

## **OVERALL WORK PROGRAMME**

### **1 SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report details those topics already referred to this Committee for detailed consideration, with a view to Committee agreeing its priorities for the work programme, and timetable for carrying out this work. The report also outlines some thoughts as to the organisations/individuals the Committee might like to invite to give views and input into the topics being considered.

### **2 DETAILED CONSIDERATIONS**

- 2.1 The work of this Committee will need to be conducted in accordance with the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure rules outlined in the Constitution (refer to pages 4.26 – 4.32 of the Constitution.)
- 2.2 To date, this Committee has been asked by Council to carry out work covering the following topic areas:-
- Fees and Charges, in particular those relating to car parking, Hackney Carriage licensing and cemeteries and burial, with a view to establishing an appropriate framework for the decision making process in connection with these. At the same time Committee is asked to suggest possible changes to the charging structure in the light of this work.
  - Implications of the Government White Paper on Local Government for the District Council, particularly in terms of capacity building, performance management, partnership working.
  - The Scheme of Delegation for decision making, particularly in connection with a recent planning matter concerning telecommunications.
  - The structure for consultation with the Chambers of Trade on all relevant issues.
  - Council's policy on early retirement.

- Members' remuneration issues around carers and out of pocket expenses for advisers
- 2.3 In addition, over the next Municipal Year, the Committee will need to timetable consideration of amendments to the Financial and Contract Standing Orders, and will need to monitor progress on the Corporate Plan and Best Value Performance Plan at the half yearly stage. It will also need to oversee work in connection with the Financial Services Best Value Review, the monitoring of the budget and consideration of the external auditors' Management Letter and any issues arising from that.
- 2.4 Clearly this represents a weighty agenda and at this point in time there would be some advantage in Committee considering how it plans to timetable its work and who the Committee would like to invite to provide an input into the various items under consideration.
- 2.5 From an officer viewpoint it is suggested that initially priority be given to issues around delegation and Financial and Contract Standing Orders, so that these matters can be resolved in time for the new Municipal Year. Priority should then be given to work around fees and charges, the structure for consultation with the Chambers of Trade, and the implications of the White Paper on Local Government, with the intention of concluding work in these areas prior to the summer recess. Members remuneration issues can also be considered during this period, so that the conclusions can be fed into the independent Members Remuneration Panel. The work on Fees and Charges will also need to look at the disabled parking issues recently considered by full Council. Time can then be given over to consideration of issues around the budget in the autumn cycle, together with an update on progress on the Corporate Plan and Best Value Performance Plan. The main work around the Financial Services Best Value Review will also take place during this period, although some earlier Member involvement will be required. This can then be followed by work around the Council's policy on early retirement. Consideration of the external auditors' Management Letter can then take place in the early part of 2003.
- 2.6 As to persons to be invited to input into the various items under consideration, this report focuses on those areas suggested for consideration prior to the summer recess, although suggestions on invitees post the summer period would be welcome. This list is not definitive and as a result of the work undertaken, other organisations/individuals might be identified as appropriate.
- 2.7 In connection with the scheme of delegations, Members might like to consider inviting the mover and seconder of the original motion on this

matter to explain their viewpoints. The Chairman of Planning Services Committee might also be invited to give his views, together with officer submissions from the Corporate Director (Law, Planning & Administration) and the Head of Planning Services. Externally, Members might wish to view schemes of delegation arising from other similar Authorities. For Financial and Contract Standing Orders, Corporate Management Board are currently seeking examples of best practice and these will be used to provide Members with suggestions as to how the current Standing Orders should be redrafted.

- 2.8 In connection with fees and charges, Members might like to consider a presentation from the Head of Financial Services, and then inviting the external auditors, the Chambers of Trade (in connection with the issue of car parking charges), the taxi companies and drivers (in connection with Hackney Carriage licensing), and local undertakers (in connection with cemeteries and burials). Members might also wish to seek comparisons on charges from other neighbouring/similar authorities and information from customer feedback.
- 2.9 As to the structure of consultation with the Local Chambers, Members might like to invite representatives from the local Chambers, the Chief Executive and other members of Corporate Management Board, plus the Corporate Policy Manager.
- 2.10 In relation to the Local Government White Paper, Members again might like to consider inviting representation from the East of England Local Government Conference, our external auditors and IDEA, for their view as to the issues that the Members need to consider. In addition, officer representation from the Chief Executive and other members of the Corporate Management Board, plus the Corporate Policy Manager might be appropriate.
- 2.11 With regards to the Member remuneration issues, Members might like to receive a presentation from the Corporate Director (Finance & External Services) giving feedback on how these matters are being addressed across Essex.

### **3 RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 It is proposed that the Committee **RESOLVES** its work programme in terms of priorities, timetabling and potential invitees to each of the matters under review. (CEx)

Paul Warren  
Chief Executive

---

---

**Background Papers:**

None

For further information please contact Paul Warren on:-

Tel:- 01702 318199  
E-Mail:- paul.warren@rochford.gov.uk