Bolton Council

Report to:	Environmental Services, Scrutiny Committee		
Date:	6th October, 2015		
Report of:	The Borough Solicitor	**Report No:**	
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Report Title: **Identification of Issues for the Scrutiny / Annual Work Programme**

Confidential / Non Confidential:	(***Non-Confidential***) This report does **not** contain information which warrants its consideration in the absence of the press or members of the public
Purpose:	The report outlines the Committee's Annual Work Programme for the 2013/2014 Municipal Year, which will be updated on an *ad hoc* basis. This document has been put together following a Work Programme Event to bring forward ideas for the Committee to scrutinise in the forthcoming Municipal Year.
Recommendation	To consider the Work Programme and agree the content for the remainder of the Municipal year.
Background Doc(s):	A timetabled list of issues agreed by the Committee as issues they would like to receive reports/investigate over the next twelve months is appended. Some items on this list emanate from Executive decisions made over the last year, along with other matters from performance and external inspection information.

Background Information

1.0 Choosing Issues

At the Committee Work Programme Meeting, held at the beginning of the Municipal Year, the matters set out in 1.1 and 1.2 below were borne in mind when setting the programme. Members of the Committee are asked to refer to these issues when considering additional items for consideration during the municipal year.

1.1 Key Factors in Assessing Relevance of Issues for Scrutiny

Relevance

- The Policy highlighted for Scrutiny is under the remit of the Scrutiny Committee.
- That the planned scrutiny has an impact in improving services to better meet the needs and expectations of residents/customers.
- Ensure that the policy, action, or organisation is not being scrutinised elsewhere.

Public Interest

- There is evidence of significant Bolton wide public interest in this topic.
- It is a “high profile” topic for specific Bolton wide communities or interest groups.
- The review would, where appropriate, give an opportunity for the people of Bolton to have a say.

Impact

- The review will have a significant impact on the well-being of the public of Bolton.
- The issue has implications for diversity, equality, and social inclusion.
- This could make a big difference to the way services are delivered.
- This could make a big difference to the way resources are used.

Performance

- Is Performance particularly good/bad?

1.2 Identification of Criteria to Evaluate the Appropriateness of Issues for Scrutiny Panels

The review of whether a subject is suitable for scrutiny should consider:

•	Relevance	
	•	Would a review be replicated by any other internal or external review process?
	•	Is the service or issue a national government priority?
	•	Have there been national changes to policy?
	•	Is the issue of significant interest to the Bolton wide public?
	•	Would there be a significant impact on a particular community? (both interest and locality)

	•	Have there been local changes to policy?
	•	Is it an area of poor performance?
	•	Is it an area of outstanding performance?
	•	Is there a pattern of budgetary overspend in service area?
	•	Has there been a change to the remit of our arms length bodies?
•	Potential Impact of a Review	
	•	Is it possible for the Scrutiny Panel to make a valuable contribution?
	•	Are there sufficient resources both in terms of finance and officer availability to have a tangible impact?

1.3 **The Council's Main Aims and Priority Themes**

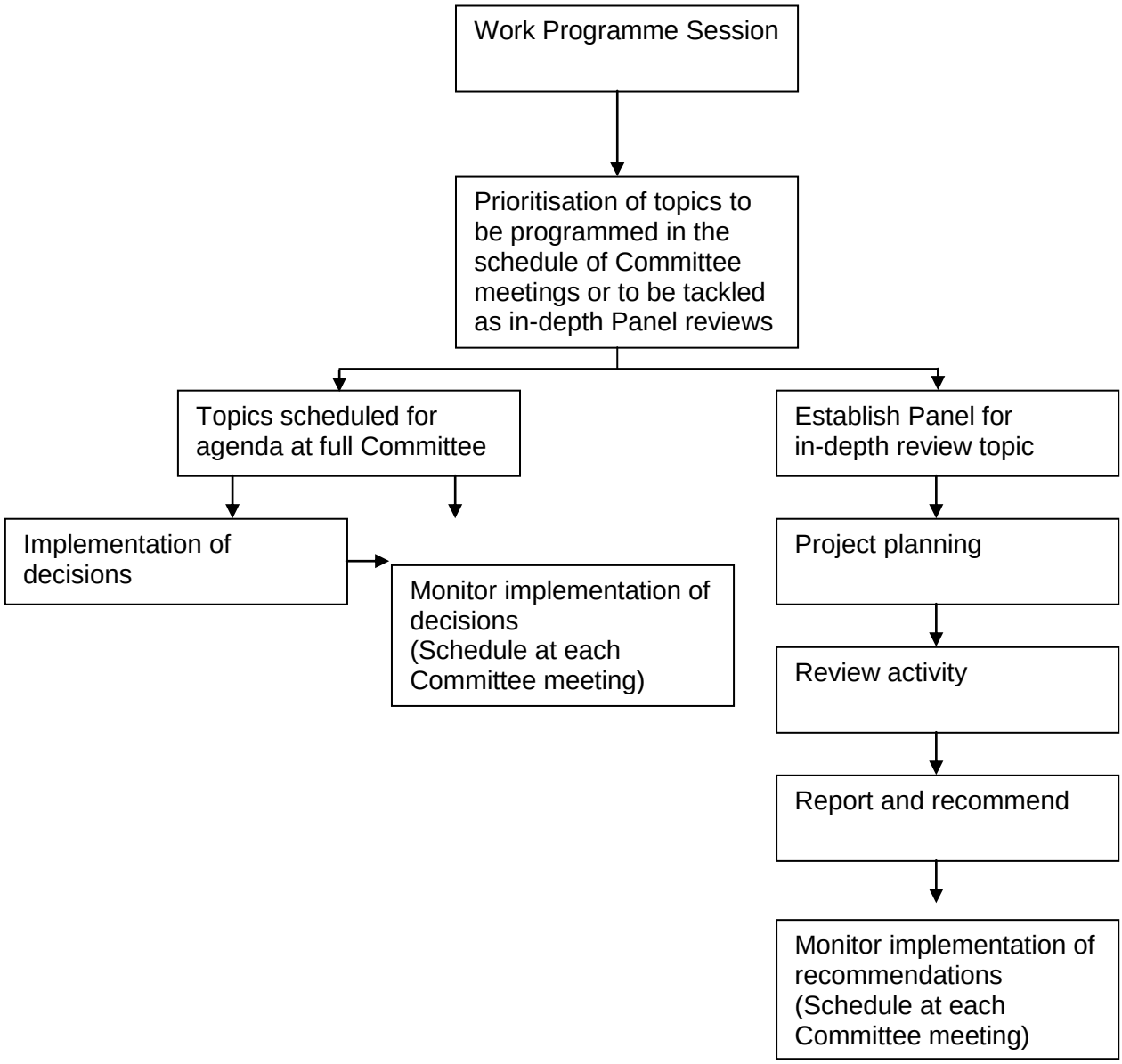
It is also worth keeping in mind the Council's Main Aims and Priority Themes when considering Committee Work Programmes:

