

Work Programme

Date: 14 October 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

The report sets out the draft 2024/25 work programme for the Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources).

All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work programme for the municipal year. In doing so, the work programme should not be considered a fixed and rigid schedule, it should be recognised as a document that can be adapted and changed to reflect any new and emerging issues throughout the year.

The Scrutiny Board Procedure Rules also state that, where appropriate, all terms of reference for work undertaken by Scrutiny Boards will include 'to review how and to what effect consideration has been given to the impact of a service or policy on all equality areas, as set out in the Council's Equality and Diversity Scheme'.

Members will be invited to review and discuss the work programme at each public Scrutiny Board meeting that takes place during the 2024/25 municipal year.

Recommendations

- a) Members are requested to consider and discuss the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the 2024/25 municipal year.

What is this report about?

- 1 A draft work programme for the Strategy & Resources Scrutiny Board is presented at Appendix 1 for consideration and discussion. Reflected in the programme are known items of scrutiny activity, including performance and budget monitoring and identified Budget and Policy Framework items.
- 2 The latest Executive Board minutes from the meeting held on 18 September 2024 are also provided at Appendix 2. 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.
- 3 Under the Sources of Work agenda item considered at the 17 June meeting of the Board initial views on work programming were put forward by Board Members and senior officers. Appendix 1 to this report attempts to reflect that discussion and subsequent work programming discussion at Board meetings since.
- 4 In September, the Board discussed a future item on the employee pay date change which was agreed to subject to agreeing timescales with the service and Director, those discussions are ongoing and an item will be scheduled once concluded.
- 5 The Board has an annual working group to consider the authority's budget for the following financial year, in this case 2025/26. This has been scheduled on 9 December 2024 to follow the Board's formal December meeting which will have two substantive items. This will therefore be in person with a comfort break in between the formal meeting and the commencement of the Budget Working Group, the aim will be to conclude the working group by 13.00 and therefore make use of the existing diary booking for the formal board.
- 6 Work programming is an iterative process and board members can seek to add to the programme or suggest areas of interest as the year progresses.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 7 All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work programme for the municipal year.

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

Health and Wellbeing

Inclusive Growth

Zero Carbon

- 8 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the best council objectives.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

Wards affected:

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

- 9 To enable Scrutiny to focus on strategic areas of priority, it is recognised that each Scrutiny Board needs to establish and maintain an effective, early dialogue with relevant Directors, senior officers and Executive Board Members.

10 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?

11 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.

12 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.

13 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?

14 This report has no specific risk management implications.

What are the legal implications?

15 This report has no specific legal implications.

Appendices

- Appendix 1: Draft work programme 2024/25
- Appendix 2: Minutes of the Executive Board meeting on 18 September 2024.

Background papers

- None