

**Report of Head of Governance and Scrutiny Support**

**Report to Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)**

**Date: 22 March 2018**

**Subject: Work Schedule – March 2018**

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.

Developing the work schedule

- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 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

2.5 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

2.6 The work schedule reflects the Board’s discussion about monitoring specific service areas. Any updated proposals will be reported to the Scrutiny Board.

##### Business Rates Inquiry

2.7 At the beginning of the municipal year, the Scrutiny Board identified ‘Business Rates’ as a specific inquiry topic. The Scrutiny Board has considered a range of information to date.

2.8 As part of the inquiry, members of the Scrutiny Board to attended and observed a Valuation Tribunal Hearing on 12 December 2017.

2.9 On 22 January 2018, the Scrutiny Board met 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.

2.10 The Scrutiny Board also considered details of the recently announced Leeds City Region 100% Business Rates Retention Pool pilot, which is likely to form part of the Board inquiry report. The Board requested a summary of the Business Rates Pool Committee as part of this part of the inquiry, details of which are presented elsewhere on the agenda.

2.11 After the meeting, and subject to any additional information identified by the Scrutiny Board, it is proposed that a draft report/ statement from the Board will be drafted and circulated for comment and agreement.

##### Apprenticeships Levy

2.12 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.

- 2.13 At its previous meeting in December 2017, the Scrutiny Board agreed to arrange a working group meeting once the outcome of the Council's bid to the Education and Skills Funding Agency to become an Employer Provider is known.
- 2.14 Specific details remain to be finalised and any further developments will be reported at the meeting. This may be an issue to be re-considered in the new municipal year (2018/19).

*Impact of the failure of Carillion*

- 2.15 At its meeting in January 2018, the Board agreed to consider the impact and implications for the Council arising from the recent collapse of Carillion. Specific details were presented and considered by the Board at its meeting in February 2018.

*Outcome of discussions at the Scrutiny Board meeting*

- 2.16 Details of any specific outcomes from the meeting may need to be considered and reflected in an updated work schedule, including any longer-term consideration of future budget developments or proposals.

**3. Recommendations**

- 3.1 Members are asked to consider the matters outlined in this report and agree (or amend) the overall work schedule (as presented at Appendix 1) as the basis for the Board's work for the remainder of 2017/18.

**4. Background papers<sup>1</sup>**

- 4.1 None used

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<sup>1</sup> 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.