

Annual Scrutiny Work Programme

The use of a template has helped to focus the activity of Task and Finish groups, and is probably one reason why they have been so successful in probing specific issues over the life of the last council.

We would like to introduce something similar for Scrutiny so that Members have a better opportunity not only to suggest topics, but also understand why other members may be bringing forward their suggestions. The standardisation will also help to assess the relative merits of the topics brought forward and make prioritising and choosing between possibly competing topics easier and more transparent – because it will be a more objective process.

This template sets out the key features of topics for the Scrutiny Work Programme. Members proposing topics should be able to set out why the topic should be included in the work programme – and be able to indicate what the ‘Expected benefits/Outcomes’ will be.

If they have some ideas on the approach they believe should be used, who they would like to hear from in the work, and the types of evidence they want to receive they can also include this information. However this is not as essential because these elements of the work programme can be worked up with support from relevant officers once the topic has been agreed for inclusion by the Scrutiny Committee and the Scrutiny Chairs.

Timescales for completion and inclusion in the schedule of Scrutiny Committee meetings will also be confirmed when the approach that will be used to undertake the work and any more detailed Terms of Reference [and Project Plan e.g. for Task and Finish group Work] have been agreed.

Evaluating the proposed topics

The following criteria should be used by the Scrutiny Committee and will be used the Scrutiny Chairs to support their evaluating and prioritising each proposed topic for the Scrutiny Committee work programmes. With support from Officers the Scrutiny Chairs will co-ordinate topics that would fall within more than one Committee, identifying where joint working will take place or which Committee will take the lead.

CRITERIA FOR SELECTING TOPIC	CRITERIA FOR POSSIBLY REJECTING TOPIC
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Does the issue affect more than one area in the county?• Is it a key issue for the public?• Is it or has it been a poor performing service?• Is there or has there been a high level of user dissatisfaction with the service?• Is there a high level of budgetary commitment to the service?• Is there a pattern of budgetary overspends?• Does the topic relate to the Council corporate priorities / central government priorities?• Has new government guidance or legislation been released?• Is there scope to involve the service users/ the public in a review?• Can scrutiny members reasonably expect to add value?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Is the issue being, or soon to be, examined by Cabinet/officer group/other internal body and changes imminent?• Is new legislation or guidance expected within the next year?• Has the topic been covered by an in-depth scrutiny review in the 3 years?• Is the topic being proposed because of an individual complaint?

Scrutiny Committee Work Programme Template – Guiding Questions For Suggesting Topics and Completion

Topic	Expect Benefits/Outcomes	Approach	Activities	Witnesses/ Evidence required	Resources and other requirements	Lead Committee/ Lead Scrutiny Member
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you want to achieve by looking at this topic? • What difference will Scrutiny make by looking at the topic have? • How will you know that you have made a difference? • How does this topic further the priorities of the Council? • How does this topic address concerns/issues raised by the community? • What value will scrutinising this topic add? • Will service users and the public be involved in the work? <p>Overall view – will the impact of the scrutiny be more than the cost of doing it? Is it worth the investment?</p>	<p>What is the best way for you to scrutinise the topic to achieve your outcomes?</p> <p>e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task and finish groups • Select Committee (including preparation and pre-meeting) • Concurrent meetings on a single topic 	<p>How would you undertake your scrutiny activity?</p> <p>e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sites visits • Live audio or video streaming • Member led research • Desk based research • Visits to other counties • Focus groups • Meeting people in the community • Customer experience • Preparation for Select Committee • Opportunity Risk Assessments 	<p>Who do you need to hear from?</p> <p>e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Which officers • Which organisations • Individuals • Community reps <p>What do you need to know?</p> <p>e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service user experience • Customer intelligence • Performance information • Service usage information • Cost and budget information <p>How do you want to receive it?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations • Reports • Briefing papers • Graphs • Tables • Videos 	<p>What do you need to have to support you to deliver your work?</p> <p>e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How much Scrutiny officer support time? • How much member time? • What type of skills? • Any budget requirement e.g. to cover cost of travel, surveys, focus groups? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there anything that you need to have in place before you start or to finish your work? i.e. Dependences and interdependences 	<p>e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify specific committee or whether a joint exercise • Identify Lead Scrutiny Member

