

# Annual Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda

**Tuesday, 26 July 2016 at 6.00 pm**

Council Chamber, Upper Ground Floor, Aquila House, Breeds Place, Hastings,  
East Sussex, TN34 3UY

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# Agenda Item 3

**Report to: Annual Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Date of Meeting: 26<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

**Report Title: Update on 2015-16 Work Programme and Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2016-17 Municipal Year**

**Report By: Jane Hartnell Director of Corporate Services and Governance**

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## **Purpose of Report**

1. To update Members on the status of reviews from the 2015/16 work programme for Overview and Scrutiny (O & S)
2. To set out the Chair and Vice Chair's proposed key lines of inquiry for the 2016/17 Scrutiny work programme.

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## **Recommendation(s)**

That the Annual Meeting reach agreement on the key lines of inquiry proposed for the Overview and Scrutiny work programme for the 2016/17 Municipal Year.

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## **Reasons for Recommendations**

It is the responsibility of Members serving on Overview and Scrutiny to set their own work programme for each municipal year at the Annual Meeting, whilst taking into account the advice of officers present.

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## Introduction

1. Scrutiny Steering Group met on the 12th of May and part of their agenda considered future ideas for the 2016/17 work programme.
2. Chair and Vice Chairs met on the 25<sup>th</sup> of May following Annual Council and the confirmation of members on the new single Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
3. Discussions were informed by previous debate at the Scrutiny Steering Group (SSG) and previous work programme suggestions.
4. The Chairs and Vice Chairs are recommending that:
  - (i) The Annual Meeting receive an update of progress against the reviews (see appendix C) and work programme undertaken in 2015/16.
  - (ii) The Annual Meeting approve the key lines of inquiry set out for the 2016/17 work programme and flag any further ideas, omissions or revisions.

## Update on 2015/16 work programme

5. The 2015/16 Programme outlined at appendix C has been completed to time, cost and specification.
6. Lessons learned and a number of the key themes considered as part of this programme inform the following proposals for the 2016/17 programme.

## Prospective 2016/17 Scrutiny work programme

### Overview

7. The proposed work programme for 2016/17 acknowledges a significant change in scrutiny arrangements following a move from two to one committee.
8. The Chair and Vice Chair are keen to build on the associated momentum resulting in this move (see [scrutiny report](#)) to further enhance the practice of undertaking scrutiny in a more streamlined context.
9. In particular, there is a desire to carefully balance Scrutiny being kept up to speed through performance updates at quarterly meetings, scrutiny reviews and task and finish group work and better understanding how the Council arrives at the decisions it takes before they are taken.
10. Specifically: how is the council prioritising between competing resources; how does the council reconcile between what it has to do and chooses to do; how far are such difficult decisions driven by legislation, policy, customer insight, technology, and political mandate or otherwise? What checks, balances and contingency arrangements are put into place pre and post decision making and are these standardised across the council?
11. Underpinning these questions is how the council prioritises and the Chair and Vice Chair are keen to use the 2016/17 work programme to better understand how this

is undertaken, in addition to updates and being kept up to speed after decisions have been taken.

12. In line with the Council's transformation intentions and previous scrutiny work, the Chair and Vice Chair are also keen that scrutiny holds up a mirror to internal process and workings, mindful of the following context and through the key lines of inquiry set out below.

### **Context**

13. Recent scrutiny review work has focused on how budget reductions have, and continue to impact on the ability for the Council and partners to deliver services (see [community safety review](#) ) and how moving services online enable those that can, scope to self-serve (see also [digital inclusion review](#)).
14. This work has been underpinned by the familiar narrative of working in unprecedented challenging financial circumstances, having to make tough choices and realising (technology driven) efficiencies, and this narrative continues to set the tone for HBC and subsequent internal Scrutiny work.
15. The Chair and Vice Chair are also keen to flag up other contextual 'elephants in the room' e.g. the Devolution agenda and what this may mean for us as a district council (including implications of the EU referendum decision).
16. The Chair and Vice Chair acknowledge that HBC's income generation aspirations (if successful) should enable the Council to have stronger autonomy in regard to the future viability and shape of HBC.
17. The Chair and Vice Chair suggest the new scrutiny committee will have an interest in options appraisal for income generation initiatives, as the associated choices made will coincide with a wider interest in corporate prioritising, the future shape of the Council and, in turn, what the Council will perhaps no longer do or focus less on, given the strain on finances, staff capacity and resources.

