

Report of Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support

Report to Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)

Date: 29 November 2017

Subject: Work Schedule – November 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 remainder of 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 a range of matters which were then used to help formulate an outline work schedule.
- 2.2 The latest iteration of the work schedule is attached as Appendix 1 for consideration and agreement of the Scrutiny Board – subject to any identified and agreed amendments.
- 2.3 Executive Board minutes from the meetings held on xx October 2017 and 15 November 2017 are also attached to this report at Appendix 2 and Appendix 3, respectively. The Scrutiny Board is asked to consider and note the Executive Board minutes, insofar as they relate to the remit of the Scrutiny Board; and identify any matter where specific scrutiny activity may be warranted, and therefore subsequently incorporated into the work schedule.

Developing the work schedule

- 2.4 The work schedule should not be considered to be a fixed and rigid schedule, it should be recognised as something that can be adapted and changed to reflect any new and emerging issues throughout the year; and also reflect any timetable issues that might occur from time to time.

- 2.5 However, when considering any developments and/or modifications to the work schedule, effort should be undertaken to:
- Avoid unnecessary duplication by having a full appreciation of any existing forums already having oversight of, or monitoring a particular issue.
 - Ensure any Scrutiny undertaken has clarity and focus of purpose and will add value and can be delivered within an agreed time frame.
 - Avoid pure “information items” except where that information is being received as part of a policy/scrutiny review
 - Seek advice about available resources and relevant timings taking into consideration the workload across the Scrutiny Boards and the type of Scrutiny taking place
 - Build in sufficient flexibility to enable the consideration of urgent matters that may arise during the year
- 2.6 In addition, 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.

Developments since the previous Scrutiny Board meeting

Service area performance

- 2.7 The work schedule has been amended to reflect the Board’s discussion about monitoring specific service areas. .

Business Rates Inquiry

- 2.8 At the beginning of the municipal year, the Scrutiny Board identified ‘Business Rates’ as a specific inquiry topic. To date, the Scrutiny Board has considered a range of information and further details are presented elsewhere on the agenda.
- 2.9 As part of the inquiry, arrangements are being finalised for members of the Scrutiny Board to attend and observe a Valuation Tribunal Hearing on 12 December 2017. The outcome of this attendance will be reported back to the Scrutiny Board.
- 2.10 Following attendance at Valuation Tribunal Hearing, it is proposed that members of the Scrutiny Board meet with representatives of the Valuation Office Agency (VOA), in order to better understand the role of the VOA and consider any associated matters relevant to the collection of Business Rates. Precise details of this meeting remain to be finalised.

Apprenticeships Levy

- 2.11 At the Scrutiny Board meeting in October 2017, members of the Scrutiny Board agreed that arrangements should be made for a working group meeting in early 2018 to review progress against the identified ‘inquiry points’ set out in the apprenticeship levy paper.
- 2.12 This is reflected in the attached work schedule, however no specific date has yet been identified.

2018/19 Budget proposals and Best Council Plan refresh

2.13 In line with the constitutional requirements in relation to budget and policy framework matters, both the 2018/19 Budget proposals and Best Council Plan refresh are scheduled to be considered by the Scrutiny Board in December 2017.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked to consider the matters outlined in this report 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

4.1 None used

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 published works.