Sheffield City Council

Report to Governance Committee

22nd November 2023

_____

Report of: Head of Policy and Partnerships

_____

Subject: Committee Work Programme

_____

Author of Report: Alice Nicholson, Policy & Improvement Officer

_____

Summary:

The Committee's Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for the Committee's consideration and discussion. This aims to show all known, substantive agenda items for forthcoming meetings of the Committee, to enable this committee, other committees, officers, partners and the public to plan their work with and for the Committee.

Any changes since the Committee's last meeting, including any new items, have been made in consultation with the Chair, and the document is always considered at the regular pre-meetings of the Committee.

The following potential sources of new items are included in this report, where applicable:
- Questions and petitions from the public, including those referred from Council
- References from Council or other committees (statements formally sent for this committee's attention)
- A list of issues, each with a short summary, which have been identified by the Committee or officers as potential items but which have not yet been scheduled (See Appendix 1)

The Work Programme will remain a live document and will be brought to each Committee meeting.

_____

Recommendations:

1. That the Committee's work programme, as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed, including any additions and amendments identified in Part 1. There are items identified for a Governance Committee discussion and recommendation.

2. That consideration be given to the further additions or adjustments to the work programme presented at Part 2 of Appendix 1.

3. Note the additional indications of items which are likely to need more intensive work (eg. citizen involvement, task and finish groups, policy review and development work) and consider implications for prioritisation of Governance Committee's forward workplan.

4. Consider any further issues to be explored by officers for inclusion on the future iteration of the work programme.

Background Papers: None

Category of Report: Open

COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Update on the Committee workplan for Governance Committee

1. At the previous Governance Committee in July, Members discussed the Committee's draft workplan. As part of the discussion, Members recognised that there a number of significant items which will need and will benefit from longer-term activity, including community involvement and leadership by task and finish groups from the Committee.

2. The Governance Committee's work is an essential part of the Council's commitment to continuously improve our committee system and how we work within it as Members, officers and with citizens and partners. However, there are significant constraints on Member and officer capacity and therefore, prioritising the items on the workplan to focus on the things Members most want to achieve in the municipal year is essential.

3. However, the Governance Committee's workplan contains a mix of items. Some are relatively self-contained (eg. with a paper outlining options and officer recommendations for the Committee to discuss and agree in one meeting) while others need much deeper development work with Member, citizen and officer time.

4. To make this clearer, the workplan has been updated to:
   - Reflect the live workplan for the committee as of 14th November
   - Include an officer steer on where items are likely to need more intensive development work

5. It is recommended that Members consider the current workplan and discuss items to prioritise over the coming months, particularly where there is policy development and involvement activity needed.

References from Council or other Committees

2.1 Any references sent to this Committee by Council, including any public questions, petitions and motions, or other committees since the last meeting are listed here, with commentary and a proposed course of action, as appropriate:

Issue	N/A
Referred from	
Details	
Commentary/ Action Proposed	

Member engagement, learning and policy development outside of Committee

3.1 Subject to the capacity and availability of councillors and officers, there are a range of ways in which Members can explore subjects, monitor information and develop their ideas about forthcoming decisions outside of formal meetings.

Appendix 2 is an example 'menu' of some of the ways this could be done. It is entirely appropriate that member development, exploration and policy development should in many cases take place in a private setting, to allow members to learn and formulate a position in a neutral space before bringing the issue into the public domain at a formal meeting.

2.2 Training & Skills Development - Induction programme for this committee.

Title	Description & Format	Date
N/A		

Appendix 1 – Work Programme

Part 1: Proposed additions and amendments to the work programme since the last meeting:

Item	Proposed Date	Note	Suggested approach
Governance Review Implementation Plan	Standing Item	To update the Committee on progress against actions in the Governance Review Implementation Plan and identify further actions for inclusion. (LB)	Regular update to Committee – update appended to this report (Document A)
Member Development Programme	20th July 23	Member Development Working Group to oversee member development activity and the Member Development Strategy 2021-2025, including skills and priorities for learning and development and the inclusion of learning from recent reviews, such as the LGA Peer Challenge and the Race Equality Commission Report. (JD)	Member Development Working Group established July 2023. Committee updated 12th Oct 2023. Further updates and involvement of the Governance Committee, as appropriate.
Public Questions Task and Finish Group	20th July 23 Report of findings and recommendation to 14th December Committee	As per the Governance Review recommendation: to formally agree the approach, terms of reference of, and appointment to, the task and finish work on public questions: • ensuring the process for citizens to ask public questions is clear, that public questions are triaged in a way that directs them to the most appropriate forum and that those forums are easy to access. • Considering processes for responding to public questions, ensuring a consistent approach that is fit for purpose in the Committee System.	Current timeline, activity appended to this report.
NHS governance and alignment with our committee system	12th October 2023 The work is on track to report back to the	Governance Committee to sponsor a task and finish group to consider appropriate Sheffield City Council membership of the forum that considers joint SCC and NHS commissioning and planning through a pooled budget under Section 75 of the NHS Act 2006.	Member Task and Finish but supported by Strategic Commissioning /

	February Governance Committee.	The group is formed of three members of the Governance Committee and one additional from each of the Groups in the administration. It has begun its work and has held two sessions, with a further two in the diary.	Strategy & Partnerships.
		The group is formed of three members of the Governance Committee and one additional from each of the Groups in the administration. It has begun its work and has held two sessions, with a further two in the diary. The work is on track to report back to the February Governance Committee meeting.	
Democratic participation Task and Finish Group	November 2023	**See separate Citizen Participation and Community Involvement: next steps item on this meeting agenda**	Will be a long-term project.

Will need dedicated Member and officer time outside of Gov Committee meetings |
| Devolution to Local Area Committees and review of Committee Remits | January 2024

Outline / setting up task and finish group report scheduled for December Governance Committee | To consider possible changes to decision making in Local Area Committees, and how this will impact on our overall governance arrangements.

Taking a holistic approach to reviewing committee remits, taking into account experience of 2023/24 workloads, any changes that have happened as a result of the development of Local Area Committees, and any changes to the council's operating/management structures.
A Task and Finish outline/set up report to December meeting. | Early conversations with LAC Chairs.

Will need significant Task and Finish work to look at Policy Committee remits and the interaction between LACs and city level committees. |
| Urgent Decisions | 28th February 24 | To review the use of urgent decisions to date, understand whether the process is working as intended, and whether changes are required (DH, JD) | Policy review work – officer research |

			presented to Committee
Charity Sub Committee and SCC role as a charitable trustee.	March 2024	To consider, and recommend to Full Council, the most appropriate way for the Council to discharge its role as Charitable Trustee	Likely to need Task and Finish group
Measuring the health of the Committee System	TBC	To develop and agree a performance framework and set of metrics to enable us to measure progress as the Committee System develops.	Should be developed and designed with citizens, officers and Members. Small number of workshops.
Changes to delegations	TBC	To consider, and recommend to Full Council, changes to delegations (including grants – initially discussed by the Committee in December 2022).	
Understanding Committee Roles and Remuneration	TBC	To consider the roles of Deputy Chair and Group Spokespeople, and whether current arrangements, including remuneration, are appropriate.	
Establishing a Sub-Committee of the Transport, Regeneration and Climate Change Policy Committee to deal with TROs	TBC	Consider the role of Governance Committee in this – is it development, info or approval, for example, is TRC ultimate decision maker on this, plus full council approval.	
International Relationships	TBC	To agree a framework setting out the purpose and arrangements for International Relationships	
Officer support and engagement in Policy Committees	TBC	To be defined – need to work with Governance Committee Members and officers to agree scope and focus	

Part 2: List of other potential items not yet included in the work programme

Issues that have recently been identified by the Committee, its Chair or officers as potential items but have not yet been added to the proposed work programme. If a Councillor raises an idea in a meeting and the committee agrees under recommendation 3 that this should be explored, it will appear either in the work programme or in this section of the report at the committee's next meeting, at the discretion of the Chair.