Main Aims – Economic Prosperity, Narrowing the Gap and Transforming Services.

Priority Themes – Healthy, Achieving, Prosperous, Safe, Cleaner and Greener and Strong and Confident.

Attached at **Appendix One** is a schedule which Members can use as an aid to the identification of items for consideration by the Committee.

1.4 Planning and Managing the Committee Workload



1.5 Evaluating the Work of Scrutiny Panels

Evaluating the work of Scrutiny Panels will become increasingly important to aid the Council in determining what works well and in terms of Government expectations, leading from the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Councillor Call for Action

Proposed process for evaluating the Panel and monitoring implementation:-

1. At their last meeting, all panels include an item in which they look back on the panel's work and evaluate its effectiveness. Panel members' views of what has and has not been effective is noted so that it can be taken on board for future panels.

2. Once the report has been received by the Executive or Executive Member it is sent out to all those who contributed to the panel's work along with a short evaluation form asking contributors about their experience of the scrutiny panel, from the adequacy of administrative arrangements to the standard of interaction with the panel and their views on the final report. The published report is put on the web site and also sent to all libraries and is provided on request to anyone who wants a copy.

3. Ultimately the real effectiveness of the panel must be measured by the difference it makes to outcomes. This remains extremely hard to evaluate given that there may be many changes occurring within a particular service area at any one time due to any number of reasons and these can all have an impact on residents' lives. Singling out the effect of the implementation of scrutiny panel recommendations is therefore very difficult.

4. However, care should be taken to ensure that those recommendations that are agreed by the Executive are implemented.

   This should be done via a standard Decision Monitoring Schedule which will be implemented this municipal year.

   In certain circumstances it may though be necessary to write off some outstanding recommendations. This may be because implementation was initially agreed in principle, subject to funding being approved but despite attempts to locate sources there is no reason to think that funding will be available in the near future. It could also be because legislation or internal changes had altered the shape of a service to such an extent that some recommendations had become obsolete.

Environmental Services Scrutiny Committee

9th June, 2015	• The work programme • Departmental performance monitoring report
18th August, 2015	• Waste Savings Update • The GM Transport Strategy and the opportunities for Bolton including bids • Environmental Services Finance Report – Final Outturn • Departmental Performance Update, Quarter 4, 2014/15 • United Utilities Water – Service Issues
6th October, 2015	• Warranties regarding contracts on road repairs, including what we had and how they were negotiated • Water Courses and Their Environmental Value – Development of this Asset • Environmental Services Finance report, Quarter 1
24th November, 2015	• Updates on recycling and residual waste and comparisons with other authorities • A review of car park usage in Bolton • Environmental Services Finance Report, Quarter 2 • Departmental Performance Report, Quarter 1, 2015/16
9th February, 2016	• An update on the Bolton and Wigan Partnership • Evaluation of Environmental Behaviour Change Work • Departmental Performance Report, Quarter 2, 2015/16

5th April, 2016	• How the success of community safety was measured, including what the Community Safety Partnership did • LED lighting update • Environmental Services Finance Report, Quarter Three