individuals/sections of the community.
19. The Select Committees will be updated as necessary on any matters affecting their operation that relate to legislation, regulations, and the County Council's Constitution.

## **Resource and Value for Money Implications**

20. Work programmes which are effectively prioritised will ensure that scrutiny activity is focused where it can be of greatest benefit.

## **Risk Implications**

21. The key aspects of risk management in regard to scrutiny work programmes are:

- ensuring that there are clear outcomes from the scrutiny process that impact positively upon the people and communities of Staffordshire and link to corporate priorities; and
- that there is adequate capacity for the Select Committees to complete the work that has been agreed.

## **Climate Change Implications**

22. The Committee will need to consider the implications for climate change of any recommendations it makes in relation to those issues included on the work programme. The Committee should also consider the implications of the scrutiny methods it decides to utilise – for example, travelling for best practice visits.

## **Contact Officer**

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## **Appendices/Background papers**

Appendix 1 - Draft Work Programme