

## **MEMBER INDUCTION AND WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16**

Officer contact: Charles Meakings, [charles\\_meakings@wycombe.gov.uk](mailto:charles_meakings@wycombe.gov.uk), 01494-421980

### ***What is the Commission being asked to do?***

- (i) To consider the proposed induction arrangements at the first meeting of the Commission following the elections, on 17 June 2015; and
- (ii) To note the emerging work programme that will be submitted to the Commission's meeting on 17 June, 2105.

### **Executive Summary**

1. This report outlines the components of the induction session for the Members of the Improvement and Review Commission, which will be formed after the district council elections on 7 May this year.
2. Details of the emerging work programme that will be submitted for consideration to the first meeting on 17 June are outlined, which can be changed and added to as necessary at that meeting.

### **Background and Issues**

#### **Member Induction for Improvement and Review Commission**

3. As well as the general induction programme for all Members, it is proposed to use the first part of the Commission's meeting on 17 June 2015 to familiarise Members with their role on the Improvement and Review Commission.
4. The session will cover:
  - The improvement and scrutiny roles of the Commission.
  - The relationship between the Commission, the Cabinet and the Council.
  - The various ways Members can propose items for consideration at Commission meetings and for inclusion in the work programme.
  - The call-in process.
  - The emerging work programme for 2015/16.
5. The two key reference documents will be:
  - The Commission's Scrutiny Guide (as agreed on 18 June 2014)
  - The Commission's Protocol as contained in the Constitution (as agreed by Council 26 February 2015)

### **Emerging Work Programme 2015/16**

6. The Commission has successfully completed its work programme for the current year.
7. The work programme will be submitted to the meeting on 17 June 2015 for consideration and approval. At the current time, the following topics will be submitted for consideration:

### **Local Plan Task and Finish Group**

The Commission will be asked to consider whether to establish this Task and Finish Group to input into the review of the Local Plan.

Cabinet considered the current position with regard to the Local Development Scheme at its meeting on 2 March, 2015.

### **Budget Task and Finish Group**

This is an annual feature of the Commission's work. The key issue to be addressed will be regarding the focus of the Task and Finish Group's work and therefore the timing.

There are two broad options:

#### **Option 1- Review of the Council's 2016/17 Budget**

The primary focus of the Group's work would be to look at the budget being proposed for 2016/17 and to make recommendations to Cabinet at its meeting on 8 February 2016. The bulk of the work would be undertaken during December and January, given the timings of the Government's funding announcements. It would not look at proposing new schemes or initiatives.

#### **Option 2 – Medium-Term Look Ahead**

Under this option the Task and Finish Group would look at the Council's priorities and the medium-term financial strategy, with a view to identify further schemes and initiatives to assist the Council. In view of the need to analyse and cost schemes and initiatives the Group would start work in September and look to report to Cabinet on 16 November, 2015, thus allowing time for any agreed recommendations to be taken forward by Cabinet with appropriate funding included in the 2016/17 budget.

8. In addition to the above, Councillor Trevor Snaith has submitted a topic for inclusion in the Commission's work programme regarding the role of ward members and officers in the planning process and planning enforcement, which is attached as **Appendix A**. A question on this was asked at the Council Meeting (26 February 2015) when the Cabinet Member replied that like all Councils, it was acknowledged that resources were stretched but we were managing to the best of our abilities. If this was to be taken forward care would need to be exercised to ensure that the remit of the review did not cross over into staffing matters or non-executive matters under the purview of the Planning Committee.
9. The Commission's view is sought on whether this topic should be added to the emerging work programme for consideration on 17 June 2015.

### **Next Steps**

10. A report will be made to the 17 June 2015 meeting.

### **Background Papers\***

None.