

Guildford Borough Council

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Services

Date: 22 July 2024

Ward(s) affected: All

Report of Director: Strategic Director, Legal and Democratic Services

Author: James Dearling, Senior Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny)

Tel: 01483 444141

Email: james.dearling@guildford.gov.uk

Councillor responsible: Councillor James Walsh, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Services

Tel: 07533 767227

Email: james.walsh@guildford.gov.uk

Report Status: Open

Committee Work Programme

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report and its appendices outlines the future work plan of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Services as thus far developed and provides an opportunity for the Committee to formally review and approve its work for the coming months.
- 1.2. Significantly, this report details a request from the Executive for Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) to review the Heritage Service and Tourist Information Centre (TIC). The proposed review would be in-depth and undertaken through a task and finish group, as detailed in Appendix 3.

2. Recommendations to Committee

2.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Services is asked to:

(I) approve its draft work programme attached at Appendix 1.

(II) agree the proposed establishment of a task and finish group to review the Heritage Service and Tourist Information Centre as detailed at Appendix 3.

3. Reasons for Recommendations:

3.1. To enable the Committee to review and agree its work programme for the coming months and begin a review of the Council's Heritage Service and TIC.

4. Exemption from publication

4.1. No part of this report is exempt from publication.

5. Purpose of Report

5.1. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee [sic] includes responsibility to approve its work programme and thereby help ensure that the Committee's time is used effectively and efficiently.

5.2. A well-planned overview and scrutiny function will help both officers and members plan their workloads as well as providing a clear picture to the public of planned activity. An effective work programme is the foundation for a successful overview and scrutiny function.

5.3. This report sets out the work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Services as developed thus far for 2024-25.

- 5.4. In addition, this report provides information to support a proposal to establish an overview and scrutiny task group to review the Council's Heritage Service and TIC.

6. Strategic Priorities

- 6.1. The O&S function strengthens the position of the Council to ensure we are able to deliver our strategic priorities. For example, O&S assists the Council in improving services and ensuring we are open and accountable in our decision-making.

7. Setting the Work Programme

- 7.1. Councillors are encouraged to discuss any proposals for the Committee work programme with the relevant O&S Committee Chair and Vice-Chair or the Senior Democratic Services Officer – Scrutiny. (The remits for both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Services and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Resources are listed within Appendix 1.) The work programme proposed for the Committee should be determined with reference to the P.A.P.E.R. selection tool, attached as Appendix 2 to this report.
- 7.2. Such work programme selection discussions should include how a proposed item or alteration fulfils the criteria outlined in the mnemonic P.A.P.E.R. (Public interest; Ability to change; Performance; Extent; and Replication).

8. Proposed task and finish group for Heritage Service and Tourist Information Centre review

- 8.1 The Executive has requested O&S undertake an in-depth review of the Council's Heritage Service and TIC. The O&S review will help inform the plans for short / medium term service delivery and the longer-term strategic direction of these areas.

- 8.2 Attached at Appendix 3 is a completed scoping document that provides the reasons for the proposed review, identifies sources of information, and outlines the broader project plan.
- 8.3 Attached at Appendix 4, as additional background information to inform the Committee's decision, are the slides from a presentation on the proposed task group given to the Chair and Vice-Chair of this Committee on 21 June 2024.
- 8.4 The Heritage Service Lead and the Lead Councillor for Commercial Services will both be present at the Committee meeting on 22 July to respond to questions from Councillors.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report.

10. Legal Implications

- 10.1 There are no specific legal implications.

11. Human Resource Implications

- 11.1 There are no specific human resources implications. It is envisaged that the work programme, as drafted, is achievable within the existing resources.
- 11.2 Overview and scrutiny will call on relevant officers during the conduct of its reviews. Individual scoping reports will seek to take additional resource requirements into account when drafted.

12. Equality and Diversity Implications

- 12.1 The Council has a statutory duty under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 which provides that a public authority must, in exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to (a)

eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; and (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

- 12.2 This duty has been considered in the context of this report and it has been concluded that there are no equality and diversity implications arising directly from this report. Future overview and scrutiny reviews will consider equality implications on a case-by-case basis.

13. Climate Change/Sustainability Implications

- 13.1 There are no specific climate change / sustainability implications.

14. Summary of Options

- 14.1 The Committee is asked to approve or amend its future work programme as developed thus far. In addition, the Committee is requested to approve the establishment of a task and finish group to review the Council's Heritage Service and Tourist Information Centre.

- 14.2 The Committee may decline to do either or both.

15. Conclusion

- 15.1 Developing a work programme for the overview and scrutiny function is an essential stage in the scrutiny process. An effective overview and scrutiny work programme identifies the key topics to be considered over the coming months. In addition, it is suggested that a well-developed programme

ensures that the views of councillors, partners, the public, and external organisations are represented effectively in the process.

- 15.2 For information, attached at Appendix 5 is the general procedure that task and finish groups are expected to operate and report their findings in accordance with.

16. Background Papers

- 16.1 None.

17. Appendices

- 1 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Services work programme, July 2024
- 2 – P.A.P.E.R. selection tool
- 3 – Scoping document for proposed review of Heritage Service / Tourist Information Centre
- 4 – Presentation slides, Heritage & Tourist Information Centre Task & Finish Group briefing, 21 June 2024.
- 5 – Task group procedure [Appendix 4 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules within the Council's Constitution]