

Work Programme

Date: 15 January 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 2023/24 work programme for the Scrutiny Board (Strategy & Resources) and reflects initial views from Board members at the June Board meeting and through subsequent consideration of work programme reports at each public meeting.

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.'

Members 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

- a) Members are requested to consider and discuss the Scrutiny Board's work programme for the 2023/24 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 13 December 2023 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 19 June meeting of the Board initial views on work programming were put forward by Board Members, Executive Board Members and comments were also heard from senior officers. In addition, discussion at subsequent Board meetings under this item are reflected in Appendix 1.
- 4 Members are reminded that there is a planned site visit to the Council's Contact Centre due to take place on 31 January at 9.30AM. This follows an update report on the Contact Centre received by the Board at its December meeting.
- 5 In addition, some minor adjustments have been made to the Work Programme for the remainder of the year, this is limited to the inclusion of an addition item in March on Financial Reporting which will examine the latest in year budget position as the end of the financial year approaches.

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 2023/24
- Appendix 2: Minutes of the Executive Board meeting on 13 December 2023.

Background papers

- None