

<b>OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE</b>	<b>DATE</b> 26 January 2021	<b>ITEM NO:</b> 8
<b>TITLE</b> Forward Plan	<b>WARD (S)</b> All	
<b>CHIEF OFFICER</b> Director of Communities & Environment	<b>CABINET MEMBER</b> Leader of the Council	

## **I. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1 To note the upcoming executive decisions set out in the [Forward Plan](#) for the period January 2021 – April 2021, as set out at Appendix I, and to determine any items for scrutiny.

## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Council reintroduced a Forward Plan in late 2015 to further improve transparency in decision making and to ensure that all Members and the public had greater notice of upcoming business. This followed proposals put forward by Overview and Scrutiny councillors that were welcomed by the Leader.
- 2.2 The publication of the Forward Plan is in addition to the requirements of the revised 2012 Access to Information Regulations and is published monthly. It coincides with the publication date for the required Access to Information Notices for Cabinet and also gives an indication of non-key decisions to be taken by Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members.
- 2.3 Publication of the Forward Plan is in addition to the following transparency measures:
- All councillors are notified of an upcoming key decision to be taken by a Cabinet Member or Chief Officer and sent a link to the published report;
  - All councillors are notified when a Cabinet Member or Chief Officer has taken a key decision and are notified of the call in arrangements;
  - Party Group Leaders, Party Whips, the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Scrutiny Panel Chairs and where relevant, ward councillors, are informed of upcoming non-key decisions to be taken by Cabinet Members and subsequently all councillors are notified of the decision and the call in arrangements; and

- With regard to Cabinet, all councillors are notified both of matters included on the Cabinet's agenda in advance of the meeting and when the discussion has been taken, together with the call in arrangements.

### **3. Report**

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 17 September 2015 considered a report titled 'Improving the Effectiveness of Scrutiny – Action Plan Update', which included items relating to decision making. It was felt that there should be more consultation and information before decisions are made and that decision making timescales were often too short to enable Members to comment and respond. An improved Forward Plan and pre-decision scrutiny were considered to be ways of improving the current arrangements.
- 3.2 The Committee agreed that the Forward Plan be considered at its meetings on a regular basis in order to identify any decisions that it felt should be subject to scrutiny; the plan for June – September 2020 (inclusive) is set out at Appendix I.
- 3.3 The Forward Plan, as presented, is to be considered as a view of the scheduling of decisions at a particular time. This scheduling of business is a continuous process and it can be expected there will have been changes to the Forward Plan since the time of publication. The current status of these decisions can be viewed on the [Council's website](#).

### **4. Comments of the Director of Legal Services**

- 4.1 There are no additional legal comments.

### **Background Papers**

None other than previously published Committee papers

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