### **Key Lines of Inquiry**

18. Appendix A set outs the areas of activity the Chair and Vice Chair are proposing Scrutiny cover on a quarterly basis.

### **Prioritising**

19. The Chair and Vice Chair are keen to arrange a Scrutiny meeting following shortly after the Annual Meeting with the Leader and Deputy Leader.
20. The purpose of which is to better understand what future is anticipated for HBC and how this is informing planning and preparation of (and prioritising in) a draft 2018/19 Corporate Plan and Budget where both of these will be set against an ever challenging financial backdrop and uncertain devolution agenda and preceding an existing ambitious Corporate Plan and income generation intentions.

### **Transformation**

21. It is proposed that the committee receive an update on the Council's transformation programme from the Transformation and Accommodation Manager at the quarter 1 meeting.

22. The Chair and Vice Chair are particularly interested in the extent of buy in into the programme from across the breadth of the organisation and major challenges and barriers the Transformation Manager has encountered and how they are or might be managed or overcome?
23. The Chair and Vice Chair are also interested in whether the physical change to working practices and the flexible arrangements brought about by a revamped Aquila House building have coincided with a change to how the organisation works in terms of planning and prioritising as considered in paragraph 10.

### **Base Budgeting?**

24. The Chair and Vice Chair are keen to understand lessons learned from reviewing the cleaning contract procurement process and how/whether lessons learned from a base budgeting approach will be extended to other service areas?
25. Directors views are sought on how to engage Scrutiny on this topic and whether this interest is best served through a review, task and finish piece of work or simple update, or a combination of these?

### **EU Funding**

26. Two key areas of focus are proposed for the quarter two meeting. Firstly an update on our EU Funding programme is requested.
27. The Chair and Vice Chair were keen to understand how the Council prioritises funding opportunities to progress, and how this coincides with broader prioritising, feeding into our workforce planning arrangements and income generation aspirations? Given our financial challenges how is the council deciding what officer posts are identified and potentially secured as match funding for EU Funding projects?
28. However, given the outcome of the recent referendum, Scrutiny Steering Group may wish to refine these lines of enquiry further. Members may also wish to receive this update earlier in their work programme than originally planned.

### **Cultural Regeneration**

29. Secondly there is a keen interest in our cultural regeneration aspirations given our investment in the 950th celebrations, particularly what legacy these celebrations will leave? Again, given our financial challenges, how much HBC input, capacity, funding can be expected beyond 2016/17 given our statutory commitments, transformation and income generation intentions?

### **Planning Service**

30. A key concern of the Chair and Vice Chair as well as the previous Scrutiny Steering Group is the desire to see improvements in the provision of the Council's Planning service.
31. Scrutiny members are keen to hear from the new Planning Services Manger on plans to improve the service and associated working practices.

32. The views of Directors on the specific timing for such an update is sought, however it is anticipated that this be forthcoming from quarter two onwards and may take the form of a special Scrutiny meeting.
33. The Chair and Vice Chair feel that from quarter two onwards, the new Planning Services Manager should have had sufficient time to bed down to arrive at suitable plans and recommendations for the future development and improvement of the Planning Service.

### **Waste and Street Cleansing**

34. The previous Scrutiny Steering Group and the Chair and Vice Chair have had a longstanding interest in the joint waste and street cleansing contract with particular regards to performance in Hastings and work practices.
35. Scrutiny is keen to keep a watch brief on performance arrangements through the quarterly meetings but would welcome advice from officers on perceived leverage to escalate concerns should performance not be meeting with expectations.
36. Scrutiny is also aware that significant work has been undertaken to integrate service delivery through the MyHastings platform. An update on the success of these integrations and lessons learned would be welcome.
37. Additionally this update is requested in terms of a briefing note in advance of the Quarter 1 meeting. Subject to content of this note the Chair and Vice Chair are keen to build in capacity to follow up in more depth should this be required.