Scrutiny Committee Work Programme Topics, 2014-15

Committee: Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny Committee

Topic	Expect Benefits/Outcomes	Approach	Activities	Witnesses/ Evidence required	Resources and other requirements	Lead Committee/ Lead Scrutiny Member
Economic Redesign Work	To explore if further work is needed on the Council's approach to Economic Growth	Officer to brief Committee on outcome of Redesign work and recommendations of Task and Finish Group of 2014/15. To be done in autumn 2015	Claire Cox to brief Members	Claire Cox Portfolio Holders	Officer time Claire Cox and Redesign Team	Cllr Steve Davenport
Tourism	To explore if further work is required on Tourism and the Visitor Economy following the implementations of recommendations from the Enterprise and Growth Scrutiny Committee Task and Finish Group in 2011 and the impact of the Economic Growth Redesign work.	Briefing Paper sent to Members for review informing Members of the outcomes from earlier work. Also to include subsequent increase in service provision. Tourism Officer to attend Committee to answer Members' questions arising from the briefing paper if required	Members to question the Tourism Officer with a view to deciding whether further scrutiny action is required. If so, to establish the remit of investigations and to scope that enquiry which may take the form of a one item agenda meeting of the committee or the establishment of a rapid action task and finish group.	Louse Cross Any local businesses / representatives of the local tourism partnerships / members of the public Portfolio Holder/s	Officer Time Tourism strategy	Cllr Steve Davenport

Topic	Expect Benefits/Outcomes	Approach	Activities	Witnesses/ Evidence required	Resources and other requirements	Lead Committee/ Lead Scrutiny Member
Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy	<p>Annual review of the Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy which the Committee had an active role in developing and monitoring.</p> <p>To ensure that the strategy is still current and of benefit to the economy of Shropshire.</p>	One item Agenda for Committee to monitor the progress of strategy. To be considered in December 2015	Members to have the opportunity to receive feedback from the Shropshire Business Board Chair and Chief Executive of the Chamber of Commerce on the effectiveness of the strategy.	<p>Shropshire Business Board Chair Mandy Thorn</p> <p>Chief Executive of Chamber of Commerce Richard Sheehan</p> <p>Portfolio Holder/s</p>	<p>Officer Time</p> <p>Shropshire Economic Growth Strategy</p> <p>Mark Pembleton</p>	Cllr Steve Davenport
Planning Committees	On-going Task and Finish Group considering the best way to deliver the Planning Committees	Ian Kilby appointed as Lead Officer for the Task and Finish Group.	<p>Regular updates on the work of the Task and Finish Group.</p> <p>Task and Finish Group to gather evidence from stake holders.</p> <p>Visits to be undertaken to see best practice in neighbouring authorities.</p>	<p>Planning Officers</p> <p>Portfolio Holder</p> <p>Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Planning Committees</p> <p>Evidence from Town and Parish Councils and any other stake holders deemed necessary</p>	<p>Officer time</p> <p>Site visit to neighbouring authority to observe best practice</p>	Cllr Steve Davenport

Topic	Expect Benefits/Outcomes	Approach	Activities	Witnesses/ Evidence required	Resources and other requirements	Lead Committee/ Lead Scrutiny Member
Telecom Connectivity	To review the service provided by the telecommunications companies since the final report of the Task and Finish Group previously established to examine this.	Briefing Paper sent to Members for review informing Members of the outcomes from earlier work and changes in signal provision. Officer to attend Committee to answer Members' questions arising from the briefing paper	For Members to have the opportunity to receive feed-back from representatives of the telecommunication s industry on the provision of service in the County	Representative s from telecommunications industry Representative from the Shropshire Business Board	Mark Pembleton Chris Taylor Officer time	Cllr Steve Davenport
The Museum Service	Greater understanding of the service provision following service redesign	Officer to be asked to give presentation and provide briefing note	Presentation at Committee	Museum Officer	Officer time	
LEP Funding	LEP officer to be invited to give a presentation on the work of the LEP to update Members on its activities. To include information on LEP work on highways	Officer to be requested to give presentation, provide a briefing paper and attend committee to answer questions arising	Presentation and briefing paper	LEP Officer Portfolio Holder	Officer Time	Cllr Steve Davenport

Topic	Expect Benefits/Outcomes	Approach	Activities	Witnesses/ Evidence required	Resources and other requirements	Lead Committee/ Lead Scrutiny Member
Apprenticeships	To review the outcomes of previous work done in this area.	Briefing paper to be provided with an officer available to answer questions at committee. Steve Wain to be invited to talk to Members	Briefing paper	County Training Steve Wain Jeanne Vernon		
The provision of Student Accommodation following the establishment of the University Centre Shrewsbury	Andy Evans to be invited to attend Committee to explain the Student Accommodation Strategy and for Members to consider if the establishment of a Task and Finish Group be required	Presentation from Andy Evans and the possible establishment of a Task and Finish Group	Examination of other towns providing student accommodation to identify any changes required in planning practice	Andy Evans Public Protection Officers Evidence from other towns with new universities	Officer Time	Cllr Steve Davenport
Age Demographics of the County and the effect this has in relation to employment and business	To gain a better understanding of the demographics of the County and the effect this has on the economy. Should the paper trigger specific areas of focus then these could be explored as potential agenda topics	Tom Dodds to provide a briefing paper for circulation	Briefing paper to be circulated		Officer Time	