

	Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 3 June 2008	Agenda Item No.
Title	Review of the workplan	
For further information about this report please contact	Theresa Goss, Committee Services Officer, 01926 456114 or committee@warwickdc.gov.uk Victoria Cook, Organisational Development and Performance Improvement Officer. 01926 456559 victoria.cook@warwickdc.gov.uk	
Service Area	Members' Services & Organisational Development and Performance	
Wards of the District directly affected	N/A	
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006	No	
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	N/A	
Background Papers	Workplans attached as appendix 1 & appendix 2	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No

Officer/Councillor Approval		
With regard to officer approval all reports <i>must</i> be approved by the report authors relevant director, Finance, Legal Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).		
Officer Approval	Date	Name
Relevant Director	20.05.08	John Dubber
Chief Executive	20.05.08	Chris Elliott
CMT	N/A	
Section 151 Officer	20.05.08	Mary Hawkins
Legal	20.05.08	Simon Best
Finance	20.05.08	Marcus Miskinis
Portfolio Holders	21.05.08	Councillors Mrs Bunker, Caborn, Mrs Grainger, Hammon, Kinson and White

Consultation Undertaken	
Consultation with the previous Policy Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Chairs.	
Final Decision?	Yes
Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)	

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report informs the Committee of their terms of reference, sets out ways of working, and asks them to discuss the outstanding items from the workplans of the former Culture and Social Policy Committee and Environment and Economic Policy Committee.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 The Committee considers which items from the workplans of the former Culture and Social Policy Committee, attached at appendix 1, and the former Environment and Economic Policy Committee, attached at appendix 2, it would like to initially keep in their new workplan;
- 2.2 Where the Committee would like to keep items in their workplan, a group of four eligible Councillors, or individual eligible Councillors, be nominated to create scoping document for each of these items and these be submitted to future meetings of the Committee;
- 2.3 If any other items, in addition to those above, are added to the Committees' work plan, at this or future meetings, one member be nominated to create a scoping document for that item and submit it to the next meeting of the Committee for consideration, and a decision as to whether or not a Task and Finish Group be appointed; and
- 2.4 Any further comments from this Committee and the Audit and Resources Scrutiny Committee be incorporated into the new process, and the process be finalised in consultation with the Chair's of both Committees, and a training session be arranged for all members.

3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The reports which are indicated in the workplans from the former Culture and Social Policy Committee and Environment and Economic Policy Committee and due to be submitted in June 2008, have not been prepared and submitted to this committee. It was considered that with the establishment of a new Overview and Scrutiny Committee, it was an appropriate time to review the process for adding items to the workplan, and how the outstanding items should be dealt with.
- 3.2 A meeting was held on 7 May 2008, with officers and the Policy Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Chairs, and they were very much in favour of reviewing the scrutiny process and for the new Overview and Scrutiny Committee to re-look at the items which are outstanding from the old Overview and Scrutiny and Policy Committees.

4. **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 The alternative is to incorporate outstanding items in the existing workplans and put them straight into the new workplan for the Committee, and carry on operating as the previous Committees had been doing.

5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

5.1 All work for the Committee has to be carried out within existing resources.

6. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

6.1 The work carried out by the Committee helps the Council to improve in line with its priority to manage services openly efficiently and effectively.

7. **BACKGROUND**

7.1 The workplans for the Culture and Social Policy Committee and the Environment and Economic Policy Committee were considered at their last meetings on 19 March 2008. The attached workplans at appendix 1 & appendix 2 incorporates the suggestions made at that last meeting. The only item outstanding from Executive Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the Flooding Scrutiny Group which is on-going and an item on this agenda.

7.2 It is suggested that consideration of existing items in the workplans should follow these principles:

- A) Where the Committee have an interest in the items listed from the previous Policy Committees, four eligible Councillors be appointed **or** individual eligible Councillors be appointed, to complete scoping documents, a template is attached at appendix 3, for each of these items to justify why they should be scrutinised and these be submitted to future meetings;
- B) When the scoping documents come back to the Committee, it then decides which items they wish to consider. If there are a number of items, then the Committee would have to prioritise the issues, setting the dates when they will be considered and whether they need Task and Finish Groups appointing;
- C) Once the Task and Finish Group has completed the scrutiny of the item, within the remit of the scoping document, the item is then signed off by the Committee. If the Committee wishes, a progress report could be submitted, but no sooner than 6 months after the end of the scrutiny. If after 6 months, or whenever the progress report is submitted, the Committee is not happy with the area of work, or want further information, then the Task and Finish Group would be reappointed to put together another scoping document to establish exactly what the Committee are requiring and how the scrutiny of the issue will progress further; and
- D) If the Committee deems the scrutiny not to be too in-depth, then an officer could be asked to report straight to it without appointing a Task and Finish Group. If the item then needs a further report, a Task and Finish Group should then be appointed to look at the issues at the new issues which have arisen.

7.3 A diagrammatic form of the process for existing items is shown in appendix 4.

- 7.4 It is suggested that consideration of new items added to the workplan should follow these principles:
- A) If an item is put forward as an area for scrutiny at the Overview and Scrutiny meeting, the member who made the suggestion completes a scoping document for submission to the next meeting **or** if it arises during general discussion, a member is asked to volunteer to complete the scoping document;
 - B) At the next meeting, the scoping document is submitted to the Committee for consideration which sets out the justification for why a scrutiny should be undertaken;
 - C) If the Committee agrees, then they appoint a Task and Finish Group to look at the issue – probably consisting of 4 eligible members – stating when they want a report back;
 - D) Once the Task and Finish Group has completed the scrutiny of the item, within the remit of the scoping document, the item is then signed off by the Committee. If the Committee wishes, a progress report could be submitted, but no sooner than 6 months after the end of the scrutiny. If after 6 months, or whenever the progress report is submitted, the Committee is not happy with the area of work, or want further information, then the Task and Finish Group would be reappointed to put together another scoping document to establish exactly what the Committee are requiring and how the scrutiny of the issue will progress further; and
 - E) If the Committee deems the scrutiny not to be too in-depth, then an officer could be asked to report straight to it without appointing a Task and Finish Group. If the item then needs a further report, a Task and Finish Group should then be appointed to look at the issues at the new issues which have arisen.
- 7.5 A diagrammatic form of the process for new items is shown in appendix 5.
- 7.6 A similar report is being submitted to the Audit and Resource Scrutiny Committee for their comments on the new process.
- 7.7 For information, the Committees' terms of reference are attached at appendix 6 and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Portfolio Holders Structure is attached at appendix 7.
- 7.8 In addition to the above, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will also still be considering the Executive agenda. So that the Committee only consider those items which members have a significant interest in, on the publication day of the agendas, all members will be advised by e-mail, that they have until 9.00 am on the morning of the meeting to advise Committees Services of any reports that they wish to consider. The Committee should only consider reports which fall within their remit and every effort will be made for the appropriate report authors to attend. Members will be interested to know that the report preparation timetables have been amended and papers should generally be dispatched on the Monday in the week prior to the Committee taking place on the following Tuesday. The Executive now meets on the day after this Committee. Consequently if members have

detailed complex questions on Executive reports they are asked to contact the report author at their earliest opportunity to ensure issues can be resolved at the meeting if possible.