



Corporate Overview Group

Tuesday, 22 September 2020

Consideration of Scrutiny Work Programmes and Requests from Councillors

Report of the Executive Manager – Finance and Corporate Services

1. Purpose of report

1.1. The terms of reference for the Corporate Overview Group approved at Council in May 2019 state that a key responsibility of this Group is to:

- Create and receive feedback on work programmes for the Growth and Development, Communities, and Governance Scrutiny Groups based on the Cabinet Forward Plan, Corporate Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Investment Strategy and Transformation Plan.

1.2. Work programmes for each of the groups during 2020/21 were reviewed in July 2020 to ensure they reflected the current priorities of the Council especially in light of the Covid19 pandemic. Since then a number of changes have been made to the agreed work programmes (these are highlighted in blue) to respond to the ongoing pandemic and its affect on some areas of work.

1.3. To ensure that scrutiny is responsive, effective and an essential part of the Council's decision-making process, it is important that Corporate Overview Group considers the work programmes each time it meets taking into account changes to the Council's key documents and any topics for potential scrutiny submitted by Councillors and Officers.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Corporate Overview Group:

- a) review the current work programme for each of the scrutiny groups (Appendix Two)
- b) consider any additional items for scrutiny from the current Cabinet Forward Plan, Corporate Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Investment Strategy and Transformation Plan
- c) consider the scrutiny matrices submitted by Councillors and Officers included at Appendix Three
- d) determine if any additional topics should be included in a scrutiny group work programme.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. To fulfil the requirements of the terms of reference for the Corporate Overview Group and ensure effective scrutiny of decisions.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. In March 2019, Council adopted a new structure for scrutiny comprising of one Corporate Overview Group and three additional Scrutiny Groups focused on Growth and Development, Communities, and Governance. The Corporate Overview Group is responsible for setting the work programmes for all scrutiny groups based on the Cabinet Forward Plan, Corporate Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Investment Strategy and Transformation Plan. Links to these documents can be found via the internet links at **Appendix One**.
- 4.2. **Appendix Two** shows the work programmes for all scrutiny groups as agreed in July 2020 by the Corporate Overview Group. The Group is asked to consider if the work programmes remain appropriate and achievable for the current year.
- 4.3. Any additional items identified from the Cabinet Forward Plan, Corporate Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Investment Strategy and Transformation Plan, highlighted by members of the Group, or raised by officers, should be assessed against the scrutiny matrix to inform the decision to include them on a scrutiny group work programme.
- 4.4. Councillors and Officers have identified a number of topics they believe to be suitable for scrutiny by the Council's Scrutiny Groups over the next twelve months. Each of these potential topics has been developed into a scrutiny matrix for discussion by members of the Corporate Overview Group. These are included at **Appendix Three**. The Group is invited to discuss these and make a judgement about whether they should be included in the work programme for a particular scrutiny group during the coming year.
- 4.5. It is important to note that the purpose of scrutiny is to:
 - scrutinise a topic in more depth than the Cabinet can in advance of a Cabinet decision with the purpose of informing the decision to be made by Cabinet
 - investigate topics of concern to residents resulting in recommendations to Cabinet with the purpose of improving Council services
 - monitor the progress of the Corporate Strategy to ensure the Council is meeting its stated priorities accepting that this may require more in-depth scrutiny of specific strategic projects at appropriate times
 - hold the Executive to account on behalf of the residents of the Borough to ensure sound decisions are made.

The Group is reminded that there will be cases in which scrutiny is not necessary or appropriate at this time. Officers will be clear in providing

reasons where they feel this is the case. Councillors are also asked to be mindful of the resources available for scrutiny in considering the advice of officers present in the meeting.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

5.1. There are no direct risks associated with this report.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

6.1.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6.2. Legal Implications

6.2.1. This report supports effective scrutiny. There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6.3. Equalities Implications

6.3.1. There are no direct equalities implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

6.4.1. There are no direct Section 17 implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

Quality of Life	Scrutiny of issues of concern to residents can lead to improvements in their perceived Quality of Life
Efficient Services	Scrutiny of issues of concern to residents can lead to more efficient services.
Sustainable Growth	Scrutiny of issues of concern to residents can lead to Sustainable Growth.
The Environment	Scrutiny of issues of concern to residents can lead to improvements in the Environment

8. Recommendations

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- c) consider the scrutiny matrices submitted by Councillors and Officers included at Appendix Three
- d) determine if any additional topics should be included in a scrutiny group work programme.

