

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Overview &amp; Scrutiny Work Programme</b>		
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>16 July 2012</b>		
<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Strategic Director, Resources</b>		
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<b>Key Decision:</b>	<b>No</b>		
<b>Ward(s) affected:</b>	<b>All</b>		

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE**

**1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 This report sets out a draft scrutiny work programme for 2012/13 and mechanisms through which to develop it further.
- 1.2 Members are invited to consider a request from the Leader of the Council to undertake further pre-decision scrutiny relating to changes in council tax support and also to agree to take forward the 'Cultural Provision for Older People' piece of work through the Age Friendly City initiative.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That members:
- 2.1.1 Agree the draft work programme (Annex 1).
  - 2.1.2 Note the Budget and Policy Framework items that will need scrutiny prior to decision, and agree to add these to the work programme as they arise (Annex 2).
  - 2.1.3 Agree to consult all members, partner organisations and senior officers for suggestions for scrutiny.
  - 2.1.4 Agree to progress the 'Cultural Provision for Older People' Panel through the WHO Age Friendly City initiative (Annex 3).
  - 2.1.5 Note the request for a scrutiny panel into council tax benefit changes from Cllr Jason Kitcat (Annex 4 & 5) and decide whether to establish such a panel.

### **3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 Within the new committee system the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is mainly to commission pieces of scrutiny work. The role of scrutiny was set in some detail in agenda item 8.
- 3.2 It is suggested that the OSC receives a suite of documents at committee that together should enable members to focus scrutiny resources where they will make most impact. These include:
- City Performance Plan
  - Organisational Health Report
  - Annual complaints data
  - Corporate Plan reports
  - Equalities updates
- 3.3 The work programme for the committee is based upon utilising these reports as the skeleton around which further work is commissioned.

#### **Budget and Policy Framework**

- 3.4 Annex 2 sets out those reports that makeup the budget and policy framework for the council. These are decisions that are reserved for full council due to their importance. Subject to a decision at the Policy and Resources Committee on the 12th July Annex 2 highlights those reports that will have to be directed through scrutiny prior to a decision being taken at council. Members are asked to note these items as they will be added to the work programme at appropriate junctures.

#### **Partnership Approach**

- 3.5 Overview and Scrutiny Committees have for some time been inviting external partners to bring forward issues they would like to see scrutinised. This partnership approach has considerable benefits and has been recognised as good practice nationally. It is therefore recommended that partner organisations are written to inviting suggestions for scrutiny.

#### **Cultural Provision for Older People**

- 3.6 Annex 3 to this report provides members with background to a decision by CTEOSC to undertake a piece of work on cultural provision for older people. It was agreed to begin this piece of work following the completion of the retail sector review (agenda item 7).
- 3.7 Members may be aware that a deputation will be presented to full council later in the week asking the council to sign up to become an Age Friendly City. This is a World Health Organisation (WHO) initiative that will result in a number of work streams, through which cultural provision for older people could be addressed.

- 3.8 Rather than have two separate pieces of work being undertaken on very similar topics it is suggested that options for progressing this piece of work are taken forward through the Age Friendly City initiative. It may well be that a scrutiny panel would be the most appropriate vehicle through which to progress it, however it would seem sensible to at least seek a joined up approach to the issue.

### **Council Tax Support**

- 3.9 Annex 5 of this agenda are the draft minutes from the workshop for OSC members on changes to council tax support. Members are asked to note these.
- 3.9 The workshop offered members that chance to question officers regarding changes to council tax support.
- 3.10 The Leader of the Council, Cllr Jason Kitcat, has since the workshop written to ask for further scrutiny work on the issue prior to the Policy and Resources Committee making a final decision on the scheme on the 11<sup>th</sup> October 2012 (Annex 4).
- 3.11 If members are minded to agree to this request the panel would need to undertake most of its work between the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2012 when the consultation closes and the 28<sup>th</sup> September when reports for the Policy and Resources Committee are published. This leaves a fairly tight timescale and as such a single day-long event may well be the most appropriate manner in which to progress the issue. Members may wish to view this as the first part of a larger piece of work that could be undertaken on wider welfare and benefit changes.

## **4. CONSULTATION**

This report seeks member approval to consult with relevant partners and members on the future scrutiny work programme.

## **5. FINANCIAL AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

### **5.1 Financial Implications**

All scrutiny work will be carried out within existing budgets. When developing the scrutiny work programme members need to be mindful of the resource implications of each piece of work.

### **5.2 Legal Implications**

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

### **5.3 Equalities Implications**

The council's Equality & Inclusion Policy will be considered by overview & scrutiny prior to submission to Full Council for approval. This report recommends regular equalities monitoring.

#### 5.4 Sustainability Implications

The proposed process requires the council's Sustainability Policy to be considered by overview and scrutiny, prior to submission to Full Council for approval.

#### 5.5 Crime & Disorder Implications

OSC is designated as the council's crime and disorder scrutiny committee.

The proposed process requires the council's Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy to be considered by overview & scrutiny and the Policy & Resources Committee prior to submission to Full Council for approval.

#### 5.6 Risk and Opportunity Management Implications

The involvement by overview & scrutiny in the council's budget formulation process and in a number of key plans and strategies reduces the risk of subsequent disagreement and challenge.

#### 5.7 Public Health Implications

None arising directly from this report.

#### 5.8 Corporate / citywide Implications

OSC should be seeking a balanced work-programme that addresses important issues for the city.

### **6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):**

6.1 Members are being presented with a number of options as to how they wish to utilise scrutiny resources.

### **7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

7.1 OSC needs to agree a work programme, recommendations within the report represent good practice developing such a programme.

### **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Annex 1	Draft work programme
Annex 2	Budget & Policy Framework items
Annex 3	CTEOSC report and minutes re Cultural Provision for Older People
Annex 4	Scrutiny request from Cllr Kitcat
Annex 5	Council Tax support workshop