

June 2012

Consideration of Panel Work Programme for 2012/13

Ward(s) All

Portfolio Holder: Councillor R. Andrew

Summary of report:

The purpose of this report is to provide relevant background information for Members so that the Panels work programme can be agreed for 2012/13.

It is important for Members to consider the wide range of potential issues within their remits that they could consider during the year which could range from council specific to completely external issues.

When agreeing items it is important that consideration is given to what, value the Panel can add and what tools and performance measures are available to support them in their work.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That Member's consider the range of items within their remit available to them and agree a work programme for 2012/13 along with any potential working groups and their membership.

Resource and legal considerations:

In terms of resources it is important that the right balance and number of items and working groups are selected so that the work programme can be completed during the year without placing undue pressure on Member capacity.

Legal considerations for specific items will need to be addressed as and when necessary based on the items that are selected for inclusion on the work programme.

Citizen impact:

An effective work programme will enable the Panel to focus its work on the most important issues within its remit. Consideration of these issues and subsequent recommendations, if accepted, could improve the quality of services delivered to

local residents.

Environmental impact:

The level of environmental impact will be dependant on which issues are selected to become a part of the panels work programme for 2012/13. The borough's Sustainable Community Strategy places an importance on considering the impact of present decisions on future generations which includes environmental issues.

Performance management:

The report asks Members to consider performance management information when deciding on their work programme, and also to consider how they wish to use performance management information and tools in assisting them with their work over the course of the year.

Equality Implications:

Ensuring equality for all is a key theme in the boroughs Sustainable Community Strategy as well as being one of the Council's core values. Members are advised to consider what, if any, equality implications there are for any items on their work programme.

Consultation:

Members may wish to consider the results of any formal or informal consultation exercises, including that with the public and partners, when considering what items they wish to include in their work programme. Whilst Council officers carry out a range of consultation activity on behalf of the Council, Members themselves engage with the public on a much more frequent basis and it is valuable to consider feedback from these sources as well.

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Introduction

At the start of each municipal year it is good practice for scrutiny and performance panels to spend some time discussing and agreeing its work programme for the year ahead for issues within its remit.

As Members will already be aware scrutiny and performance panel remits were amended by Council at its meeting on 21 and 23 May 2012. For information the Panels remit in Article 6 of the Walsall Council Constitution now reads as:

Children's and Young People Scrutiny and Performance Panel

All aspects and general services related to serving children and young people for example; education, children services, youth services within the functions set out in section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

Work Programme

In agreeing its work programme for 2012/13 the Panel will be informed from a range of sources, including all 60 Members, last years Panel work streams and suggested carry over items, Council Officers, and Partners.

When agreeing the items to be included in its work programme focus should be given to the range of performance management information available that could assist the Panel with each particular issue. A whole host of performance information is available on a range of subjects that Members could utilise to measure success or otherwise.

Working Groups

Members need to decide whether they want to operate any working groups for this year. Working Groups are at their most effective when they are considering broad policy areas that require detailed investigation time that cannot be completed at Panel level. The Panel will set the working group remit, its membership and once a working group has completed its investigations it will report its findings and recommendations to the Panel for consideration and adoption.

It is very important that Member capacity is considered when deciding on what working groups are formed as many members sit on more than one panel and their respective working groups. As such getting suitable dates in the municipal diary and getting suitable attendance at those meetings is difficult if too many working groups are formed. In previous years experience and given the number of Panel's in this years municipal diary, it is suggested that each Panel should look to operate one working group at any one time. Panels that wish to operate more than working group during the year should timetable the second to start as the first finishes.

A copy of the councils working group toolkit has been despatched separately to Members and is available to members of the public by request. Member's are asked to familiarise themselves with this toolkit ahead of deciding what, if any, working groups

Value for Money Service Reviews

The Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel has developed a value for money (vfm) toolkit to assist Members if it is decided to complete a service review. Previously, the Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel used the value for money toolkit to review the Councils Communication and Payroll and Pensions services. The two reviews were well received by both Members and Officers and resulted in positive recommendations for both services. The Corporate Panel recommended that other Panel's also look to use this toolkit and this recommendation was endorsed by the scrutiny working group of Chair's and Vice-Chairs.

The vfm assessment tool provides a framework for members in partnership with services to work through and is divided into 3 broad themes:

1. What does it cost to provide this service? (economy)
2. How is this service performing? (efficiency)
3. What quality is the service being provided? (effectiveness)

For each of these themes there is the opportunity/potential for scrutiny panels with the service being assessed to benchmark with other service providers to give a clearer picture of relative performance.

The aim is that on completing this assessment scrutiny members will be able to make a judgement regarding the vfm provided by the service and identify and recommend any potential further action.