For more information contact:	Peter Linfield Executive Manager - Finance and Corporate Services Tel: 0115 9148439 plinfield@rushcliffe.gov.uk
Background papers available for Inspection:	
List of appendices:	Appendix One – Document Links Appendix Two – Work Programmes 2020-21 Appendix Three – Requests for Scrutiny

Links

Cabinet Forward Plan

<https://democracy.rushcliffe.gov.uk/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=151&RP=137>

Corporate Strategy

https://www.rushcliffe.gov.uk/media/1_rushcliffe/media/documents/pdf/publicationscheme/3whatourprioritiesareandhowwearedoing/Corporate%20Strategy%202019-23.pdf

Medium Term Financial Strategy, Investment Strategy, Transformation Plan

<https://democracy.rushcliffe.gov.uk/documents/s6326/budget%20and%20financial%20strategy%202020-21.pdf>

Appendix Two

Work Programme 2020-21 – Corporate Overview Group

	Items / Reports
22 September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standing Items<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Implementation of Change – Scrutiny○ Feedback from Scrutiny Group Chairmen○ Consideration of Scrutiny Group Work Programmes○ Financial and Performance Management○ Consideration of Future of Scrutiny – part one• Rolling Items<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Customer Feedback Annual Report
15 December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standing Items<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Implementation of Change – Scrutiny○ Feedback from Scrutiny Group Chairmen○ Consideration of Scrutiny Group Work Programmes○ Financial and Performance Management○ Consideration of Future of Scrutiny – part two• Rolling Items<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Diversity Annual Report
23 March 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Standing Items<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Implementation of Change – Scrutiny○ Feedback from Scrutiny Group Chairmen○ Consideration of Scrutiny Group Work Programmes○ Financial and Performance Management• Rolling Items<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ xx

Draft Work Programme 2020-21 – Governance Scrutiny Group

	Items / Reports
29 September 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit Progress Report – 5 month update 2020/21 • Constitution Follow-Up • Review of the Risk Management Strategy
24 November 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit Progress Report • Annual Audit Letter • Statement of Accounts 2019/20 • Treasury and Asset Investments – 6 monthly update
4 February 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit Progress Report • Internal Audit Strategy • External Audit Annual Plan • Treasury and Asset Investments Strategy– update • Risk Management
18 May 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal Audit Progress Report • Internal Audit annual Report • Annual Governance Statement

Work Programme 2020-21 – Growth and Development Scrutiny Group

	Items / Reports
14 October 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abbey Road Developer Presentation • Design and Build of the Crematorium • Planning Enforcement Policy – part two
20 January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of open spaces in new developments – part two • Town Centres Update – Cashless Society
21 April 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cycling Networks in the Borough

Work Programme 2020-21 – Communities Scrutiny Group

	Items / Reports
7 October 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flooding and Drainage • Review of the Nature Conservation Strategy (including rewilding)
28 January 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dog Fouling, Littering and Fly Tipping – part two • Rushcliffe Equality Strategy – part two • The Future of Edwalton Golf Courses
29 April 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon Management Plan

Rushcliffe Borough Council – Scrutiny Matrix

Councillor Request for Scrutiny	
Proposed topic of scrutiny ...	Planning: consultation with residents
I would like to understand ... (key lines of enquiry)	<p>The exact policy for consulting with residents on planning applications. <i>People feel that the system is stacked against residents and in favour of applicants. A more transparent system might help engender a more conciliatory and open minded approach from neighbours.</i></p> <p>I am interested in why the council only puts signs up at the first submission of a planning application, even when the application may come back many times over several years. <i>New people may have moved in to the area and be unaware of the situation, and residents' world views may have changed.</i></p> <p>I am interested in exactly who letters are sent to. It seems they are only sent to a very few neighbouring houses, and they are addressed 'to the resident' whereas clearly the council knows the name of the person paying the council tax. <i>Addressing the letter by name would increase the chance of it being read by the right person at the right time. I am frequently told of people neighbouring properties who do not get a letter.</i></p> <p>I am interested in the dates that letters are sent out relative to the date that the consultation period closes. <i>The Letters often arrive 10 days or so after the apparent postal date and very soon before the closing date for comments which makes a lot of residents very stressed.</i></p> <p>I am interested in why the council absolutely refuses to send out printed plans, even at a time when all public means of accessing computers and printers were not available (eg libraries and council buildings during lockdown.). <i>Many residents are not computer literate and have no</i></p>

