

Neighbourhood Services, Planning and Countryside Scrutiny Committee Work Programme Descriptors 2020/2021

(The Work Programme is reviewed at each meeting and as such is subject to change)

Date / Timing	Overarching Item	Officer & Cabinet Member	Scrutiny Focus	Strategic Focus
28 th September 2020	Forward Work Programme 2020/2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr Declan Sammon (Chair) • Scrutiny Committee Members 	The Committee to discuss the draft Work Programme and to officially agree and sign off the Work Programme for 2020-2021.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF) • Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I)
	Coronavirus Update – Response and Transition to Recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer - Judith Jones • Portfolio Member - David Hughes • Waste Manager - Paul Davies 	Scrutiny & Challenge: - The committee has requested a report to give an update on how Neighbourhood Services are responding to the demands and challenges due to the Coronavirus pandemic. This report should also outline the services transition to recovery and lessons learned going forward.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I)
2 nd November 2020	Environment Act (Wales) 2016 - Re: Weed Spraying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer - Judith Jones • Portfolio Member - David Hughes • Street Scene Manager - Rob Barnett • Street Cleansing and Fly-tipping Manager - Paul Jones 	Scrutiny & Challenge: - Public authorities must now seek to 'maintain and enhance biodiversity' in the course of exercising their functions' (but without prejudice to the proper exercise of those functions) and in so doing 'promote the resilience of ecosystems'. Therefore, the committee seeks to develop a clear understanding of the Councils policy of weed spraying within the County Borough. The report should comprise of two main areas and how they impact on the Environmental Act (Wales) 2016, the first part should explain Councils the current policy for highway weed spraying (i.e. road and street spraying) and the second part of the report should focus on and give details on the Japanese Knotweed policy (including private land). In addition to this, the committee would like further information on what weed spraying options can/could be offered to residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment Act (Wales) 2016 • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF)
	Fly Tipping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer - Judith Jones • Portfolio Member - David Hughes • Street Cleansing and Fly-tipping Manager - Paul Jones 	Scrutiny & Challenge: - Fly Tipping The fly-tipping theme has been regularly presented to the committee in previous years. As this is a contentious topic, the scrutiny members would like a report that gives a current update on fly-tipping within the borough, which also makes specific reference to the following areas:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF)

As per the Audit Wales (AW) scrutiny forward work programmes should: provide a clear rationale for topic selection; be more outcome focussed; ensure that the method of scrutiny is best suited to the topic area and the outcome desired; align scrutiny programmes with the council's performance management, self-evaluation and improvement arrangements.

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ review of surveillance cameras ➤ overview of Fly-Tipping Policies (private land / Council land) ➤ latest figures/data and the affects, if any, of recent HWRC closure ➤ dog fouling (Public Spaces Protection Orders) 	
	Forward Work Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Support Officer – Sian Lyons-Nicholas 	Scrutiny and Challenge: - To review the items due to be presented at this Scrutiny Committee meeting, ensuring a clear brief of the Committee’s expectations are available to report authors who will be drafting the report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF) • Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I)
7th December 2020 Meeting Cancelled	Energy Saving / Carbon Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer - Judith Jones • Portfolio Member - David Hughes • Building and Property Services Manager - Chris Jones • Energy Engineer - Iain Goldsworthy 	Scrutiny & Challenge: - A Carbon Management report was presented to scrutiny on 11th March 2019 (and updated on 16 th September 2019), whereby the officers attending stated several saving achieved since the employment of the new Carbon Management Officer. The scrutiny members have requested an update on the savings made to date, and what impact has this work had on the carbon footprint of the borough. The report should also refer to statutory and other measure reported by the team and if the Authority is on track of achieving its targets.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF) • Carbon Management Plan
	Community Asset Transfer Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer - Judith Jones • Portfolio Member - David Hughes • Estates Manager – Lisa Emmerson 	Scrutiny & Challenge: - The Council is committed to being sustainable and resilient and therefore, the committee has requested a report to be presented on the Community Asset Transfer Policy with specific focus on the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ community engagement; ➤ leases to community groups; and ➤ promoting biodiversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I)
	Forward Work Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Support Officer – Sian Lyons-Nicholas 	Scrutiny and Challenge: - To review the items due to be presented at the next Committee meeting, ensuring a clear brief of the Committee’s expectations are available to report authors who will be drafting the report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF) • Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I)

