

Work Schedule

Date: 29th March 2023

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Children and Families)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

- Today's meeting is expected to be the final formal public meeting of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board for this municipal year. As such, a draft work schedule of the successor Scrutiny Board for the 2023/24 municipal year has been appended to this report for Members' consideration. This includes preliminary future meeting dates and reflects known items of scrutiny activity, such as performance and budget monitoring, as well as other identified areas of work that the Board has already recommended for the successor Scrutiny Board to pursue in the new municipal year.

Recommendations

Members are requested to consider the draft work schedule of the successor Scrutiny Board for the 2023/24 municipal year.

What is this report about?

1. Scrutiny Boards are subject to an annual review and appointment process as part of the overall governance arrangements presented and agreed by Council at its Annual General Meeting.
2. Scrutiny Boards have tended to adopt different approaches to planning for the new municipal year and providing a 'handover' of issues to be considered by the appropriate and newly constituted Scrutiny Board. Linked to this, a draft work schedule of the successor Scrutiny Board for the 2023/24 municipal year has been provided for Members' consideration (see Appendix 1). This includes preliminary future meeting dates (these remain subject to confirmation following the Annual General Meeting in May 2023) and reflects known items of scrutiny activity, such as performance and budget monitoring, as well as other identified areas of work that the Board has already recommended for the successor Scrutiny Board to pursue in the new municipal year.
3. In agreeing to recommend any specific matters for consideration by the successor Scrutiny Board, members should recognise the future work schedule will:
 - Become the responsibility of a successor Scrutiny Board (subject to the arrangements agreed by Council in May 2023).
 - Remain flexible and adaptable to reflect any new and emerging issues or changing priorities identified in the new municipal year.
 - Need to reflect any timetabling issues that might occur from time to time.
4. Nonetheless, setting out proposed meeting dates and a draft work schedule for the new municipal year will provide a foundation that will not only help with the initial planning for next year's Scrutiny Board, it also has the potential to help with planning the work programme in the longer-term.
5. Also appended to this report for information are the Executive Board minutes from the meetings held on 15th March 2023. 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 consider any matter where specific scrutiny activity may also be warranted.

What impact will this proposal have?

6. All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year.

How does this proposal impact the three pillars of the Best City Ambition?

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

7. The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the Best City Ambition.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

8. To enable Scrutiny to focus on strategic areas of priority, it is recognised that each Scrutiny Board needs to maintain dialogue with the Directors and Executive Board Members holding the relevant portfolios. The Vision for Scrutiny also states that Scrutiny Boards should seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources prior to agreeing items of work.

What are the resource implications?

9. Experience has shown that the Scrutiny process is more effective and adds greater value if the Board seeks to minimise the number of substantial inquiries running at one time and focus its resources on one key issue at a time.
10. The Vision for Scrutiny, agreed by full Council also recognises that like all other Council functions, resources to support the Scrutiny function are under considerable pressure and that requests from Scrutiny Boards cannot always be met.
11. Consequently, when establishing their work programmes Scrutiny Boards should:
 - Seek the advice of the Scrutiny officer, the relevant Director and Executive Member about available resources;
 - Avoid 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.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

12. There are no risk management implications relevant to this report.

What are the legal implications?

13. This report has no specific legal implications.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 – Draft work schedule of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board for the 2023/24 municipal year.
- Appendix 2 – Minutes of the Executive Board meeting on 15th March 2023.

Background papers

- None.