

Work Schedule

Date: 16th February 2022

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

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year. In doing so, the work schedule 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; and also reflect any timetable issues that might occur from time to time.
- 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'.
- The latest iteration of the Board's work schedule is attached to this report for the Board's consideration.

Recommendations

Members are requested to consider and discuss the Scrutiny Board's work schedule for the 2021/22 municipal year.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

1. All Scrutiny Boards are required to determine and manage their own work schedule for the municipal year and therefore the latest iteration of the Board's work schedule for the remainder of the municipal year is attached as Appendix 1 for Members' consideration.

Developing the work schedule

2. 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.
3. In addition, in order to deliver the work schedule, the Board may need to take a flexible approach and undertake activities outside the formal schedule of meetings – such as working groups and site visits, where necessary and appropriate. This flexible approach may also require additional formal meetings of the Scrutiny Board.

Developments since the previous Scrutiny Board meeting

Ofsted Focused Visit Improvement Plan

4. Last month, the Scrutiny Board received a further update report from the Director of Children and Families surrounding the Improvement Plan linked to the Ofsted Focused Visit to the Leeds Children and Families Front Door Service in July 2021. During today's meeting, the Director of Children and Families will provide a further verbal update surrounding any significant developments made since the Board's last meeting.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards affected: All

Have ward members been consulted?

Yes

No

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

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

6. 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?

7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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 legal implications?

10. This report has no specific legal implications.

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

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

Does this proposal support the council's three Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

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

Appendices

13. Appendix 1 – Draft work schedule of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board for the 2021/22 municipal year.

Background papers

14. None.