### **Scrutiny Review**

38. Scrutiny has already committed (see [scrutiny report](#)) to reviewing how the move from two to one scrutiny committee is bedding down and this will take place from the end of quarter two with the review team to be determined.
39. Scrutiny will continue to be assisted by the use of Director reports that highlight key performance exceptions and areas of concern, to assist in terms of streamlining the focus of the quarterly meetings.
40. The Chair and Vice Chair are keen to use this review opportunity to review both performance monitoring arrangements – How far these are and the extent to which a more holistic approach brought about by one committee serves to give Scrutiny a better overview of key Council activities alongside the appropriate budget information?
41. And; to review the extent to which broader scrutiny work – Reviews, Task and Finish Groups etc. are planned and prepared so that there is an improved balance between receiving updates on service outputs and outcomes combined with a critical consideration of those processes, planning and prioritising that arrive at desired outputs and outcomes.

### **A greener town**

42. The Chair and Vice Chair are mindful that there has been a longstanding commitment in successive corporate plans to a 'greener town' as a key priority and are aware that greener/sustainable activity may assist our income generation ambitions.

43. Less clear is how this work is now being coordinated across the Council and what precisely our Council offer is in the context of this broad agenda in the short medium and long term?
44. The Chair and Vice Chair understand that there is likely to be further clarity around direction of travel for this work area following the report to Cabinet in July on income generation initiatives.
45. The Chair and Vice Chair are therefore requesting an update during quarter three, but may request the input of key officers on this sooner should the Cabinet report not give sufficient clarity in terms of the Council offer and direction of travel on progressing this particular area of interest.

### **Information Technology**

46. The Chair and Vice Chair are keen that Scrutiny receive a briefing on the potential implications of distributed ledger or [blockchain technology](#) on its potential to transform public sector activity but more specifically any associated implications for HBC.
47. This update is requested at the quarter 3 Scrutiny meeting, to form part of a broader report to Scrutiny on how IT is assisting the Council transform the way it does business.
48. It is requested that such a report also cover: An update on the recommendations from the previous Digital Inclusion Scrutiny review; a post implementation review of the Council's new website, an update on My Hastings progress and on any further developments with regards to aligning back office IT functions through an Enterprise Resource Planning system.
49. In terms of this particular request, the Chair and Vice Chair wish to exercise some flexibility in terms of reporting and welcome the views of associated managers to ensure these reports can best coincide with their project plans where appropriate and viable.

### **Outstanding Work**

50. Scrutiny have also committed to maintaining a watching brief with regards to the future provision of further education in the town, given the University of Brighton's intentions to scale back their presence and offer in the town.
51. Scrutiny are due to receive a further update from the Director of Operational Services in due course as proceedings develop.

### **Methods**

52. Subject to the Scrutiny Committee approving the key lines of inquiry set out, it is proposed that Scrutiny Steering Group review each and undertake a further scoping exercise.
53. The intention of doing so is to firm up key areas of interest, questions and desired outcomes and then determine a realistic timeframe for addressing these. These will have an impact on whether an update, task and finish group, review or otherwise is required.

54. It is recommended that where possible, specific Scrutiny work does not extend beyond the length of the annual programme.
55. It is also recommended that where possible and practical Scrutiny employ business process and planning tools to shape the focus of their enquiries, in line with those being rolled out as part of the Council's transformation programme.

