

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

COPELAND BOROUGH COUNCIL

WORKPLAN 2005-06

Introduction

The Work Plan of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees has been drawn together from a number of sources:

From individual Members drawing on the experience they have as ward Councillors and their specialist interests.

From Parish and Town Councils.

From studying the Corporate Plan for the coming year and discussing work items with the Executive and Departments

From individual members of the public, responding to publicity and from

Media coverage relating to Council services.

It is intended to give a good idea of the ground the Committees will cover in the coming year. It is, however, an organic document and is subject to change and review as priorities change.

If there are any comments or contributions you might want to make to the Work Plan, then please do not hesitate to contact Scrutiny Support in the first instance:

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REVIEWS

ITEM	REVIEWS	BACKGROUND	INT/EXT	TIMESCALE
Section 106 agreements	Pre-scrutiny → Poss review OSC EC	Members would like to establish what Copeland's policy is on 106 agreements. It has been suggested that the Council might make more of such agreements. A report of current policy will enable members to decide whether they wish to pursue this item further	Internal	Pre-scrutiny briefing
Public Loos	REVIEW OSC ENV	Members would like to undertake a comprehensive review of the provision, standard and maintenance of public loos in Copeland, exploring best practice for delivery in rural areas, and the needs of local people and of the tourist industry in Copeland. In doing this, they will expect to retain a sense of realism and to look at all provision, including those provided by external organisations.	Internal and External	Work started June
Budget Criteria	REVIEW OSC PR/EC	Opinion is being voiced by some members of Overview and Scrutiny, particularly those of Environmental Well-being, that the budget criteria are too job focused. They point out that the right conditions need to be created for regeneration to flourish, and these are often environmental issues, and they also feel that issues that they have looked at, and which haven't necessarily scored very highly, for example travel concessions and pest control, are socially important issues that the Council does need to address.	Internal	Joint meeting of Exec and OSC Chairs and Vice Chairs agreed to delay a look at the budget criteria until the Council' role in regeneration is better defined – may be next year.

ITEM	REVIEWS	BACKGROUND	INT/EXT	TIMESCALE
Regeneration in West Cumbria	Pre-scrutiny Poss REVIEW OSC EC & joint with Allerdale and County	The LSP Economic Well-being group has suggested a joint review of who is doing what on the regeneration front in West Cumbria. It may well be that the timing for this is not the best, with Cumbria Vision on the horizon, however the Chairs would like a pre-scrutiny report of the funding that Copeland Borough Council has drawn down in 2004-05 from external sources, how this has been spent, and how many jobs have been directly created. They would also welcome a debate to define the Council's own role in the delivery of economic regeneration.	Internal ↓ Poss external	Chris Collier, Chief Exec, Cumbria Vision due to attend special meeting 13/06/05 at 10.30am.
Enforcement	REVIEW OSC ENV	Members want to take a very close look at enforcement as a whole. This will include all aspects, including dog fouling and car parking policy on issuing of fines. On car parking issues, OSC Economic to be invited to attend. Results may feed into the restructure review..	Internal	
Restructure 6 mths +	REVIEW OSC PR - Lead	Further thought is required as to how exactly this will be done, but their aim is to establish whether the restructuring exercise has delivered what it set out to do.		
Leisure Opening Hours	Pre-scrutiny→ Poss Review OSC Social	It has been suggested that Members might want to look at the opening hours of the pool, sports' centre etc, in particular in respect of public holidays. A preliminary report will be requested for members to decide whether they wish to look at this item in more depth.	Internal	July meeting
Supporting People Strategy	Poss joint review with County OSC SOC	It has been suggested that a joint scrutiny by County and District be held, which Copeland has supported. However, we have pointed out that the timing may not be right as the new strategy only just came into force in April.	Internal/ External	

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Dentists	REVIEW OSC SOC	We have suggested to the health scrutiny cttee of the County Council that the provision of NHS dentists in Copeland should be scrutinised. Dentists have been put onto the work plan of the Health Scrutiny Cttee (on which Copeland has a representative), but yet to hear whether there is an appetite for joint working.	External	??
Schools in Copeland	Pre-scrutiny → Poss Review OSC SOC	The questionnaire carried out by OSC on the things that attract people to come and live here and those that put them off has not been given wide distribution as some of the data was unreliable. However, the results were largely predictable and placed a good deal of emphasis on the quality of schools, equally of local importance. Recent statistics showing that Copeland is lagging behind the Cumbrian and national average when it comes to test results for 14 year olds has prompted the Committee to explore why this is the case, and in looking at the bigger picture, what more might be done to drive up performance.	External	Date – tba
School dinners	Pre-scrutiny → Poss Review	A pre-scrutiny report on healthy food initiatives to be commissioned from the County, before deciding if the Review will take place and in what format.	External	See above.
Cycling	???	They acknowledged that the whole issue of revenue funding for maintenance of cycle paths in Copeland appears to be at an impasse and that until it is resolved, it is unlikely that any progress on future development will be made. Watching brief.	External	

