

Report of Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support

Report to Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)

Date: 26 October 2017

Subject: Work Schedule – October 2017

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

1 Purpose of this report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the current municipal year.

2 Main issues

2.1 At its initial meeting in June 2017, the Scrutiny Board discussed a range of matters for possible inclusion within the overall work schedule for 2017/18. The areas discussed included the following matters:

- Apprenticeships (for newly recruited and existing employees) and the apprenticeships levy;
- Equalities – in particular work around ensuring Leeds City Council has a workforce that is representative of the population;
- Emergency planning and business continuity – with specific reference to (a) building security and (b) recent events in Manchester (Manchester Arena) and London (Grenfell Tower);
- Performance of specific service areas;
- General application of Contract Procedural Rules and levels of 'off-contract' spending.
- Invest to save developments – and the specific application in relation to ICT developments;
- Elections, voter registration rates and work targeting 'hard to reach' groups;
- Licencing policy review (due January / February 2018) and monitoring;
- Business rate revenue and appeals;
- General overview of the Council's financial health.

2.2 Specific responses and/or additional information on a number of areas have already been provided to members of the Scrutiny Board through a series of briefing notes. The areas included:

- The Apprenticeships Levy;
- Hate crime prevention;
- Voter registration rates and work targeting 'hard to reach' groups; and,
- Funding arrangements for Neighbourhood Networks.

2.3 An outline work schedule is presented at Appendix 1 for consideration by the Scrutiny Board. In considering the outline work schedule, it is important to allow sufficient flexibility to reflect matters as they may arise during the course of the year. As such, it is also important to recognise that the work schedule presented may be subject to change and should be considered to be indicative rather than precisely definitive.

2.4 In order to deliver the work schedule, the Board may need to take a flexible approach and undertaken activities outside the formal schedule of meetings – such as working groups and site visits, where deemed appropriate. This flexible approach may also require additional formal meetings of the Scrutiny Board.

Specific service areas

2.5 A proposed timetable for considering specific service areas and associated performance is included elsewhere on the agenda. Subject to the Board discussion, the work schedule will need amending to reflect the proposals and/or any amendments agreed by the Board.

Business Rates Inquiry

2.6 At its meeting in September, the Board considered a range of information associated with its inquiry around business rates, the associated risks to the Council and mitigating actions. The Board identified the need for follow-up / additional information which has been provided to members of the Board.

2.7 Looking forward, arrangements are being put in place for representatives from the Valuation Office Agency to attend the Board meeting in November. At this meeting, therefore, there is an opportunity to identify any specific matters to be addressed in November 2017.

2.8 Members will also be aware that arrangements are being put in place for all Board Members to attend a Valuation Tribunal Hearing on 12 December 2017. Any further details regarding this visit will be outlined at the meeting.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked to consider and agree (or amend) the overall work schedule as the basis for the Board's work for the remainder of 2017/18.

4. Background papers¹

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include

4.1 None used