The vfm toolkit can be used to support the investigations of working groups or independently. When used independently the Corporate Scrutiny and Performance Panel appointed a lead member who liaised with the service area whilst the toolkit is completed and then reports back their findings to the Panel for agreement of recommendations and any other further action that may be necessary.

Suggested Items

Appendix One contains a number of suggested items completed on a standard template to assist Members with deciding what they wish to include on their work programme. This template requires the following points to be considered-

- o **What the Issue Is**
- o **Where it has come from-** for example it could be a carry over item from last year's panel, a suggestion from a Councillor or member of the public or it could be a new item officers are aware of that is coming up this year,
- o **Why it is important-** with limited time available to Members they need to be able to prioritise their work and concentrate on those things that really matter.
- o **Who it affects-** Does it impact on any particular ward or user group? Does it concern partner agencies or staff groups? Any potential equalities issues may be highlighted here if the item is likely to have a disproportionate affect on any particular group.
- o **How can scrutiny add value-** What specifically can Scrutiny do? E.g. provide feedback and recommendations ahead of a Cabinet (or partner executive) decision, support the development of policy, service review, public engagement etc. Suggestions have also been made here for if the item is particularly suited to a particular method of scrutiny such as a working group or value for money review.

- ø **Timings-** This will highlight any critical timings that would need to be taking into consideration such as statutory deadlines which would dictate when scrutiny would need to have considered the item by if they are to have any valuable input

The items highlighted at appendix one are not an exhaustive list, but only those that it is possible to provide in advance of the meeting. Members should consider these alongside any items they wish to raise themselves and use them to develop a balanced work programme that concentrates on what is important to them and on where they believe they can make a difference.

Appendix Two is a copy of the forward plan for June to September 2012.

Proposed Items for Scrutiny Work Programme

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|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------|-------------------------|-------|
| Issue | IYPSS – Anti-Social Behaviour | | | | | |
| Who from | Previous years panel | Individual Member | Officer X | Public | Other Council Committee | Other |
| Why is it important? | The issue of Youth ASB and the need for positive activities for young people is a priority issue for Walsall communities and for each of the 6 area partnerships. Walsall Council has a statutory responsibility to delivery positive activities for young people as stated in the 2006 Education Act. | | | | | |
| Who does it affect? | Young people, Area Partnerships, the communities of Walsall. | | | | | |
| Who needs to be involved? | Local Authority, Area Partnership and related partners, young people and their communities | | | | | |
| How can scrutiny add value? | Helping to inform future priorities for IYPSS and youth related ASB. | | | | | |
| Timings | Positive Activities are delivered for 52 weeks of the year, with a focus on evening, weekend and school holiday activity. | | | | | |
| Performance Information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rates and levels of youth ASB • Numbers of young people involved in positive activities • Nature of delivery of positive activities | | | | | |

Proposed Items for Scrutiny Work Programme

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|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|---------------------|--------|-------------------------|-------|
| Issue | United Kingdom Youth Parliament priorities for 2012/13 | | | | | |
| Who from | Previous years panel | Individual Member | Officer X | Public | Other Council Committee | Other |
| Why is it important? | <p>Walsall is recognised as a national leader for its active involvement work with young people.</p> <p>Working Smarter recognises the centrality of the customer in service design and delivery.</p> <p>IYPSS ensures that our 'customers' are also our 'co-producers'. Walsall council has a statutory requirement to involve young people in decision-making, including for positive activities as instructed in the 2006 Education Act.</p> | | | | | |
| Who does it affect? | | | | | | |
| Who needs to be involved? | Young people, local authority and partners services for young people and the wider community. | | | | | |
| How can scrutiny add value? | By helping to inform and support priorities for the UKYP members and wider active involvement work with young people. | | | | | |
| Timings | Active Involvement work continues for 52 weeks of the year and includes annual UKYP elections. | | | | | |
| Performance Information | Numbers voting in annual UKYP elections. | | | | | |



Walsall Council

FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

**Civic Centre,
Darwall Street,
Walsall, WS1 1TP
www.walsall.gov.uk**

11 May 2012

FORWARD PLAN

The forward plan sets out decisions that are termed as “key decisions” which the Executive (Cabinet) intend to take over the following 4 months. Preparation of the forward plan helps the Council to programme its work. The purpose of the forward plan is to give plenty of notice and an opportunity for consultation on the issues to be discussed. The plan is updated each month with the period of the plan being rolled forward by one month and republished. The plan is available for public inspection at the Civic Centre Reception, Darwall Street, Walsall. Copies of the plan can be obtained from John Garner, Democratic Services, Walsall MBC, Civic Centre, Darwall Street, Walsall, WS1 1TP, 01922 653500 or e-mail cabinetoffice@walsall.gov.uk. The forward plan can also be accessed from the Council’s website at www.walsall.gov.uk. The Cabinet are allowed to make urgent decisions which do not appear in the forward plan.