## **Next Steps**

56. The proposed key lines of inquiry set out reflect the broad and wide ranging ambitions within the Council's corporate plan.
57. The Chair and Vice Chair have in conveying these themes and potential topics areas initially attempted through the associated questions raised to give potential direction of travel for critically scrutinising these work areas.
58. A guiding timeframe has also been set out across the quarters, indicating where it is currently felt this work could best fall.
59. The Chair and Vice Chair are keen to retain flexibility within these proposed arrangements and have deliberately not scheduled work for quarter 4 to retain capacity for planning, reviewing and completion of an ambitious schedule.
60. It is recommended that that the Scrutiny committee endorse the suggested key lines of inquiry and proposed methods making up the prospective 2016/17 work programme.

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## **Wards Affected**

Ashdown, Baird, Braybrooke, Castle, Central St. Leonards, Conquest, Gensing, Hollington, Maze Hill, Old Hastings, Ore, Silverhill, St. Helens, Tressell, West St. Leonards, Wishing Tree

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## **Policy Implications**

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Yes
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	Yes
Risk Management	Yes
Environmental Issues	Yes
Economic/Financial Implications	Yes
Human Rights Act	Yes
Organisational Consequences	Yes
Local People's Views	Yes
Anti-Poverty	Yes

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## **Additional Information**

**Appendix A – Quarterly list of work programme ideas**

**Appendix B – Chairs and Vice Chairs work programme ideas**

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## **Appendix C – Update on the 2015/16 work programme**

