Scrutiny Work Programme 2015/16

Report of the Chief Executive

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Summary:

Each of the Council's scrutiny select committees has a 'work programme' which is a timetable of the matters the Committee wishes to consider in the current municipal year. This report aims to assist the Health and Adult Services Select Committee (HASSC) members to produce its Work Programme for 2015/16.

At the start of the 2014/15 municipal year members of the HASSC were given a range of potential topic areas to consider for in-depth scrutiny. The HASSC agreed that it would undertake an in-depth scrutiny review on local eye care services in 2014/15 and allow part of the 2015/16 municipal year to complete the review and the end report containing the recommendations for service-improvement and take-up. At this time members were also interested in 'Falls' as an area to scrutinise and agreed that this could potentially be considered for in-depth scrutiny over the course of the 2015/16 municipal year, after the conclusion of the eye care services review.

The following are appended to this report:

A. The Draft Work Programme with dates of meetings, standard items and potential areas for (one-off) scrutiny at committee meetings
B. The Committee's remit as described in the Council's Constitution
C. An overview of the issues that would be involved in undertaking an in-depth scrutiny into ‘Falls’ and
D. A template for members who wish to suggest alternative topics for consideration by HASSC on areas other than ‘Falls’.

Recommendations

The HASSC is recommended to:

i. Discuss and agree whether to undertake an in-depth review into ‘Falls’ in 2015/16 after the conclusion of the eye care services review.

ii. Agree the other areas for scrutiny at HASSC meetings in 2015/16 as part of the Work Programme.
1. Scrutiny Work Programmes

Work Programmes generally consist of two types of scrutiny:

(i) Scrutiny Reviews

Usually, as part of their annual work programme, the select committees aim to complete at least one investigation into an area of member and/or public concern to make recommendations in order to improve services. These investigations are referred to as 'scrutiny reviews'. A scrutiny review usually involves a number of different stages including:

1. Agreeing the subject matter of the review according to given criteria
2. Drafting the terms of reference for the review (these are a set of questions/ specific areas the Committee wishes to consider, with a view to making recommendations for improvement in those areas)
3. Scoping the review (scoping refers to a detailed project plan outlining the suggested methods for gathering evidence including potential participants and contributors to the review. It is a timetable designed to deliver what is set out in the terms of reference and includes the estimated date for the completion of the review, in accordance with internal scrutiny procedures and protocols)
4. Carrying out the review in accordance with the agreed scope
5. Agreeing the contents of the scrutiny review report including the recommendations
6. Sharing the report with those involved with the review and finalising the report
7. Sharing the report with the body or individuals responsible for making decisions on whether to implement the decisions or not. For HASSC these could be the Health and Wellbeing Board or the Clinical Commissioning group, for example.
8. Publicising the report.
9. Monitoring the impact of the review and recommendations to evaluate the effectiveness of the review.

In September 2014, at a work programming meeting, the HASSC took the view that ‘Falls’ would be a good area to scrutinise in 2015/16. Appendix C provides an overview of the issues a scrutiny review on ‘Falls’ would involve. Members may put forward alternative areas for in-depth scrutiny for discussion by the HASSC and may use the template provided at Appendix D to help do this.

(ii) ‘One-off’ Items

Select Committees may also use their Work Programmes to consider issues on a ‘one-off’ basis by, for example, asking representatives of a service to attend a meeting to have a discussion with members, or undertaking a site visit to a facility. The Work Programme at Appendix A lists some suggestions for such items. Officers will be at hand to advise members on the particular details of these items and why it was considered necessary for HASSC to scrutinise them.

Members may also put forward the areas they believe would be effective areas to scrutinise on a one-of basis in 2015/16 for discussion and agreement by the HASSC.

2. Matters to Consider before deciding items to scrutinise

When deciding what matters should be scrutinised, whether they will be scrutinised via a review or as a one-off item, it is good practice to reflect upon the following matters:
(i) The Committee’s Remit

First and foremost the selected topics must be ones which fall under the Committee’s remit, which is provided in Appendix B.

Members will note that the HASSC specifically has the role of acting as the statutory consultee where health services propose substantial variations in the provision of services. Therefore if substantial variations are proposed during the course of the year the HASSC may wish to invite representatives of the health service making the proposal to a meeting to undertake scrutiny of the proposals.

Also specific to the HASSC is the statutory power of HealthWatch to refer matters to the Committee. In 2014/15 it was agreed that HealthWatch would inform the Scrutiny Officer of reports and other matters it wishes to refer to the HASSC, who would then liaise with the HASSC’s Lead Member as to which meeting agenda the matter should be scheduled for.

Members will note furthermore, that the HASSC's remit includes holding the Health and Wellbeing Board to account for its decisions. The Health and Wellbeing Board, which is chaired by the Cabinet Member for Health, has a duty to promote integration between services and takes executive decisions. These include approving the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Further information about the Health and Wellbeing Board can be found in the Council’s Constitution.

(ii) The ‘PAPER’ Criteria

When deciding which topic to select for review, best practice is to select topics that meet the following criteria:

— Public interest (be of importance to local residents)
— Ability to change (be within the Council and its partners’ power to change or influence)
— Performance (areas where scrutiny can add value are ones which require improvement)
— Extent of issue (priority should be given to issues that are relevant to a significant proportion of the Borough’s residents)
— Replication (avoid duplicating the work of other committees, bodies or organisations)

(iii) Other potential items

Members are asked to note that there may be additions to the Work Programme later on in the year if:

• the Committee agrees to carryout pre-decision scrutiny (including scrutiny of proposed substantial variations to health services)
• decisions made by the Cabinet or the Health and Wellbeing Board that are relevant to the Committee’s remit are 'called-in' or
• there are public petitions which fall under the Committee's remit.