

Meeting: Environment Sub-committee

Date: 3 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 present Members with potential topics for inclusion in the 2018/19 Environment Sub-committee work programme.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The sub-committee is recommended to agree a work programme and identify any further topics relevant to the remit of the sub-committee that could be included in the 2018/19 work programme.

3. Background

- 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 one of 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 Environment Sub-committee has responsibility to perform these roles in relation to the following areas:

- The Environment
- Energy Use
- Climate Change
- Flood Risk Management
- Waste Management

4. Formulating the proposed work programme

4.1 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.

4.2 The following suggestions which fell within the remit of the Environment Sub Committee were received from members of the public:

- To examine the effectiveness and efficiency of the Authority's fault reporting systems, particularly in respect of fly tipping and issues relating to streets and landscaped areas.
- To examine measures to combat the increase in branches and foliage which are overhanging footpaths and which could cause damage or injury to pedestrians, and to identify ways to remind landowners of their responsibilities in this regard.
- To examine whether it would be more cost effective to provide additional education in schools regarding the problems associated with litter rather than carrying out intermittent litter collections.

4.3 The Senior Leadership Team discussed the overview and scrutiny work programme to identify key policy areas for scrutiny to focus on. As a result a list of key plans and strategies has been referred to the chairs and deputy chairs of scrutiny sub-committee's to discuss with relevant Cabinet Members to inform the development of the scrutiny work programmes. This list includes the following plans and strategies that relate to the remit of the sub-committee:

- A Sustainable North Tyneside Strategy
- Air Quality Plan
- Waste Strategy

4.4 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?

4.5 As has been practice in previous years, it is recommended that sub groups (of around 4/5 members) be established to carry out the scrutiny of the topics that have been selected for in-depth investigation. 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.

- 4.6 During the meeting, Members will have the opportunity to raise any others topics relevant to the remit of the sub-committee that they think should be included in the work programme. Additional topics raised will be scheduled accordingly in consultation with the Chair and the Deputy Chair.

5. Appendices

None

6. Background Information

The following documents have been used in the compilation of this report and may be inspected at the offices of the author.

- Suggestions for topics for scrutiny received from members of the public.
- North Tyneside Scrutiny Handbook
- North Tyneside Constitution