

Overview and Scrutiny Committee



Forest Heath
District Council

Title of Report:	Work Programme Update and Suggestion for Scrutiny	
Report No:	OAS/FH/16/002	
Report to and date:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	14 January 2016
Chairman of the Committee:	Simon Cole Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Tel: 07974 443762 Email: simon.cole@forest-heath.gov.uk	
Lead Officer:	Christine Brain Scrutiny Officer Tel: 01638 719729 Email: christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk	
Purpose of report:	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1) To update the Committee on the current status of its rolling work programme for 2016 (Appendix 1); and2) To consider a work programme suggestion submitted on "The Lack of Integrated Transport" (Appendix 2).	

Recommendation:	<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee:</p> <p>1) That, Members note the current status of the work programme and the annual items expected during 2016.</p> <p>2) To consider one suggestion for the work programme set out at Appendix 2, and, if accepted, includes the issue into its forward work programme with a timescale to be recommended by Members for officers to prepare in the first instances a summary of the current services, the operating companies, consultation process and identify gaps in services.</p>
<p>Key Decision: <i>(Check the appropriate box and delete all those that do not apply.)</i></p>	<p><i>Is this a Key Decision and, if so, under which definition?</i></p> <p>Yes, it is a Key Decision - <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>No, it is not a Key Decision - <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>
<p>Documents attached:</p>	<p>Appendix 1 - Current Work Programme and Task and Finish Groups</p> <p>Appendix 2 Work programme suggestion – Local Regional Transport</p>

1. Key issues and reasons for recommendations

1.1 Rolling Work Programme

1.1.1 The Committee has a rolling work programme, whereby suggestions for scrutiny reviews are brought to each meeting, and if accepted, are timetabled to report to a future meeting. The work programme also leaves space for Call-ins and Councillor Calls for Action. The current position of the work programme for the next few months is attached at **Appendix 1**.

1.2 Member Work Programme Suggestion

1.2.1 The following suggestion (Appendix 2), has been submitted for addition to the work programme as follows:

- To investigate the integration of local public transport serving Forest Heath residents.

1.2.2 Members are asked to:

- a) Consider whether this issue would be appropriate for scrutiny, including potential outcomes; and
- b) Decide on an appropriate timescale for requesting in the first instance, a future report by officers, if added to the Work Programme summarising current services, the operating companies, consultation process and identify gaps in services, prior to the Committee taking verbal evidence from public transport companies.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Rolling Work Programme Forest Heath District Council

The Committee has a rolling work programme, whereby suggestions for scrutiny reviews submitted by Members completing a Work Programme Suggestion Form are brought to each meeting, and if accepted, are timetabled to report to a future meeting. The work programme also leaves space for Call-ins and Councillor Calls for Action.

Description	Lead Officer	Details
10 March 2016		
Portfolio Holder Presentation	Resources and Performance	The Portfolio Holder has been invited to give a short presentation / account of their portfolio and answer questions from the Committee.
New Housing Development Sites Joint Task and Finish Group	Service Manager (Planning-Development)	Final Report - To jointly review with St Edmundsbury Borough Council the unacceptable length of time taken by housing developers to bring highways, footpaths, landscaping and open space up to adoption standards on new developments.
West Suffolk Community Safety Partnership	Community Safety Officer	To review the work of the Partnership on an Annual basis.
Cabinet Decision Plan	Scrutiny Officer	To peruse the latest Decision Plan for items on which it would like further information or feels might benefit from the Committee's involvement.
Work Programme	Scrutiny Officer	To receive suggestions for scrutiny reviews, appoint Task and Finish Groups for these reviews and indicate review timescales.
21 April 2016		
Portfolio Holder Presentation	Families and Communities	The Portfolio Holder has been invited to give a short presentation / account of their portfolio and answer questions from the Committee.
Newmarket Vision Update	Families and Communities	The Portfolio Holder for Families and Communities to update the Committee on progress since 10 September 2015.
Annual Locality Budget Scheme Update	Service Manager (Families and Communities)	Annual update on the locality budget scheme.
Directed Surveillance (Quarter 4)	Monitoring Officer	To scrutinise the authority's use of its surveillance powers on a quarterly basis.

Description	Lead Officer	Details
21 April 2016		
Cabinet Decision Plan	Scrutiny Officer	To peruse the latest Decision Plan for items on which it would like further information or feels might benefit from the Committee's involvement.
Work Programme	Scrutiny Officer	To receive suggestions for scrutiny reviews, appoint Task and Finish Groups for these reviews and indicate review timescales.

Futures items to be programmed at a later date

1. Tree Preservation Orders
2. Workspace/Incubation Space in Newmarket (Update from 18 December 2014)
3. Decisions Plan: West Suffolk Operational Hub
4. Decisions Plan: Single Issue Review

Current position of Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Groups

	Title	Purpose	Start date	Members appointed	Estimated End date
1.	New Housing Development Sites (Joint Scrutiny Review)	To jointly review with St Edmundsbury Borough Council the unacceptable length of time taken by housing developers to bring highways, footpaths, landscaping and open space up to adoption standards on new developments.	August 2013	<u>St Edmundsbury</u> Diane Hind Angela Rushen Jim Thorndyke	10 March 2016
			Progress updates	<u>Forest Heath</u> David Bimson Ruth Bowman Bill Sadler	
			23 January 2014		



Forest Heath & St Edmundsbury councils

West Suffolk
working together



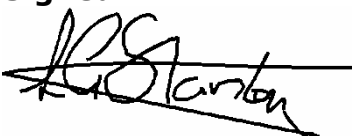
**Suggestion for Scrutiny Work Programme Form
(To be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee)**