Topic	
Description	

Lead Officer/s	
Item suggested by	*Officer, Member, Committee, partners, public question, petition etc*
Type of item	*Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)*
Prior member engagement/ development required *(with reference to options in Appendix 2)*	
Public Participation/ Engagement approach*(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 3)*	
Lead Officer Commentary/Proposed Action(s)	

Part 3: Agenda Items for Forthcoming Meetings

Meeting 3	**22nd November 2023**	Time				
Topic	**Description**	**Lead Officer/s**	**Type of item** *Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)*	**Prior member engagement/ development required** *(with reference to options in Appendix 1)*	**Public Participation/ Engagement approach** *(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)*	**Final decision-maker (& date)** This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer
Democratic participation	• consider how we can drive progress in realising our ambitions for community involvement and engagement, taking learning from recent	James Henderson Laurie Brennan	Policy development	With Governance Committee and T&F	Yes – align to Future Sheffield and Member Development Programme	TBC – connects to S&R Committee and Full Council

	reviews including Involve, the LGA Peer Challenge, the Race Equality Commission Report • Publish the report that Involve have prepared for Sheffield • Complement Future Sheffield programme • Connect to Member Development Programme				
Standing items	• *Public Questions/ Petitions* • *Work Programme*				

Meeting 4	**14th December 2023**	Time				
Topic	**Description**	**Lead Officer/s**	**Type of item** *Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)*	**Prior member engagement/ development required** *(with reference to options in Appendix 1)*	**Public Participation/ Engagement approach** *(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)*	**Final decision-maker (& date)** This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer
Approach to Public Questions at Council Meetings	Task and finish group report of findings and recommendation	Laurie Brennan / Alice Nicholson				
Devolution to Local Area	Outline / setting up task and finish group					

Committees and review of Committee Remits						
Standing items	• *Public Questions/ Petitions* • *Work Programme*					

Meeting 5	**17th January 2024**	Time				
Topic	**Description**	**Lead Officer/s**	**Type of item** *Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)*	**Prior member engagement/ development required** *(with reference to options in Appendix 1)*	**Public Participation/ Engagement approach** *(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)*	**Final decision-maker (& date)** This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer
Committee Remits and LACs	To consider possible changes to decision making in Local Area Committees, and how this will impact on our overall governance arrangements. Taking a holistic approach to reviewing committee remits, taking into account experience of 2023/24 workloads, any changes that have happened as a result of the development of Local Area Committees, and any changes to the council's	James Henderson David Hollis Lorraine Wood	Policy Development	For Committee to scope	Yes – to be developed	Full Council (AGM 2024)

	operating/management structures.					
Standing items	• *Public Questions/ Petitions* • *Work Programme*					

Meeting 6	**28th February 2024**	Time				
Topic	**Description**	**Lead Officer/s**	**Type of item** *Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)*	**Prior member engagement/ development required** *(with reference to options in Appendix 1)*	**Public Participation/ Engagement approach** *(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)*	**Final decision-maker (& date)** This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer
NHS governance and alignment with our committee system	Report of task and finish group	Dan Spicer				
Urgent Decisions	To review the use of urgent decisions to date, understand whether the process is working as intended, and whether changes are required					
Standing items	• *Public Questions/ Petitions* • *Work Programme*					

Meeting 8	27th March 2024	Time				
Topic	**Description**	**Lead Officer/s**	**Type of item** *Decision/Referral to decision-maker/Pre-decision (policy development)/Post-decision (service performance/ monitoring)*	**Prior member engagement/ development required** *(with reference to options in Appendix 1)*	**Public Participation/ Engagement approach** *(with reference to toolkit in Appendix 2)*	**Final decision-maker (& date)** *This Cttee/Another Cttee (eg S&R)/Full Council/Officer*
Charity Sub Committee and SCC role as a charitable trustee.	To consider, and recommend to Full Council, the most appropriate way for the Council to discharge its role as Charitable Trustee	David Hollis	Referral to decision maker		To be defined	Full Council (AGM 2024)
Standing items	• *Public Questions/ Petitions* • *Work Programme*					

Appendix 2 – Menu of options for member engagement, learning and development prior to formal Committee consideration

Members should give early consideration to the degree of pre-work needed before an item appears on a formal agenda.