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18th January 2021	Overview of Property Services information report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer - Judith Jones Portfolio Member - David Hughes Building and Property Services Manager - Chris Jones 	Scrutiny & Challenge: - The committee seeks to develop a clear understanding of the Property Services department and requests a report be presented to committee giving an overview of the service area. In addition to this, the report should include a detailed programme plan of the service and identify the key areas for development and improvement for 2020/21.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I) Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF)
	Fly-tipping Update	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer - Judith Jones Portfolio Member - David Hughes Street Cleansing and Fly-tipping Manager - Paul Jones 	Scrutiny and Challenge: - The Scrutiny Members have requested a short fly-tipping update report to be presented, which should include the Christmas period information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I) Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF)
	Fly-tipping on Unregistered Land	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer - Judith Jones Portfolio Member - David Hughes Street Cleansing and Fly-tipping Manager - Paul Jones 	Scrutiny and Challenge: - Scrutiny Members will receive a report outlining the implications of the removal of fly tipped waste from unregistered land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I) Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF) Wales Towards Zero Waste
	Dog Fouling Public Space Protection Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Senior Solicitor – Simon Jones 	Policy Development & Review: The Committee will receive a report containing the key findings of a recent consultation exercise in relation to this topic, which links to earlier Committee discussions around responsible dog ownership. Committee Members will consider the report to ensure the views and feedback of Committee Members is included where the Council is required to develop a policy document in relation to addressing this issue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF)
	Forward Work Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny Support Officer – Sian Lyons-Nicholas 	Scrutiny and Challenge: - To review the items due to be presented at the next Committee meeting, ensuring a clear brief of the Committee’s expectations are available to report authors who will be drafting the report.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF) Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I)

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1st March 2021	Nature Recovery Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer - Judith Jones • Portfolio Member - David Hughes • Ecologist & Countryside Officer - Matt Davies 	<p>Scrutiny & Challenge: - The committee received a report regarding the Council's Nature Recovery Action Plan on 13th January 2020. The Scrutiny Members have requested a report that provides a current position statement on the actions within the plan along with any details of issues/barriers experienced and how these have been overcome.</p> <p>In addition to this, the committee would like to receive specific information on the grass cutting priority plans. The report is also to consider key areas for development and improvement for 2020/21.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF) • Environment Act (Wales) 2016
	Energy Saving / Carbon Management Item re-scheduled from 07.12.2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer - Judith Jones • Portfolio Member - David Hughes • Building and Property Services Manager - Chris Jones • Energy Engineer - Iain Goldsworthy 	<p>Scrutiny & Challenge: - A Carbon Management report was presented to scrutiny on 11th March 2019 (and updated on 16th September 2019), whereby the officers attending stated several savings achieved since the employment of the new Carbon Management Officer. The scrutiny members have requested an update on the savings made to date, and what impact has this work had on the carbon footprint of the borough. The report should also refer to statutory and other measure reported by the team and if the Authority is on track of achieving its targets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF) • Carbon Management Plan
	Community Asset Transfer Policy Item re-scheduled from 07.12.2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer - Judith Jones • Portfolio Member - David Hughes • Estates Manager – Lisa Emmerson 	<p>Scrutiny & Challenge: -</p> <p>The Council is committed to being sustainable and resilient and therefore, the committee has requested a report to be presented on the Community Asset Transfer Policy with specific focus on the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ community engagement; ➤ leases to community groups; and ➤ promoting biodiversity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF) • Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I)