	<p><i>family to support them. The current procedure is counter to Council policies on inclusion as some residents have been completely unable to access plans. Most residents of West Bridgford are completely able to read plans and it is insulting to suggest that they do not need to see them.</i></p> <p>The procedure for visiting a site needs to be made clear to residents. They often think that the planning officers do not visit but I know that they do as they often present photos at the Planning meetings. I understand why officers may feel unable to meet neighbours but I do think it would help residents to feel heard if officers did call or leave a visiting slip at the houses of people who have objected when they visit a site. <i>This will make people feel like they have a voice in the process; it will also allow them to make sure that their points are clear to the planning officer.</i></p> <p>I understand that the government asked that applications related to major developments did not proceed during lockdown. I would like to know what the council defines as a major development. <i>Major developments require residents to meet together to discuss plans. This was not possible during lockdown. I would have thought any multiple dwelling applications should be considered a major development.</i></p> <p>I would like to see a clear explanation of legal reasons that planning applications can be opposed put on the council website so that residents can understand why and how to respond.</p> <p>If planning is a quasi-judicial process, then it should be recognised that many of the current practices of RBC feel very unjust to many residents. Often they just want to feel that they have a real voice in the process.</p>	
<p>I think this topic should be scrutinised because ... (please tick)</p>		Poor Performance Identified
	✓	Change in Legislation or Local Policy
		Resident Concern or Interest
		Cabinet Recommendation
		Links to the Corporate Strategy

		Other (please state reason)
Officer Consideration of Councillor Request for Scrutiny		
Officer Feedback (please tick)	✓	Officer Comment
- Issue already being addressed	x	
- Issue has already been considered in the last 2 years?	x	
- Issue is a legal matter	x	
- Issue of a complaint investigation	x	
- Issue is a staffing matter	x	
- There is an alternative way of dealing with the issue	x	
Is there sufficient capacity ...		
- Scrutiny Work Programme?	x	
- Officer Resources?	x	
Recommendation	Topic is not considered appropriate at this time for scrutiny. Methods of consultation for planning applications are under review as part of the national review of planning. Consultation is a statutory service and the Council sets its operational service in advance of the national requirements.	
Lead Officer	x	
Proposed Timescale for Scrutiny and Scrutiny Group	x	

Rushcliffe Borough Council – Scrutiny Matrix

Councillor Request for Scrutiny		
Proposed topic of scrutiny ...	The provision of cycle paths in the Borough	
I would like to understand ... (key lines of enquiry)	<p>The recent traffic chaos generated from the closing of Clifton Bridge highlights the need of the Borough to embrace and encourage alternative forms of transport into Nottingham. Half of Rushcliffe residents work in Nottingham and one of the best ways to travel into the city for the people of Rushcliffe is on their bikes.</p> <p>Through the scrutiny process we can look in detail at:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The building of cycle paths as a condition of all new housing estates, 2. The connection of cycle paths in new developments to the existing cycling infrastructure, 3. A commitment to work more closely with Nottinghamshire County Council and Nottingham City to have a more holistic approach to our cycling infrastructure, 4. Revisit and see what can be learned from Rushcliffe’s Cycling Strategy from 1995 and consider how we can readapt this or write a new one 5. An audit of the existing provision and a consider what paths require an upgrade and how we can make better use of what we already have in place, e.g. the incorporation of the subway under the A52 so the young people of Ruddington can cycle to Rushcliffe School safely and also making all of our paths open to cyclists. <p>I would invite scrutiny to extend an invitation to the public and interested parties - Pedals, school children, Head Teachers, environmental groups and Public Health as they will have views that will impact our decisions.</p>	
I think this topic should be scrutinised because ...	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor Performance Identified
	<input type="checkbox"/>	Change in Legislation or Local Policy
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Resident Concern or Interest

(please tick)		Cabinet Recommendation
	✓	Links to the Corporate Strategy
		Other (please state reason) Council motion debated July 2020 - "This Council supports alternative forms of transport in and around Rushcliffe, in particular cycling, and will strive to work with Nottinghamshire County Council, as Highway Authority, to identify improvements that could be made to the cycling network in Rushcliffe."