All agenda items will anyway be supported by the following:

- Discussion well in advance as part of the work programme item at Pre-agenda meetings. These take place in advance of each formal meeting, before the agenda is published and they consider the full work programme, not just the immediate forthcoming meeting. They include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers
- Discussion and, where required, briefing by officers at pre-committee meetings in advance of each formal meeting, after the agenda is published. These include the Chair, Vice Chair and all Group Spokespersons from the committee, with officers.
- Work Programming items on each formal agenda, as part of an annual and ongoing work programming exercise
- Full officer report on a public agenda, with time for a public discussion in committee
- Officer meetings with Chair & VC as representatives of the committee, to consider addition to the draft work programme, and later to inform the overall development of the issue and report, for the committee's consideration.

The following are examples of some of the optional ways in which the committee may wish to ensure that they are sufficiently engaged and informed prior to taking a public decision on a matter. In all cases the presumption is that these will take place in private, however some meetings could happen in public or eg be reported to the public committee at a later date.

These options are presented in approximately ascending order of the amount of resources needed to deliver them. Members must prioritise carefully, in consultation with officers, which items require what degree of involvement and information in advance of committee meetings, in order that this can be delivered within the officer capacity available.

The majority of items cannot be subject to the more involved options on this list, for reasons of officer capacity.

- Written briefing for the committee or all members (email)
- All-member newsletter (email)
- Requests for information from specific outside bodies etc.
- All-committee briefings (private or, in exceptional cases, in-committee)
- All-member briefing (virtual meeting)
- Facilitated policy development workshop (potential to invite external experts / public, see appendix 3)
- Site visits (including to services of the council)
- Task and Finish group (one at a time, one per cttee)

Furthermore, a range of public participation and engagement options are available to inform Councillors, see appendix 3.

Appendix 3 – Public engagement and participation toolkit

Public Engagement Toolkit

On 23 March 2022 Full Council agreed the following:

A toolkit to be developed for each committee to use when considering its 'menu of options' for ensuring the voice of the public has been central to their policy development work. Building on the developing advice from communities and Involve, committees should make sure they have a clear purpose for engagement; actively support diverse communities to engage; match methods to the audience and use a range of methods; build on what's worked and existing intelligence (SCC and elsewhere); and be very clear to participants on the impact that engagement will have.

The list below builds on the experiences of Scrutiny Committees and latterly the Transitional Committees and will continue to develop. The toolkit includes (but is not be limited to):

    a. Public calls for evidence
    b. Issue-focused workshops with attendees from multiple backgrounds (sometimes known as 'hackathons') led by committees
    c. Creative use of online engagement channels
    d. Working with VCF networks (eg including the Sheffield Equality Partnership) to seek views of communities
    e. Co-design events on specific challenges or to support policy development
    f. Citizens assembly style activities
    g. Stakeholder reference groups (standing or one-off)
    h. Committee / small group visits to services
    i. Formal and informal discussion groups
    j. Facilitated communities of interest around each committee (eg a mailing list of self-identified stakeholders and interested parties with regular information about forthcoming decisions and requests for contributions or volunteers for temporary co-option)
    k. Facility for medium-term or issue-by-issue co-option from outside the Council onto Committees or Task and Finish Groups. Co-optees of this sort at Policy Committees would be non-voting.

This public engagement toolkit is intended to be a quick 'how-to' guide for Members and officers to use when undertaking participatory activity through committees.

It will provide an overview of the options available, including the above list, and cover:

- How to focus on purpose and who we are trying to reach
- When to use and when not to use different methods
- How to plan well and be clear to citizens what impact their voice will have
- How to manage costs, timescales, scale.

There is an expectation that Members and Officers will be giving strong consideration to the public participation and engagement options for each item on a committee's work programme, with reference to the above list a-k.

