



**CAMBRIDGESHIRE
& PETERBOROUGH**
COMBINED AUTHORITY

Agenda Item No: 11

Report title: Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

To: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Date: 28th March 2022

Public report: Yes

From: Anne Gardiner
Scrutiny Officer

Recommendations: The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

a) discuss and agree items for the work programme and their prioritisation, and to comment as appropriate on what resources may be required.

b) Consider the scoping report received from the Lead Member for Skills for addition to the work programme

1. Purpose

1.1 To request the committee to discuss and make suggestions on the suggested work programme at Appendix 1 and review any scoping reviews that have been received by the Scrutiny Officer. (Attached Appendix 2)

2. Background

2.1 In accordance with the Constitution, the Overview & Scrutiny Committee is responsible for setting its own work programme.

2.2 In considering items for their work programme the Committee are requested to take into account the guidance published by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS)

'Overview and scrutiny in combined authorities: a plain English guide' (Second Edition) which states:

“That where the Committee takes a rigorous approach to prioritising its work, and only placing items on the work programme where they will clearly add value, and where they relate to scrutiny’s role, the work programme will reflect that exercise.”

2.3 That guidance continues with a section on approaches to shortlisting topics which states when shortlisting topics these “should reflect scrutiny’s overall role in the authority. This will require the development of bespoke, local solutions, however when considering whether an item should be included in the work programme”. The kind of questions a scrutiny committee should consider, therefore, might include:

- Do we understand the benefits scrutiny would bring to this issue?
- How could we best carry out work on this subject?
- What would be the best outcome of this work?
- How would this work engage with the activity of the executive and other decision-makers, including partners?

2.4 Given the guidance in paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6 it is clear that the Committee should plan and manage their activities more effectively in order to ensure that there is ongoing development of the overview and scrutiny function. A key tenet of making improvements is to focus upon topic selection and produce more robust work programmes to underpin improved ways of working taking a realistic account of the resources available. Ultimately, Overview and Scrutiny Members will want to be in the position of exerting a proactive and positive influence upon what the Combined Authority does in practice.

2.5 While an agreed work programme will assist in managing committee activity, it should be recognised that unforeseen matters will arise from time to time that will affect Members’ ability to achieve the goals within an overall work programme.

2.6 We have received a draft scoping document for the Review of the Community Learning Programme from the Lead Member for Skills (attached at Appendix 2) for review and consideration on whether to add this item to the work programme.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 No financial implications

4. Legal Implications

4.1 No legal implications.

5. Appendices

5.1 Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Draft Work Programme

5.2 Appendix 2 – Community Learning – Scoping Document