Suggestion from:
Cllr. Lance Stanbury
What would you like to suggest for investigation / review?
<p>To investigate the integration of local public transport serving Forest Heath residents.</p> <p>I recommend that a hearing be convened by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Forest Heath District Council into the integrated public transportation serving our communities, to enable the council to form a view on their efficiency, their integration, their promotion and to what extent they contribute to the economic development of the district.</p> <p>It is clear, from examining bus and train timetables, from discussion with Abellio Greater Anglia, and the failure of the DfT Rail Executive to include this council's concerns expressed in its consultation on the franchising process, that there is a lack of integration or consideration of the needs of the local community.</p> <p>Such a hearing should therefore invite, and take evidence from, rail and bus operators and the county council transport department, to allow the committee to make recommendation to Cabinet on how it might influence the improvement in the integration of local public transport.</p>
What are the main issues / concerns to be considered?
<p>There is a lack of public transport integration because;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local communities are poorly served by public transport • There appears to be a lack of user data available to support scheduling • The companies do not appear to be communicating well with each other, • Bus and train timetables are not synchronised well, • Train and bus services are infrequent and sporadic, and fail to support commuters • Economic development is hindered by poor commuter services • Franchise agreements appear not to take account of local consultation.
Would this review benefit from a "West Suffolk" approach (i.e. joint scrutiny by both Councils), or is it relevant only to your council?
<p>This issue is relevant to all areas, as there are many railway stations and copious bus services in West Suffolk, however a wider scrutiny process could easily become huge, infinite and unwieldy. I would therefore recommend limiting this enquiry to this district first to enable a short examination and quick recommendations and to highlight points for wider consideration.</p>

Who is responsible for providing this service, or tackling the issue in question?
<p>See Bus and train operators listed under 'witnesses' below.</p> <p>The Rail Executive oversees the rail franchising schedule.</p>
Have you spoken to them, and if so, what was the response?
<p>I have discussed services with Abellio Greater Anglia and my report is attached (Appendix 2A)</p>
What is the Portfolio Holders view on this issue?
<p>The portfolio holder for economic development appreciates the current issues with local transport and has written jointly to the rail franchising department.</p>
What would be the likely benefits and outcomes of carrying out this investigation / review?
<p>The O&S committee can make recommendation to Cabinet on how to encourage bus and train companies to work more closely together to improve their services to our constituents.</p>
Estimated Committee and officer resource implications (eg research group, one-off report, dedicated meeting etc)
<p>The first requirement is for officers to prepare a summary of the current services, the operating companies, consultation process and identify gaps in services.</p> <p>The next requirement is on the committee is to take verbal evidence from the public transport companies. This may require two or three sessions. For those companies unwilling to appear officers should try to obtain written answers to the committee's questions.</p> <p>Officers to produce a summary with suggested recommendations for the committee's final deliberations and recommendations to Cabinet.</p>
Suggested witnesses, documentation and consultation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abellio Greater Anglia • Mulleys • Stephenson of Essex • Suffolk Norse • Coach Services • Stage Coach • Chambers • A representative of the DfT or the Rail Executive • Transportation website hosts • Local transportation user groups • FHDC Portfolio holder for Economic Development • FHDC Director of Planning

Will this investigation / review contribute to one or more of the Council's Strategic Priorities? If so, which (please tick)	
Increased opportunities for economic growth	Yes
Resilient families and communities that are healthy and active	Yes
Homes for our communities	
Will this investigation / review contribute to the achievement of one or more of the commitments within the Council's Strategic Plan 2014-2016? If so, which (please tick)	
Increased opportunities for economic growth:	
1. Benefit growth that enhances prosperity and quality of life.	Yes
2. Existing businesses that are thriving and new businesses brought to the area.	Yes
3. People with the educational attainment and skills needed in our local economy.	Yes
4. Vibrant, attractive and clean high streets, village centres and markets.	
Resilient families and communities that are healthy and active:	
1. A thriving voluntary sector and active communities who take the initiative to help the most vulnerable.	Yes
2. People playing a greater role in determining the future of their communities.	Yes
3. Improved wellbeing, physical and mental health.	Yes
4. Accessible countryside and green spaces.	Yes
Homes for our communities:	
1. Sufficient housing for current and future generations, including more affordable homes; improvements to existing housing.	Yes
2. New developments that are fit for the future, properly supported by infrastructure, and that build communities, not just housing.	Yes
3. Homes that are flexible for people's changing needs.	Yes
Will this investigation hit one of the essential elements of a scrutiny review when analysing potential scrutiny reviews? If so, which (please tick)	
Public Interest: The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen by overview and scrutiny.	Yes
Impact (Value): Priority should be given to issues that make the biggest difference to the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of the area, and which have the potential to make recommendations which could lead to real improvements. The outcome must also be proportionate to the cost of carrying out the review in terms of staff and councillor time.	Yes
Relevance: Overview and scrutiny must be satisfied that an issue identified for review is relevant and does not duplicate existing work being undertaken elsewhere by various Working Groups, Cabinet, partners etc.	Yes

Partnership working or external scrutiny: The focus of scrutiny is moving towards joint action and community leadership, so anything which offers this opportunity should be given serious consideration.	Yes
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Would you like to be involved in the investigation / review?	
Yes	No
Date of request: 02/01/16	Signed 

Please return this form to the:

Scrutiny Officer, Forest Heath District Council, College Heath Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7EY

Email: Christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk

Updated: July 2013

Updated: June 2014 (Revised West Suffolk Strategic Priorities)

Updated: March 2015 (Amended as a Joint Form)