

## AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

<b>Name of Committee</b>	<b>County Council</b>
<b>Date of Committee</b>	<b>15 May 2007</b>
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Core Work Programme 2007/08</b>
<b>Summary</b>	This report advises members of the proposed core work programme for overview and scrutiny over the next financial year. These are the matters which will have priority during the year. The number of items in the Core work programme is small to ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny Committees have flexibility to deal with other issues and respond to changes in circumstances. The Council is asked to endorse the Core Work Programme.
<b>For further information please contact:</b>	Jane Pollard Overview and Scrutiny Manager Tel: 01926 412565 janepollard@warwickshire.gov.uk
<b>Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?</b>	No
<b>Background papers</b>	None

**CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-**

Details to be specified

Other Committees	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Group 17 January and 20 March 2007 meetings, Leaders Liaison Group 1 March 2007, Cabinet 8 March 2007
Local Member(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Other Elected Members	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cabinet Member	<input type="checkbox"/>
Chief Executive	<input type="checkbox"/>
Legal	<input type="checkbox"/> Sarah Duxbury
Finance	<input type="checkbox"/>

- |                          |                          |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Other Chief Officers     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| District Councils        | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Health Authority         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Police                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Other Bodies/Individuals | <input type="checkbox"/> |

***FINAL DECISION YES***

***SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS:***

Details to be specified

- |  |                          |
|--|--------------------------|
| Further consideration by<br>this Committee | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To Council                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To Cabinet                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To an O & S Committee                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| To an Area Committee                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Further Consultation                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**County Council - 15 May 2007.**

**Overview and Scrutiny Core Work Programme 2007/08**

**Report of the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny  
Coordinating Group**

**Recommendation**

That the Council endorses the Overview and Scrutiny Core Work Programme for 2007/08

**1.0 Introduction**

- 1.1 The feedback from the Scrutiny Review was that most members felt that the arrangements for agreeing the work programme were okay or better and that the work programme reflected the significant issues facing relevant services reasonably well. However most members felt that policy was too officer driven and that there was a role for overview and scrutiny to be more pro-active and contribute to key policy issues affecting the delivery of public services.
- 1.2 Similarly members had a role in challenging whether our key performance targets are robust enough -do they take the council to where it needs to be within an appropriate timescale? Overview and Scrutiny Committees have received reports in the autumn cycle specifically asking this question and undoubtedly the new performance information system will provide an invaluable tool for assessing not only whether there is improvement but the pace of improvement in comparison with others.

**2.0 Developing a Core Work Programme**

- 2.1 Whilst there was a common view that the work programme should be member led and that committees should be able to develop their own work programmes, there was an acknowledgement that there should be agreement about a core annual work programme to ensure that the key issues were tackled in a timely way and allocated appropriately. The number of items included in a core work programme should be small to enable Committees to retain some flexibility and accommodate issues that may arise during the course of the year. It should reflect the key issues that must addressed by Overview and Scrutiny over the next financial year whatever else it does.

- 2.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Group initially set out three issues which it considered should be included i.e. Directorate Report Cards, Medium Term Financial Planning, and Joint Scrutiny relating to the Local Area Agreement. Views were then sought from Cabinet, the Leaders Liaison Group and other members on the issues which should form part of any core work programme.
- 2.3 The Leaders Liaison Group considered the matter on 1 March 2007 and expressed the following views-
- The Core Work Programme should include areas which are likely to have a significant impact on the Council's CPA assessment in 18 months time, where a scrutiny review would be helpful preparation for inspection – the specific example given was preparation for the Children's Services Joint Area Review.
  - Partnerships and Area/Locality working was considered a particular priority given the emphasis on neighbourhood governance, enhanced two tier working and local area agreements.
- 2.4 The Cabinet considered the matter on 8 March 2007 and during the discussion the following views were expressed
- Care must be taken to comply with the delegation of responsibilities under the Constitution and to ensure that the best possible use was made of the expertise of overview and scrutiny committees when routing items.
  - Members "substituting" on overview and scrutiny committees often gained wider experience in the operations of the Council thereby enabling a more rounded approach to scrutiny.
  - Future legislation could possibly increase the workload of councillors and might require further consideration of the scrutiny function.
  - The Constitution provided for members of an overview and scrutiny committee and other members, in groups of five, to require items to be included on the agendas for future meetings of the committee.
  - Notification of items for future consideration from individual members could be given at committee meetings or at members briefing meetings.
  - Consideration should be given to arrangements for joint scrutiny by the County and District/Borough Councils.
  - Workloads were prioritised and if necessary the frequency of meetings could be increased on a temporary basis to deal with increased work programme.
- 2.5 The Cabinet supported the inclusion of the issues suggested. The Cabinet would also encourage Overview and Scrutiny Chairs to consider the following:
- (a) Flexibility of items to be considered between committees to balance the work load

- (b) Emphasis to be placed on directorate report cards, performance management related items and LAA targets
- (c) Making sufficient space in their work programmes for issue and concerns raised by elected members

2.6 The Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Group considered the feedback received and proposes that the Overview and Scrutiny Core Work Programme 2007/08 includes the following

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Lead Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee</b>	<b>Comments (Timing or other issues)</b>
Directorate Report Cards	All	Six monthly basis
Medium Term Financial Planning	Resources Performance & Development	After publication of Corporate Business Plan and before November 2007
Joint Scrutiny relating to the Local Area Agreement, Partnerships and Localities	Joint OSC bodies	LAA to be considered after first 6 months performance figures available
Children's Services – preparation for JAR/CPA	Children, Young People and Families	Completion by March 2008
Home Care Services	Adult & Community Services	Completion by March 2008
Mental Health/Dementia Services for Older People	Adult & Community Services	Completion by March 2008
Supporting People	Adult & Community Services	Completion by March 2008

KEN BROWNE  
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Coordinating Group

Shire Hall  
Warwick  
25 April 2007