MONITOR /CHALLENGE

ITEM	MNTR/CHLGE	BACKGROUND	INT/EXT	TIMESCALE
Tourism	Monitor OSC EC	They have already indicated that they would like to be kept abreast of all developments and initiatives in tourism as affects Copeland.	Internal /External	??
Sundry Debtors	Challenge	Outstanding Audit actions on sundry debtors, on the list for some time, has prompted members to ask for a full report on the issue of the processing of sundry debtors.	Internal	??
Fly Tipping	Monitor OSC Env	Members are aware that a Cumbria wide strategy is being discussed and would like to be kept abreast of developments which may also feed into their overview of enforcement generally.	Internal	??
Transport Concession	Monitor OSC Soc	Members want to review the new voucher system to see whether it has achieved savings, and to examine the impact of the decision to give free bus travel to senior citizens.	Internal	Sep/Oct
Asset Management	Challenge OSC PR	Members are aware that the Asset Management Plan is ready for review. Equally, they want to make sure that officers are confident the asset management register is up-to-date and that there is no risk of the Council losing land by default.	Internal	??

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Capital Strategy	Monitor OSC PR	Members are aware that the capital strategy is due for review and will wish to be consulted on any changes.	Internal	??
Benefits Fraud Inspectorate Report	Monitor/Challenge OSC PR	Members would like to see the full report and consider and monitor the action plan in more detail.	Internal	May
Food Safety Plan	Monitor OSC ENV	To monitor the food safety service plan.	Internal	??
Health and Safety Plan	Monitor OSC Soc	To monitor the health and safety service plan.	Internal	??
BVR Communications Improvement Plan	Challenge	Members want to take a close interest in the implementation of the Improvement Plan, in particular plans for better consultation and how Members might better feed views of their constituents into the process.	Internal	??
Copeland Homes	Monitor OSC Soc	Members wish to receive a report annually on progress towards the decent homes standard in addition to the Chair and Vice Chair's participation in the liaison group, and the standard of maintenance and repairs.	External	??
IDEA Review of Arts development - Action Plan	Monitor OSC Soc	IDEA undertook a review of Art development in 2004-05. Their final report – due to be issued shortly – has a number of action points which Members will wish to challenge and monitor.	Internal	??

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Provision of street cleansing and refuse collection service	Challenge OSC Env	Members are concerned about the number of complaints that they themselves are dealing with about, in particular, the refuse service (missed bins etc). They want to monitor the performance of the service itself (not just recycling targets).	Internal	??
Nuclear Opportunities Group	Monitor OSC EC	Members want to be kept informed of all developments and receive regular briefings from the Manager of the Nuclear Opportunities Group.	External	23 May 2005 12 Sep 2005 6 March 2005
Government Strategic Forum	Monitor OSC EC	Members want to learn and keep abreast of initiatives, action plans and outcomes.	External	??
Huntsman/Rhodia	Monitor OSC EC	Members are aware that the Environment Agency has the lead role in the clean up and development of the site and want to be kept informed of progress.	External	??
Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership	Monitor OSC SOC	There has been a suggestion from the LSP that a joint scrutiny is undertaken (Districts and County) on the Safer, Stronger Communities Fund, which is a new way of delivering funding. Whether or not this is achieved, Members would like to examine how the fund is being spent for the benefit of Copeland.	External	??
Cleator Moor Single Regeneration Budget	Monitor/Challenge OSC EC	As this wraps up, Members would like to see an evaluation of the programme, including how the money was spent and how many jobs were created.	External	18 th July – Judith Brown (813536)

POLICY DEVELOPMENT/WORKING GROUPS

ITEM	TYPE	BACKGROUND	INT/EXT	TIMESCALE
Bereavement Strategy	Working Group OSC Env	A sub group of Members is assisting in the development of a bereavement strategy	Internal	Delayed
Green Spaces Strategy	Working Group OSC Env	A sub group of Members is assisting in the development of a green spaces strategy.	Internal	Delayed
CCTV	Working Group OSC Soc	A sub group of Members is working with the Portfolio Holder and department on provision of CCTV.	Internal	Already started
IT	Working Group OSC PR	A sub group of Members is working with the Portfolio Holder and department on the future provision of IT services.	Internal	Ad hoc regularly
Audit	Working Group OSC PR	A sub group of Members provides quarterly monitoring.	Internal	Quarterly