



Corporate Overview Group

Tuesday, 20 July 2021

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, Investment Strategy and Transformation Plan.
- 1.2. Work programmes for each of the groups during 2021/22 were reviewed in April 2021 to ensure they reflected the current priorities of the Council especially in light of the Covid19 pandemic.
- 1.3. To ensure that scrutiny is responsive, effective and an essential part of the Council's decision-making process, it is important that Corporate Overview Group considers the work programmes each time it meets taking into account changes to the Council's Forward Plan, and any topics for potential scrutiny submitted by Councillors.

2. Recommendation

It is RECOMMENDED that the Corporate Overview Group:

- a) review the current work programme for each of the scrutiny groups (Appendix Two)
- b) consider any additional items for scrutiny from the current Cabinet Forward Plan, Corporate Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, Investment Strategy and Transformation Plan
- c) consider the scrutiny matrices submitted by Councillors and officers (Appendix Three)
- d) determine any additional topics to be included in a scrutiny group work programme for 2021-22 for each of the scrutiny groups.

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, Investment Strategy and Transformation Plan. Links to these documents can be found at Appendix One.
- 4.2. Appendix Two shows the work programmes for all scrutiny groups as agreed in April 2021 by the Corporate Overview Group. The Group is asked to consider if the work programmes remain appropriate and achievable for the current year.
- 4.3. Any additional items identified from the Cabinet Forward Plan, Corporate Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy, 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.
- 4.4. Councillors and officers have identified a number of topics they believe to be suitable for scrutiny by the Council's Scrutiny Groups over the next twelve months. Each scrutiny matrix has been included for discussion by members of Corporate Overview Group. These are included at Appendix Three. 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.
- 4.5. 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.
- 4.6. 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**

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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- c) consider the scrutiny matrices submitted by Councillors and officers (Appendix Three)
- d) determine the topics to be included in a scrutiny group work programme for 2021-22 for each of the scrutiny groups.

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Background papers available for Inspection:	None
List of appendices:	Appendix One – Document Links Appendix Two – Work Programmes 2021-22 Appendix Three – Potential Scrutiny Items for Consideration