



Corporate Overview Group

Wednesday, 14 June 2023

Consideration of Scrutiny Group Work Programmes

Report of the Director – Finance and Corporate Services

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1. The terms of reference for the Corporate Overview Group accepted at Council in May 2019 clearly state that a key responsibility of this Group is to:
 - Create and receive feedback on work programmes for the Growth and Development, Communities, and Governance Scrutiny Groups based on the Cabinet Forward Plan, Corporate Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Capital and Investment Strategy and Transformation Plan.
- 1.2. Each meeting of the Corporate Overview Group considers the work programmes for the Growth and Development, Communities, and Governance Scrutiny Groups as well as any new Scrutiny Matrices put forward by Councillors and Officers. Those items that are agreed for scrutiny are included on a future work programme for one of the four Scrutiny Groups.
- 1.3. Work programmes for each of the groups moving forward into 2023/24 were reviewed in February 2023 to ensure they reflected the current priorities of the Council. Given the change of membership on the Corporate Overview Group following Annual Council on 27 May 2023, it was felt appropriate to reconsider the agreed work programmes to ensure that new Chairs and Vice-Chairs of scrutiny groups as well as the new Chair of the Corporate Overview Group were given the opportunity to agree the work programmes moving forward into the new municipal year.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Corporate Overview Group:

- a) consider any additional items for scrutiny from the current Cabinet Forward Plan, Corporate Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Capital and Investment Strategy and Transformation Plan (Appendix One)
- b) consider the topics for scrutiny submitted by Councillors and officers, and already accepted by the 2022/23 Corporate Overview Group (Appendix Two)
- c) determine any additional topics to be included in a scrutiny group work programme for 2023/24 for each of the scrutiny groups as presented on newly submitted scrutiny matrices (Appendix Three)
- d) review the current work programme for each of the scrutiny groups (Appendix Four).

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1. To fulfil the requirements of the terms of reference for the Corporate Overview Group and ensure effective scrutiny of decisions.

4. Supporting Information

- 4.1. In March 2019, Council adopted a new structure for scrutiny comprised of one Corporate Overview Group and three additional Scrutiny Groups focused on Growth and Development, Communities, and Governance. The Corporate Overview Group is responsible for setting the work programmes for all scrutiny groups based on the Cabinet Forward Plan, Corporate Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Capital and Investment Strategy and Transformation Plan. Links to these documents can be found at Appendix One.
- 4.2. The Corporate Overview Group considers potential items for scrutiny (submitted by officers and Councillors on a Scrutiny Matrix) at each meeting of the Corporate Overview Group. There are currently a number of items that have been accepted for scrutiny that have been programmed into the 2023/24 municipal year. These submissions are included at Appendix Two.
- 4.3. As, following the Borough Council Election, the Corporate Overview Group has a number of new members and a new Chair, it was felt appropriate and timely to consider those items that have already been approved for scrutiny. These new items are included at Appendix Three.
- 4.4. The Lead Officer has also received a number of potential new topics for scrutiny. These matrices are included at Appendix Three.
- 4.5. The Group is invited to discuss these and make a judgement about whether they should be included in the work programme for a particular scrutiny group during the coming year.
- 4.6. Appendix Four shows the work programmes for all scrutiny groups as agreed in February 2023 by the Corporate Overview Group. The Group is asked to consider if the work programmes remain appropriate and achievable for the current year.
- 4.7. Any additional items identified from the Cabinet Forward Plan, Corporate Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Capital and Investment Strategy and Transformation Plan, highlighted by members of the Group, or raised by officers, should be assessed against the scrutiny matrix to inform the decision to include them on a scrutiny group work programme.
- 4.8. It is important to note that the purpose of scrutiny is to:
- scrutinise a topic in more depth than the Cabinet can in advance of a Cabinet decision with the purpose of informing the decision to be made by Cabinet
 - investigate topics of concern to residents resulting in recommendations to Cabinet with the purpose of improving Council services

- monitor the progress of the Corporate Strategy to ensure the Council is meeting its stated priorities accepting that this may require more in-depth scrutiny of specific strategic projects at appropriate times
- hold the Executive to account on behalf of the residents of the Borough to ensure sound decisions are made.

4.9. The Group is reminded that there will be cases in which scrutiny is not necessary or appropriate at this time. Officers will be clear in providing reasons where they feel this is the case. Councillors are also asked to be mindful of the resources available for scrutiny and listen to the advice of Officers present in the meeting.

5. Risks and Uncertainties

5.1. There are no direct risks associated with this report.

6. Implications

6.1. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6.2. Legal Implications

This report supports effective scrutiny. There are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6.3. Equalities Implications

There are no direct equalities implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

6.4. Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 Implications

There are no direct Section 17 implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

7. Link to Corporate Priorities

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| Quality of Life | Scrutiny of issues of concern to residents can lead to improvements in their perceived Quality of Life. |
| Efficient Services | Scrutiny of issues of concern to residents can lead to more efficient services. |
| Sustainable Growth | Scrutiny of issues of concern to residents can lead to Sustainable Growth. |
| The Environment | Scrutiny of issues of concern to residents can lead to improvements in the Environment. |

8. Recommendations

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- d) review the current work programme for each of the scrutiny groups (Appendix Four).

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| Background papers available for Inspection: | None |
| List of appendices: | Appendix One – Document Links Appendix Two – Topics for Scrutiny Already Agreed Appendix Three – Potential Scrutiny Items for Consideration Appendix Four – Work Programmes 2023/24 |