

Meeting: Housing Sub-committee
Date: 23 July 2018
Title: Work Programme 2018/19

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Service: Law and Governance

Wards affected: All

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Members of the topics received for potential inclusion in the 2018/19 Housing Sub-committee work programme.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The sub-committee is recommended to 1) consider the suggested work programme topics set out in Appendix A; 2) identify any additional subject areas to be included relevant to the sub-committee's remit and 3) agree a work programme for 2018/19, including the identification of any in-depth reviews the sub-committee wish to undertake.

3. Details

- 3.1 The sub-committee is invited to give consideration to determining its work programme for the year ahead. In doing so members may wish to take into account the following suggestions and framework.
- 3.2 The sub-committee is a number of overview and scrutiny sub-committees. The role of overview and scrutiny is described in the Council's Constitution as follows:

"Overview, Scrutiny and Policy Development involves councillors of all political parties, as leaders of their communities, examining the delivery of services and influencing decision makers to ensure that they meet the needs, and improve the lives, of people in North Tyneside.

It does this by:

- a) reviewing and challenging the impact of decisions and actions taken by the Elected Mayor, Cabinet and partner organisations;
- b) carrying out investigations into services and policy areas of interest and concern to communities in North Tyneside;
- c) involving communities in its work and reflecting their views and concerns; and

d) supporting and assisting the Elected Mayor, Cabinet and partner organisations in the formulation of their future plans, strategies and their decision making by making evidence based recommendations to them on how services can be improved.”

3.3 The Housing Sub-committee has responsibility to perform these roles in relation to:

- Housing
- Community Safety

3.4 The process of establishing the 2018/19 overview and scrutiny work programme began when a press release was issued on 22 March 2018 seeking the views of members of the public as to what services would be important for scrutiny to focus on. An article was also placed on the Authority web site and communication platforms inviting members of the public to raise issues that they thought would be suitable for scrutiny to investigate. Several suggestions were received and are being considered but none related directly to the remit of Housing sub-committee.

3.5 Senior officers have discussed the overview and scrutiny work programme with a view to identifying key policy areas for scrutiny to focus on. A list of key policies and strategies that the Council will be developing or creating over the coming years has been produced. This includes the following plans and strategies that relate to the remit of the sub-committee:

- Housing Strategy
- Affordable Homes Delivery
- Private Sector Renewal

3.6 To ensure that the work programme is effective it is suggested that when evaluating topics for inclusion in the work programme the following criteria should be considered:

- Is it timely?
- Will it duplicate any other work ongoing within the Council or the North East Combined Authority scrutiny work programme?
- Will it add value/contribute to policy development?

3.7 As has been practice in previous years, it is recommended that sub groups (of around 4/5 members) be established to carry out scrutiny of topics identified as being appropriate for an in-depth review. These sub-groups operate in a more informal way and can consult with a wide range of witnesses in various settings, often over a shorter period of time. When dealing with a specific topic, this focused way of working is often more productive than trying to achieve the same in a formal committee setting. Whilst more than one topic can be prioritised across the municipal year, only one sub-group per committee/sub-committee can be established at any one time due to resourcing restraints.

3.8 During the meeting, members will have the opportunity to raise any other topics relevant to the remit of the sub-committee that they think should be included in the work programme and/or identify any other potential issues for in-depth review.

3.9 A meeting of all scrutiny chairs and deputies has been scheduled for September to allow Members to share work programmes and identify any areas potential areas for duplication of work and to explore any opportunities for collaborative working.

4. Appendices

- Appendix A – topic suggestions for Housing sub-committee (from members of the sub-committee)

Housing sub-committee – work programme suggestions 2018/19

To re-visit the homelessness new regulations and the impact it has on that department and residents of the Borough.

To look at how Universal Credit going live in North Tyneside has affected residents and the HRA/ income.

Update on North Tyneside Trading Company and what has been delivered.

Update on number of Empty Homes in Borough and what is being done to bring them back into use.

Moving In and Moving Out Standard.

Affordable Homes Delivery Update.

Crime and disorder – to receive updates from the police and the community safety team.

Housing Revenue Account – briefing note on how it works.

Current legislation regarding Right to Buy

Tenant engagement – what the plans are for trying to engage with a wider range of tenants when the repairs service is brought back in house.

Kier performance – to look at the latest performance data and transition plans.

To look at the process of removal of carpet/flooring/fixtures/fittings when a tenant moves out and whether items are removed unnecessarily at cost.

Suggestions for in-depth review

To look at the development of a new IT system that will be used to manage housing repairs once brought back into the Council.

Low level anti-social behaviour.