Committee Work Programme (document A)

Governance Review Implementation Plan update (November 2023)

1. In the Six Month Review of Governance, Full Council approved the Governance Review Implementation Plan (GRIP) which predominantly comprises of practical, officer-led actions to improve the function of our committee system. Along with practical actions, there are a number of items which are work in progress as they are part of the Governance Committee's workplan for this year (eg. democratic participation).

2. Governance Committee agreed to receive regular updates on the delivery of the actions in the GRIP and where appropriate, to receive and consider draft content (eg. draft guidance to support the committee system).

3. To help bring to life the material in the GRIP itself, the below summarises the key achievements from the GRIP to date along with actions we still need to complete.

Improving how we explain the system

This was a critical part of the Governance Review and focused on how we better enable Members, citizens and officers in SCC to navigate the system and support committees to be effective in their role.

What we've done

- Rebranded and reformatted the democracy area of the SCC website to make it cleaner and easier to navigate for anyone trying to find dates or content for Committee meetings.
  See: https://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/mgListCommittees.aspx?bcr=1

- Carrying on work to improve citizen involvement in our committees through a deep dive into public questions and petitions with citizens and stakeholders, (interim findings on Governance Committee, 12th October).

- Re-instated the Member Development Working Group to support Member learning and development. This has included work to improve the role profiles of Members within the Committee System.

What we still need to do

- Develop solutions and implement improvement to our approach to Public Questions with citizens and officers, report of findings and recommendations scheduled for December Governance Committee.

- Continue to improve the accessibility of our Committee meetings both in terms of physical and online access, working with the Sheffield Equality Partnership network. This includes further testing hybrid technology for meetings and using less formal places in the Town Hall for committee meetings.

Improving the support we provide to those working in the system

What we've done

- Provided support and signposting to wellbeing advice and support for Members through the internal Member Newsletters

Committee Work Programme (document A)

- Updated internal approaches to Policy Committee workplans so that the overall set of workplans are regularly discussed by Committee Chairs and the Senior Leadership Team to ensure we better manage cross-cutting issues and support cross-committee working.

- Improved briefing guidance available to officers, particularly to support clearer work planning and support better committee system oversight by the S&R Committee

- Created a SharePoint portal to support officers to better navigate the Committee System. This includes access to guidance on work planning, briefings, decision and policy report templates, and guidance on key impact assessments (EIAs, CIAs).

- Achieved a consistent increase in the number of EIAs being completed and published with reports, ensuring we are evidencing any implications for people in Sheffield and appropriate mitigations.

What we still need to do

- We need to develop the skills of our officers to improve the quality and consistency of reports being presented to committees. We are working with our HR Team to develop the learning and development needed.

- Make it easier for officers to develop and get reports completed and published on time using the Mod.Gov app.

- Finalise a new policy toolkit to support officers engaging Committees in policy development.

Supporting development of our governance beyond the Six Month Review

What we've done

- Implemented Member Questions at Policy Committees, building on the established approach used at Full Council

- Introduced a proactive work planning approach for Full Council meetings, working cross-party with Whips

- Introduced new word limits on Notices of Motion at ordinary meetings of Full Council

What we still need to do

- Review the remits of Policy Committees and the associated relationship with Local Area Committees (part of the Governance Committee's work plan for this year)

- Support the improvement of democratic participation in the Committee System, complementing the work in the Future Sheffield programme to transform our approach to citizen engagement at SCC.

Committee Work Programme (document B)

Governance Committee task and finish group – Approach to public questions at Council meetings
Timeline November 2023

2023	November						13	14	15	16	17		20	21	22	23	24		27	28	29	30	December 1		4	5	6	7	8		11	12	13	14
	6	7	8	9	10		13	14	15	16	17		20	21	22	23	24		27	28	29	30	1		4	5	6	7	8		11	12	13	14
PQ T&F Group																																		
Workshop Plan inc. tech		X																																
Officer Insight / Iteration Workshop								X																										
Citizen Solutions Workshop										X																								
Draft Recommendations sense check															X	X	X																	
Draft Report to PQ T&F group																				X	X													
Completion of Report to GC																									*									
Publication of Report to GC																											*							
Governance Committee																																		*