Please note that the decision dates are indicative and are subject to change. Please contact the above addressee if you wish to check the date for a particular item.

Cabinet responsibilities are as follows:

- Leader of the Council
- Deputy Leader and Regeneration
- Business support services
- Children’s services
- Communities and partnerships
- Finance and personnel
- Leisure and culture
- Social care and housing
- Transport and environment

The Cabinet agenda and reports are available for inspection by the public 7 days prior to the meeting of the Cabinet. The papers can be seen at First Stop Shop at the Civic Centre, Walsall. The papers are also available on the Council’s website referred to above shortly before the meeting. Background papers are listed on each report submitted to the Cabinet and members of the public are entitled to see these documents unless they are confidential. The report also contains the name and telephone number of a contact officer. These details can also be found in the forward plan.

Meetings of the Cabinet are open to the public and take place in Conference Room 2 at the Council House, Walsall. Occasionally there are items included on the agenda which are confidential and for those items the public will be asked to leave the meeting.

The forward plan does not list all decisions which have to be taken by the Cabinet only “key decisions” which are those decisions which have a significant effect within the community or which involve considerable expenditure or savings. The Council’s Constitution defines a key decision as an executive decision which is likely:

- “(1) to result in the Council in incurring expenditure which exceeds that included in any approved revenue or capital budget or the limits set out within an approved borrowing or investment strategy and was not the subject of a specific grant;
- (2) to result in the Council incurring expenditure, or the making of savings, which are equivalent to or more than 5% of any approved revenue budget or 10% of any capital budget, whichever is the lower, subject to a de minimus level of £50,000;
- (3) to be significant in terms of its direct effects on communities in an area comprising two or more wards in the Borough.”

Dates of Cabinet meetings for 2012/2013 *(To be approved at Adjourned Council 23 May 2012)*

**FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS
JUNE TO SEPTEMBER 2012 (11.5.12)**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Reference No./ Date first entered in Plan | Key decision to be considered (to provide adequate details for those both in and outside the Council) | Decision maker | Background papers (if any) and Contact Officer | Main consultees | Contact Member (All Members can be written to at Civic Centre, Walsall) | Date item to be considered |
| 7/12 (13.2.12) | Civil enforcement of bus lane contraventions: Approval and publication of charges (within legislative constraints) to be applied for enforcement of bus lane contraventions and approval to enter into an agreement with the Bus Lane Adjudication Service Joint Committee | Cabinet | Paul Leighton 652458 | Finance, legal services | Transport and Environment portfolio | 13 June 2012 |
| 11/12 (13.2.12) | Building Control service: Whether to approve the joint provision of the Council's local authority building control service with Birmingham City Council's wholly owned Company ACIVICO via its Special Purpose Vehicle Acivico Building Consultancy | Cabinet | David Elsworthy 652409 Mark Skidmore 652444 | Legal services, finance | Regeneration portfolio | 13 June 2012 |
| 17/12 (11.5.12) | Black Country Enterprise Zone – Darlaston Site Investigation Strategy: To agree retrospective approval of the growing places fund bid for grant funding and for the Council to act as the accountable body | Cabinet | Jo Nugent 652483 Caroline Glover 653692 | Legal services, finance, procurement | Regeneration portfolio | 13 June 2012 |
| 18/12 (11.5.12) | Noirit Site infrastructure project: To agree retrospective approval of the growing places fund bid for grant funding and for the Council to act as accountable body | Cabinet | Richard Chadwick 652576 Caroline Glover 653692 | Legal services, finance, procurement, property services, planning | Regeneration portfolio | 13 June 2012 |

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| 19/12 (11.5.12) | Bringing the Turner Prize to Walsall in 2015: To approve the submission of an expression of interest and work towards the development of a bid for the New Art Gallery to host the Turner Prize in 2015 | Cabinet | Sue Grainger 650338 Stephen Snoddy New Art Gallery | | Leisure and culture portfolio | 13 June 2012 |
| 20/12 (11.5.12) | Creative people and places fund: The fund is administered by the Arts Council to encourage more people to experience and be inspired by the arts and focuses on areas where involvement in art is significantly below national average. Walsall has submitted a bid on a behalf Black Country Arts Consortium for £3m over 3 years to engage local communities in Walsall, Wolverhampton and Sandwell. To agree that the Council act as accountable body for this grant should the bid be successful. | Cabinet | Sue Grainger 650338 | Black Country Arts Partnership, Black Country Arts organisations, legal, finance | Leisure and culture portfolio | 13 June 2012 |
| 56/11 (12.10.11) | University Technical College - full business case: Approval of delegated authority for the Director of Children's Services or Director of Regeneration to approve the full business case and contract award for the development of the technical college at the former Sneyd School site | Cabinet | Kevin Kendall 471259 | Finance, legal services | Regeneration portfolio | 25 July 2012 |