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	Tree Policy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer - Judith Jones • Portfolio Member - David Hughes • Andrew Taylor 	<p>Scrutiny & Challenge: Trees are an important part of the environment bringing many health and social benefits to the district and the Council is committed to maintaining – and where possible increasing – the level of tree cover across Merthyr Tydfil. There are, however, a number of conflicts which may arise where the Council’s trees are located close to neighbouring properties and the aim of this policy is to set out the Council’s stance in dealing with these conflicts and to clarify the Council’s legal obligations.</p> <p>The Committee has requested they review all developing/refocused policies. To this end, the Committee will review the draft Tree Policy; and provide any required challenge to seek clarity on its content.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF) • Environment Act (Wales) 2016
	Forward Work Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny Support Officer – Maria Purnell 	<p>Scrutiny and Challenge: - To review the items due to be presented at the next Committee meeting, ensuring a clear brief of the Committee’s expectations are available to report authors who will be drafting the report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF) • Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I)
12th April 2021	Update report on Black Bin Charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer - Judith Jones • Portfolio Member - David Hughes • Waste Manager -Paul Davies • Waste Strategy Team Leader - Stephen Thomas 	<p>Scrutiny & Challenge: - The Council introduced a charging policy of £15.00 to replace black bins some time ago. The Committee has requested an update report detailing how much money has been generated and/or saved by the Council since the introduction of this charge for the replacement bin. The report should also include specific data such as the number of black bins replaced in comparison to previous years. In addition to this, the committee wish to be provided with information on where bins are not being replaced and what the Council policy is on this matter.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I) • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF)
	Improving Recycling Rates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer - Judith Jones • Portfolio Member - David Hughes • Waste Manager -Paul Davies 	<p>Scrutiny & Challenge: - Improving the recycling rates is one of the key priorities to Neighbourhood Services. To ensure that the Authority continues to deliver a waste and recycling service that meets the needs and aspirations of our residents whilst continuing to attain the ever more stringent statutory recycling targets, the Committee has requested a report specifically on the areas:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I) • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF)

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste Strategy Team Leader - Stephen Thomas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> details on education and enforcement solutions in order to improve the quality of materials and increase participation in recycling services. frequency of residual waste collections 'Keeping Up With The Joneses' campaign update vehicle breakdowns (e.g. what are the barriers? how much does this cost the Authority in comparison to previous years?) 	
	<p>Self-Evaluation Findings: Questions 1, 2 and 3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Officer - Judith Jones Portfolio Member - David Hughes Street Scene Manager - Rob Barnett 	<p>Scrutiny and Challenge: Made up of 3 key questions the re-focused self-evaluation process supports Chief Officers and service teams to reflect on what they achieved and identify and set priorities for improvement. The Committee will receive the service's response to the second key question which is linked to Service Delivery. They will be required to scrutinise the proforma outlining the findings of the process (along with relevant supporting evidence); and review the validity of the judgment ascribed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I) Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF)
	<p>Forward Work Programme</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny Support Officer – Sian Lyons-Nicholas 	<p>Scrutiny and Challenge: - To review the items due to be presented at the next Committee meeting, ensuring a clear brief of the Committee's expectations are available to report authors who will be drafting the report.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF) Recovery, Transformation and Improvement Plan (RT&I)

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Additional Topics for Consideration			Strategic Focus
<p>Responsible Dog Ownership</p> <p>(The scrutiny focus would need to be reviewed when the PSPO has been agreed.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Officer - Judith Jones • Street Cleansing and Fly-tipping Manager - Paul Jones 	<p>Scrutiny & Challenge: - This committee has an obligation to ensure the County Borough is as clean and safe as possible, therefore the scrutiny members have requested a report on 'Responsible Dog Ownership'. This report should give a brief overview on dog fouling and the data/statistics within the County Borough (compared to national data supplied by Keep Wales Tidy), also providing specific details to answer the following questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the current actions taken with regards to dog fouling, stray dogs, animal attacks? • What is being done by the department to raise awareness and encourage responsible dog ownership in Merthyr Tydfil, to reduce dog fouling, prioritise domestic pet welfare, minimise dog attacks on children / adults, and safety in outdoor spaces such as parks? • Controlling dog fouling under public spaces protection orders was introduced by the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014, who would enforce a PSPO? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Plan - Focus on The Future (FotF)