




Overview and Scrutiny Commission

3 February 2025

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Report Title	Overview and Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2024/25
Cabinet Portfolio	Finance and Governance
Cabinet Member	Councillor Martin Bond
Exempt Report	No
Reason for Exemption	N/A
Key Decision	No
Public Notice issued	N/A
Wards Affected	All
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Borough Priorities	Ensure children and young people have a positive start in life	X
	Promote good health, independence, and care across our communities	X
	Create safe and strong communities and neighborhoods for all	X
	Support a strong, thriving, inclusive and well-connected local economy	X
	Create green and vibrant places that reflect our heritage and culture	X
	Be a responsible Council	X

1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the process followed by members of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and its thematic committees in determining their work programmes for municipal year 2024/25.

2. Recommendation for Decision

Overview & Scrutiny Commission is recommended:

- (i) **to review the items listed within its work programme document for 2024/25 and agree priorities and timescales;**
- (ii) **to request updates on the work programmes of the Scrutiny Committees from the Chairs; and**
- (iii) **to note the Scrutiny Committees' work programmes.**

3. Purpose of this report

- 3.1 The purpose of this report is to set out the process followed in drawing up work programmes for 2024/25.

4. Background/Reason for the recommendations

- 4.1 Overview and scrutiny activities play a key role in a successful democratic process, holding decision makers to account for future (overview) and past (scrutiny) decisions and in turn, contributing to the delivery of positive outcomes for residents, the Council's workforce and resources.
- 4.2 A comprehensive work programme is fundamental to the effectiveness of the Commission and its thematic scrutiny committees. It enables them to plan and manage their workloads to make best use of the available time and resources, ensure a focus on the Borough's priorities and add the most value to the performance of the Council and outcomes for residents.
- 4.3 During June 2024, the Commission and each of the Scrutiny Committees held workshop meetings to discuss potential ideas for their work programmes for 2024/25. Officers and Cabinet Members were invited to attend the workshops to contribute to the discussion of potential topics. Each committee agreed an allocation of up to two scrutiny reviews for the year based on available resources.
- 4.4 Each of the Scrutiny Committee chairs should be requested to provide a verbal update on the progress their committees are making in relation to their work programmes. The Commission's agenda was published prior to the January 2025 meetings of the Scrutiny Committees taking place so the attached work programme documents may have been amended following each Scrutiny Committee's meeting.
- 4.5 There is scope during the municipal year for items to be amended, added, or removed from the work programmes due to changes in circumstances. Commission and Scrutiny Committee chairs will hold meetings with Cabinet Members and Officers

periodically during the municipal year to discuss potential amendments to the work programmes to be presented to the Commission and Scrutiny Committees for consideration.

Reviewing the Work Programme

- 4.6 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Scrutiny Committees are required to review and agree their work programme at every committee meeting. When reviewing the work programme, new items can be added and items that no longer require scrutiny or are not considered to be a priority for action or monitoring can be removed. When amending the work programme committees should look to maintain a maximum of two reviews during the municipal year.
- 4.7 When considering whether to add, remove and prioritise items for consideration Members should be mindful of the following:
- Would the Committee be able to add value through its work on the issue?
 - Is the issue linked to a Borough Priority?
 - Is the issue a priority/concern for partners, stakeholders, and the public?
 - Is the issue related to poorly performing services?
 - Is there a pattern of budgetary overspends?
 - Are there significant levels of public/service user dissatisfaction with the service?
 - Has there been media coverage of the issue?
 - Is the issue related to new Government guidance?
 - Would consideration of the issue be timely?
 - Are there sufficient resources (e.g., officer capacity to support a review or provide a report) to effectively consider the issue at this time?
 - Would Scrutiny be duplicating work being undertaken elsewhere?
 - Is the matter subject to judicial review (sub judice)?
- 4.8 The Work Programme Prioritisation Aid attached to this report is designed to assist members in considering whether a suggested addition to the work programme is suitable and meets the necessary criteria. If members consider that a suggestion would not be suitable for scrutiny, the Scrutiny Committee could choose to refer the matter elsewhere. If an item is considered an important issue but not a priority at this time an item may be added to the end of the work programme to be monitored for further consideration in the future.
- 4.9 To enable members, officers, partners or the public to submit work programme ideas for consideration a Scrutiny Work Programme Item Suggestion Form has been developed and can be accessed electronically via the Scrutiny pages on the Council's website. The form requests respondents to answer a series of questions about the

potential scrutiny topic and why it would be valuable for one of the committees to consider it. The information collected would be used by the committee to consider whether the idea is suitable and could be prioritised within the work programme using the criteria outlined at 4.5. Anyone submitting a work programme suggestion form will receive a response from the Scrutiny Team regarding the decision of the relevant scrutiny committee to add/or not the suggestion to the work programme.

5. Consideration of Alternatives

5.1 None

6. Conclusions

6.1 The Commission is requested to review its work programme and agree any amendments. The Commission is also requested to receive updates from the Scrutiny Committee chairs regarding progress against the work programmes for their committees.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 N/A

8. Financial Implications

8.1 N/A

9. Equality Impact Assessment

9.1 N/A

10. Social Value

10.1 N/A

11. Net Zero and Environment

11.1 N/A

12. Health and Wellbeing

12.1 N/A

13. Customer and Resident

13.1 N/A

14. Asset and Property

14.1 N/A

15. Staffing and People Management

15.1 N/A

16. Risks

16.1 Failure to effectively manage the work programme could lead to inefficient use of the Committee's time and resources, negatively affecting the Committee's ability to add value and help the Council achieve its priorities. By examining the work programme regularly and following the prioritisation aid as recommended, the Committee should minimize the risk of using time and resources on ineffective items.

17. Policy Framework Implications

17.1 N/A

18. Impact and Opportunities on Localities

18.1 N/A

19. Background Documents

19.1 None

20. Appendices

1. Work Programme Prioritisation Aid
2. Overview and Scrutiny Commission Work Programme 2024/25
3. Adults Health and Social Care Services Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2024/25
4. Children and Young People Services Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2024/25
5. Place Services Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2024/25

**Appendix 1
Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Prioritisation Aid**