Officer Consideration of Councillor Request for Scrutiny

Officer Feedback (please tick)	✓	Officer Comment
- Issue already being addressed	✗	
- Issue has already been considered in the last 2 years?	✗	
- Issue is a legal matter	✗	
- Issue of a complaint investigation	✗	
- Issue is a staffing matter	✗	
- There is an alternative way of dealing with the issue	✗	
Is there sufficient capacity ...		
- Scrutiny Work Programme?	✓	
- Officer Resources?	✓	
Recommendation	Topic is included for discussion in early 2021 – attendance by the most appropriate County Council officer is recommended	
Lead Officer	Andrew Pegram – Service Manager – Communities	
Proposed Timescale for Scrutiny and Scrutiny Group	Growth and Development Scrutiny Group – April 2021	

Rushcliffe Borough Council – Scrutiny Matrix

Officer Request for Scrutiny		
Proposed topic of scrutiny ...	Development of a new Crematorium	
I would like to understand ... (key lines of enquiry)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on the scheme progress • Key design elements and operating model • Next steps and timeline 	
I think this topic should be scrutinised because ... (please tick)		Poor Performance Identified
		Change in Legislation or Local Policy
		Resident Concern or Interest
	x	Cabinet Recommendation
	x	Links to the Corporate Strategy
	Other (please state reason)	
Officer Consideration of Councillor Request for Scrutiny		
Officer Feedback (please tick)	✓	Officer Comment
- Issue already being addressed	x	
- Issue has already been considered in the last 2 years?	x	
- Issue is a legal matter	x	
- Issue of a complaint investigation	x	
- Issue is a staffing matter	x	
- There is an alternative way of dealing with the issue	x	
Is there sufficient capacity ...		
- Scrutiny Work Programme?	✓	
- Officer Resources?	✓	

Recommendation	Proposed for October Growth Scrutiny
Lead Officer	Leanne Ashmore, Executive Manager Transformation
Proposed Timescale for Scrutiny and Scrutiny Group	Proposed for October Growth Scrutiny

Rushcliffe Borough Council – Scrutiny Matrix

Officer Request for Scrutiny	
Proposed topic of scrutiny ...	Draft Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Strategy 2021-2025
I would like to understand ... (key lines of enquiry)	<p>We would like to receive comments of the future challenges and future opportunities that the refreshed strategy presents.</p> <p>Members will be asked to provide feedback on the emerging strategies aims and objectives, its key target indicators and its focal area.</p> <p>The scrutiny also presents an opportunity to address the below motion regarding wildflower meadows and our current approach to their creation.</p> <p>The motion is as follows:</p> <p>“We have all probably seen photographs of the flowery, bee friendly waysides that have been planted in Rotherham and have no doubt we have all been asked by residents to achieve the same for our own wards. Rushcliffe Borough Council resolves:</p> <p>To ask Scrutiny to review the feasibility of sowing native wild flower seeds along the grassed areas that it manages and put forwards recommendations to the Cabinet.”</p>
I think this topic should be scrutinised because ... (please tick)	<input type="checkbox"/> Poor Performance Identified
	<input type="checkbox"/> Change in Legislation or Local Policy
	<input type="checkbox"/> Resident Concern or Interest
	<input type="checkbox"/> Cabinet Recommendation
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Links to the Corporate Strategy
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (please state reason) Climate Change - The Nature conservation strategy will play a key role moving forward in helping the authority to achieve its net zero emissions target from it own operations which forms part of the Council’s

		Corporate Strategy
Officer Consideration of Councillor Request for Scrutiny		
Officer Feedback (please tick)	✓	Officer Comment
- Issue already being addressed	✓	The updated strategy is being drafted in consultation with the Rushcliffe Nature Conservation Biodiversity implementation group and the scrutiny will provide an opportunity to comment and make recommendation on the draft strategy prior to adoption
- Issue has already been considered in the last 2 years?	x	
- Issue is a legal matter	x	
- Issue of a complaint investigation	x	
- Issue is a staffing matter	x	
- There is an alternative way of dealing with the issue	x	
Is there sufficient capacity ...		
- Scrutiny Work Programme?	✓	
- Officer Resources?	✓	
Recommendation		Proposed for October Communities Scrutiny
Lead Officer		Derek Hayden, Community Development Manager supported by Paul Phillips, Environmental Sustainability Officer
Proposed Timescale for Scrutiny and Scrutiny Group		Proposed for October Communities Scrutiny