

Work Programme

Date: 21 March 2024

Report of: Head of Democratic Services

Report to: Scrutiny Board (Environment, Housing & Communities)

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

Brief summary

The report includes an initial summary of the items members have recommended for consideration by the successor Scrutiny Board in 2024/25.

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, Diversity and Inclusion Scheme.'

As has been the case during 2023/24, members of the successor Scrutiny Board will be invited to review and discuss the work programme at each public Scrutiny Board meeting that takes place during the 2023/24 municipal year.

Recommendations

Members are requested to:

- a) note the draft meeting dates for 2024/25
- b) note the draft work programme for 2024/25, which includes items recommended for consideration by the current Scrutiny Board membership.

What is this report about?

- 1 A draft 2024/25 work programme for the Environment, Housing & Communities Scrutiny Board is presented at Appendix 1 for consideration and discussion.
- 2 Reflected in the programme are known items of scrutiny activity, including performance and budget monitoring and identified Budget and Policy Framework items.
- 3 Members are asked to note the 2024/25 meeting dates. These have also been circulated to members as provisional diary invitations, which will be updated once committee appointments are agreed at the Annual General Meeting in May 2024.
- 4 The following draft meeting dates have been agreed for the 2024/25 municipal year for board members consideration:
 - Thursday 20 June at 10.30AM
 - Thursday 18 July at 10.30AM
 - Thursday 19 September at 10.30AM
 - Wednesday 23 October at 10.30AM
 - Friday 6 December at 10.30AM
 - Thursday 23 January at 10.30AM
 - Thursday 20 February at 10.30AM
 - Wednesday 2 April March at 10.30AM
- 5 There will be a pre-meeting scheduled for 10.00AM to support these meeting dates.

What impact will this proposal have?

- 6 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

- 7 The terms of reference of the Scrutiny Boards promote a strategic and outward looking Scrutiny function that focuses on the priorities in 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 establish and maintain an effective, early dialogue with relevant Directors, senior officers and Executive Board Members.
- 9 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.

10 The Board's Work Programme is the subject of consultation with Board members at each public meeting and is subject to input from relevant Directors, senior officers and Executive Board Members both early in the municipal year and on an ongoing basis.

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

Background papers

- None