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## Overview and Scrutiny 2017/18 Work Programme Setting

To: Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 28<sup>th</sup> March 2017

By: Corporate Scrutiny and Overview Officer

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Summary: At its meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> September 2016, the Committee agreed the setting of an annual work programme for Overview and Scrutiny.

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### 1. Background

- 1.1 One of the agreed outcomes of the 'Raising the Profile of Scrutiny' work undertaken in 2016 was the adoption of an annual work plan for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which can guide the committee's work for the coming year.

### 2. Work Programme Period

- 2.1 In order to coincide with the publication of the Committee's annual report, it is proposed that the work programme should be agreed at the **April** Committee meeting and commence from the **May** Committee meeting. The programme will take into account existing Committee functions (Budget Scrutiny and the Community Safety Partnership reporting) and any outstanding work as recorded on the the monthly Overview and Scrutiny tracker will be carried forward into the new work programme. The tracker will be amended to reflect the setting of the annual work programme.

### 3. Programme setting

- 3.1 In agreeing topics to form a programme of work for 2017/18, regard should be had to the first five questions on the agreed topic selection flowchart (as listed below). This flowchart approach was endorsed by the Committee as its agreed approach to work planning at the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2016 meeting.
- 3.2 Topics which cannot provide satisfactory answers to the below questions should not be considered suitable for entry in the work programme.
  1. Does the topic represent a key issue for local people and is it likely to result in improvements for local people?
  2. Is the issue strategic and significant?
  3. Does the topic fall within a corporate priority area (*Enterprising Ashford; Living Ashford; Active and Creative Ashford; Attractive Ashford; Ashford's Underpinning Principles*), or is it of significant community interest?
  4. Is scrutiny of this topic likely to lead to effective outcomes?
- 3.3 The Committee's work should be set within the context of making improvements for residents of the Borough on key strategic and significant issues. Where a topic cannot provide a reasoned 'yes' answer to the above

questions, it should not be included within the Committee's work programme. Officers can provide guidance if members have questions over any aspect of the selection flowchart. If a topic provides a 'yes' answer to the first four questions on the flowchart, a 'no' response to question 5 is required in order to be considered suitable for scrutiny involvement.

5. Will scrutiny involvement be duplicating some other work?

- 3.4 The Committee should not commit to undertaking reviews where they would be duplicating work already underway elsewhere. However, as is already the case, if the Committee has concerns over ongoing work in the Council, it may be appropriate to request an overview of the work undertaken to date is brought to the Committee as appropriate. Such concerns are already captured in the 'other items' section of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 3.5 Once agreed, the work programme will remain fixed so far as possible, with topics only added to the Committee Agenda when an urgent need for the Committee's attention arises or where call-in is exercised. Non-urgent topics arising through the year will be noted and considered for inclusion in the following year's work programme.
- 3.6 Members are encouraged to forward any suggestions for potential Scrutiny to the Corporate Scrutiny and Overview Officer. Officers will collate all submitted topics, along with those already raised through Budget Scrutiny, and discuss these with the Chair and Vice-Chair before presentation to the April meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for assessment.
- 3.7 To assist Members, Officers will circulate further information on the topic selection process and a summary of the Corporate Priority areas following this meeting.

**The Committee is asked to identify potential topics for inclusion in the 2017/18 Overview and Scrutiny work programme and refer these to the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Officer by the 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

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