

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Improving Places Select Commission – 16 March 2021

Report Title

Work Programme Update

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Jo Brown, Assistant Chief Executive

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

To provide an update on the Work Programme of the Improving Places Select Commission.

Recommendations

1. That the Work Programme of the Improving Places Select Commission be noted.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 Work Programme – Improving Places Select Commission

Background Papers

Agendas of Improving Places Select Commission during the 2020/21 Municipal Year
Minutes of Improving Places Select Commission during 2020/21 Municipal Year

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Not applicable

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Work Programme Update

1. Background

- 1.1 The remit of the Improving Places Select Commission (IPSC) is to undertake scrutiny activity in respect of all matters pertaining to the borough of Rotherham as a place. In broad terms, this remit relates to business and economic development, employment, emergency planning, environment, housing, climate change, leisure, culture and tourism, transport and highways, as well as regulatory services such as trading standards and environmental health. The breadth of functions and services that fall within the Commission's remit is significant.
- 1.2 The way in which the Commission discharges its scrutiny activity is a matter for itself, having regard to the provisions of the Constitution and any direction from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. The IPSC has chosen to scrutinise a range of issues through a combination of pre-decision scrutiny items, policy development, performance monitoring, information updates and follow up to previous scrutiny work.
- 1.3 The IPSC has six scheduled meetings over the course of 2020/21, representing a maximum of 18 hours of scrutiny per year – assuming 3 hours per meeting. Members therefore had to be selective in their choice of items for the work programme. The following key principles of effective scrutiny were considered in determining the work programme:
 - Selection – There is a need to prioritise so that high priority issues are scrutinised given the limited number of scheduled meetings and time available. Members should consider what can realistically and properly be reviewed at each meeting, taking into account the time needed to scrutinise each item and what the session is intended to achieve.
 - Value-added – Items had to have the potential to 'add value' to the work of the council and its partners.
 - Ambition – the Programme does not shy away from scrutinising issues that are of greatest concern, whether or not they are the primary responsibility of the council. The Local Government Act 2000 gave local authorities the power to do anything to promote economic, social and environmental wellbeing of local communities. Subsequent Acts have conferred specific powers to scrutinise health services, crime and disorder issues and to hold partner organisations to account.
 - Flexibility – The Work Programme maintains a degree of flexibility as required to respond to unforeseen issues/items for consideration during the year and to accommodate any further work that falls within the remit of this Commission.
 - Timing – The Programme has been designed to ensure that the scrutiny activity is timely and that, where appropriate, its findings and recommendations inform wider corporate developments or policy development cycles at a time when they can have most impact. The Work Programme also helps safeguard against duplication of work undertaken elsewhere.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Members are required to review their work programme at each meeting during the 2020/21 municipal year to give focus and structure to scrutiny activity to ensure that it effectively and efficiently supports and challenges the decision-making processes of the Council, and partner organisations, for the benefit of the people of the borough.
- 2.2 Some areas of recent scrutiny work that the Commission has previously completed may benefit from being re-examined in view of Covid-19, such as the implementation of changes by Dignity in respect of bereavement services. Other topics must be considered keeping in mind additional complexities that attend the pandemic, such as a cost/benefit analysis of Council buildings whose uses have diminished with the advent of working from home. Furthermore, the coming year is expected to see significant progress made on the Forge Island development and broader town centre public realm and housing improvements. These will continue to be of interest to Members.
- 2.3 The current work programme for Improving Places Select Commission is appended to this report.
- 2.4 Following this meeting, the Commission's remaining opportunity to undertake scrutiny will be on 16 March 2021. The items listed on the work programme for this meeting are:
 - Transportation – Active Travel, Transforming Cities
 - Aids and Adaptations Tenant Scrutiny Review

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 Members are recommended to endorse the work programme.

4. Consultation on proposal

- 4.1 The work programme has been subject to consultation with the Chair and Members of the IPSC. Regular discussions take place with Cabinet Members and officers in respect of the content and timeliness of items set out on the work programme.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The decision to endorse the work programme is a matter reserved to the Commission and will be effective immediately after consideration of this report.
- 5.2 The Statutory Scrutiny Officer (Head of Democratic Services) is accountable for the implementation of any decision in respect of the Commission's work programme. The Governance Advisor supporting the Commission is responsible on a day-to-day basis for the Commission's work programme. Members are recommended to delegate authority to the Governance Advisor to make amendments to the programme between meetings.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial or procurement implications arising from this report.

7. Legal Advice and Implications

7.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

7.2 The authority of the Select Commission to determine its work programme is detailed within the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules and Responsibility for Functions parts of the Constitution. The proposal to review the work programme is consistent with those provisions.

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

8.1 There are no direct human resources implications arising from this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

9.1 There are no implications for children and young people or vulnerable adults arising from this report.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

10.1 Whilst there are no specific equalities implications arising from this report, equalities and diversity are key considerations when developing and reviewing scrutiny work programmes. One of the key principles of scrutiny is to provide a voice for communities, and the work programme for this Commission has been prepared following feedback from Members representing those communities.

11. Implications for Partners

11.1 The Commission has a number of co-opted Members from RotherFed who contribute to the development and review of the work programme. Where other matters are being considered for inclusion on the work programme, relevant partners or external organisations are consulted on the proposed activity and its timeliness.

12. Risks and Mitigation

12.1 There are no risks arising from this report.

13. Accountable Officer(s)

Craig Tyler, Head of Democratic Services and Statutory Scrutiny Officer

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This report is published on the Council's [website](#).

Appendix 1 - Work Programme

Meeting Date	Agenda Items
9 June 2020	Housing Strategy Progress Update
	Initial Work Programme 2020-21
14 July 2020	Homelessness Prevention and Rough Sleeper Strategy Update
	Housing Income and Service Charges Update
	Revised Work Programme 2020-21
Aug 2020 Workshop	Housing Maintenance and Repairs
8 September 2020	Town Centre Update
	Bereavement Services Update
20 October 2020	Economic Recovery
	Energy Switching Scheme
Nov/Dec 2020 Working Groups	MIP Review – Cllr Ken Wyatt, Chair Flooding Alleviation – Cllr David Sheppard, Chair Building Use – Cllr Jeanette Mallinder, Chair
8 December 2020	Allotments Self-Management
	Cultural Strategy Implementation
	Thriving Neighbourhoods Annual Report
January 2021 Working Group	Homes Allocation Process – Cllr Rose McNeely
2 February 2021	Rotherham MBC Code of Practice for Highway Inspection and Assessment
	Council Plan Performance Measures - Exception Reporting
	Clean Air Zone
February 2021 Working Group	Ward Housing Hubs
16 March 2021	Transportation – Active Travel, Transforming Cities
	Aids and Adaptations Tenant Scrutiny Review
	Cultural Response to Covid-19