### **Officer to Contact**

Officer Name Mark Horan

Officer Email Address mhoran@hastings.gov.uk

Officer Telephone Number 01424 451485

Appendix A – Quarterly list of work programme ideas

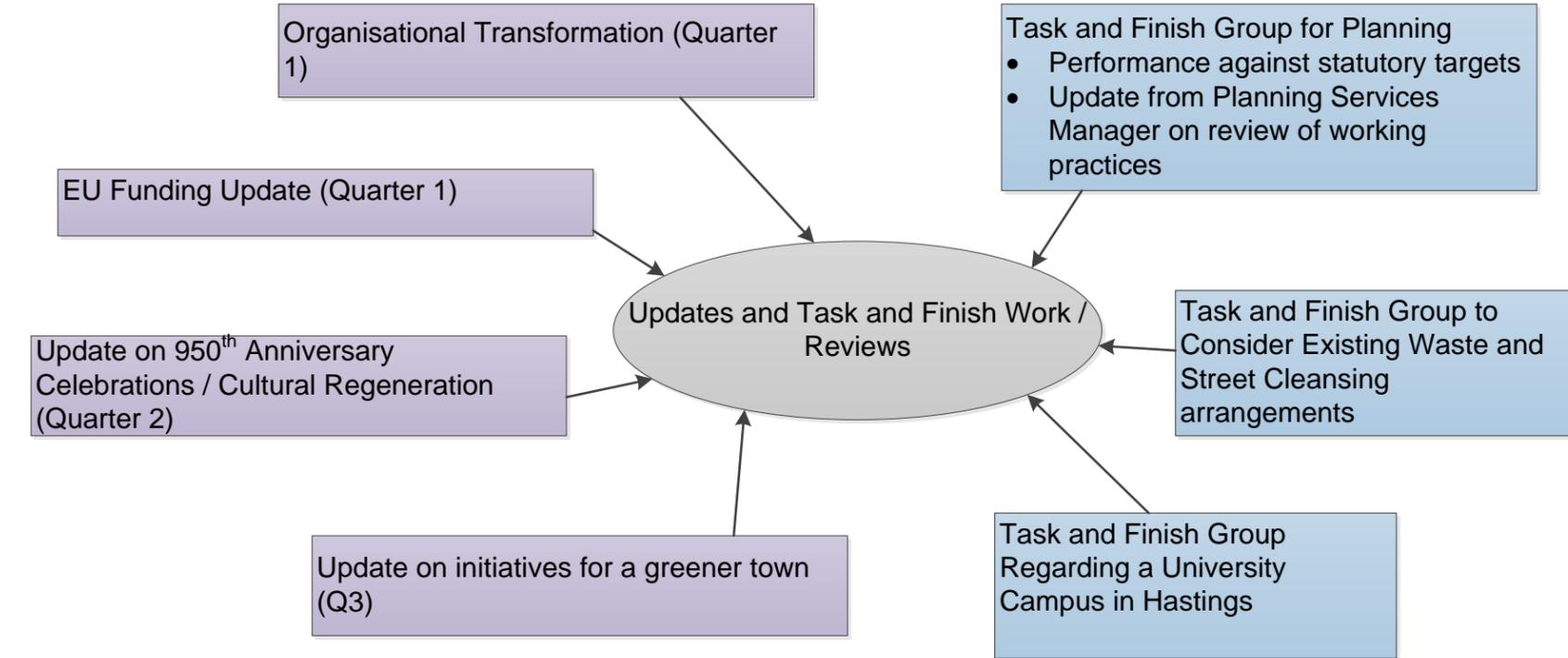
Phase

<p>Quarter 1</p>	<p>Meeting with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council – the future of the council and corporate prioritising</p>	<p>Update on the organisational transformation programme at Q1 committee meeting</p>	<p>Update to Q1 committee meeting on EU funding programme</p>	<p>Briefing on waste and street cleansing in advance of Q1 committee meeting</p>
<p>Quarter 2</p>	<p>Base Budgeting – learning from cleaning contract procurement process</p>	<p>Update to Q2 committee meeting on Cultural Regeneration</p>		
<p>Quarter 3</p>	<p>Update to Q3 committee meeting on the Planning Service – potential special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>Commence review of Scrutiny functions</p>	<p>Update on initiatives as part of a greener town and associated income generation opportunities</p>	<p>Update to Q3 committee meeting on application IT to assist transformation, including use of blockchain technologies</p>
<p>Quarter 4</p>	<p>Concluding the 2016/17 work programme</p>			



Appendix B – Chairs and Vice Chairs work programme ideas

Corporate Prioritising and Transformation				
Phase				
Processes	Customer Journey Mapping	Service Reviews	Evidence Base and Gathering Data	Policy Development
	Process Mapping	Business Case Development	Contingency Planning	Monitoring Recommendations from O&S Reviews
Opportunities and Risks	Devolution	Income Generation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Green energy, events at the Museum, camping facilities at the country park, online sale of merchandise</li> </ul>	To what extent can Blockchain technologies assist the council's transformation intentions	Case Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of the Cleaning Contract Procurement Process as an example of based budgeting and how learning from this might be applied in future by the council</li> <li>Understanding green energy and its potential as an income generation opportunity</li> </ul>
	Joint Working and Sharing Services			
	Reviewing the new structure of Overview and Scrutiny	Base Budgeting		
Outcomes	Prioritising the council's objectives	Developing the Corporate Plan and Budget		



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**Appendix C – Update on the 2015/16 work programme**

<b>Working Group</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Members</b>	<b>Progress</b>
Community Safety Scrutiny Review	Simon Hubbard, Director of Operational Services	Westley Clarke Scott Roberts Turner	Final report approved at Quarter 4 meeting.
Digital Inclusion Scrutiny Review	Jane Hartnell, Director of Corporate Services and Governance	Webb Roberts Edwards Howard Sinden	Final report approved at Quarter 4 meeting.
Task & Finish Group to review scrutiny functions process and potential streamlining	Mark Horan, Continuous Improvement and Democratic Services Manager	Webb Pragnell Edwards Howard	The new structure for Overview and Scrutiny took effect from May 2016. Overview and Scrutiny members are due to review the new arrangements as part of their 2016/17 work programme.
Task and Finish Group on Health to set the direction of travel for scrutiny work in this area	Mark Horan, Continuous Improvement and Democratic Services Manager	Beaver Charman Fitzgerald Turner	Following updates from the Clinical Commissioning Group and the council's representative on Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the task and finish group agreed to refine their proposals as part of planning for the overview and scrutiny work programme 2016/17.
Task and Finish Group	Simon Hubbard, Director	TBC	Initial meeting took place on 14

regarding the University Campus	of Operational Services		April 2016. A follow up meeting will be scheduled as part of the 2016/17 work programme.
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