

Briefing Note

Scrutiny Work Programme 2024/25



To: Scrutiny and Improvement
Committees
From: Governance Manager

Date: 28 August 2024
Ref: AWHsic/09.09.24

1 What is the purpose of this report?

1.1 To provide an update on scrutiny's work programme 2024/25.

2 What is the background to this report?

2.1 The LGA and Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) advise that robust work programming is an essential part of a successful scrutiny process.

2.2 Scrutiny and Improvement Committees are an important part of the Council's overall political management arrangements and provide an opportunity for non-executive Members to maintain an overview of progress against delivery of corporate strategy, to be involved in policy development and improvement work, and to hold decisions makers to account. With carefully planned work, coupled with the experience and insights elected members have of their local communities, scrutiny can play a valuable and effective role in making sure services are as efficient and effective as they can be.

2.3 The work of Scrutiny and Improvement Committees generally falls into the following broad categories:

Policy and Strategy Development

Scrutiny provides opportunities to examine matters in more depth, to inform policy and strategy development and to drive service improvement. These topics should be clearly aligned to the Council's corporate priorities and strategic plans. It is likely that much of this work could be progressed through the scheduled Committee meetings, perhaps spreading the work over 2-3 meetings where the subject matter warrants it. For particular 'in-depth' review work, there may be the opportunity to undertake some of this work outside of the committee cycle via task and finish panels. These would be supported by Democratic Service Officers where resources allow.

Pre-Decision Scrutiny

In addition to policy and strategy development and review, Scrutiny Committees will undertake 'pre-decision' scrutiny by considering Cabinet reports that are listed for the current cycle.

Performance Monitoring/Overview

Committees also have the opportunity to examine a mix of annual reports and performance monitoring documents in their role as 'critical friends'

2.4 Work programmes do need to include some degree of flexibility throughout the year so that they are able to respond to emerging issues and the business needs of the Council. It is good practice to routinely monitor progress against the work programme, therefore, the work programme will remain a standing item on agendas to allow Members to monitor upcoming items and make suggestions for the future topics.

2.5 **Approach to agreeing work programme for 2024-25**

Members' views were sought on potential areas of focus for Scrutiny work. New suggestions were collated with previously identified topics, considered by the Chair and Vice Chair of each committee together with the relevant Director and Cabinet Members and agreed through Committees in July. A simple flow prioritising the suggestions using a simple flow chart technique. This flow chart is attached as an appendix for information and also to serve as a guide for prioritising any new or emerging work programme topics in year.

2.6 The results of this exercise have been translated into a workplan for each committee showing how each topic relates to the various categories of scrutiny work as described in para 2.3 above. Section headings have also been added to the agendas to reflect these broad categories and assist in the management of the meeting.

2.7 Current scrutiny task and finish panel work includes:

- Volunteer Strategy
- Flood Management Strategy
- Waste Management Strategy (due to commence once Flood Management Strategy work completes)
- Support for carers and guardians of families going through transitions (jointly commissioned by Children and Families and Adults Well-being and Health Scrutiny & Improvement Committee)

2.8 In addition to this, Members are involved in other broader Council task and finish work such as:

- Collaborative Working Group looking at Crustacean Deaths
- Budget task and finish group work flowing from the all Member Conference
- Litter bin provision Task and Finish Group agreed by Council on 16 May

2.9 These demands, on both Members and Officers, have been taken account of when prioritising and setting indicative timeframes around scrutiny work, and will be a consideration in relation to any additional proposed policy and strategy development work which is likely to require more in-depth consideration and a greater time commitment.

2.10 Adults, Wellbeing and Health Scrutiny Improvement Committee are reviewing Unpaid Carers within their scrutiny remit, this is ongoing. The Committee also agreed to work with Children's and Families Scrutiny Improvement Committee in a joint Task and Finish Scrutiny Group to review 'support for carers and guardians of families going through transitions', which will be prioritised as part of the work programme. A pre-meeting is set w/c 02 September with plans to commence this work in the coming months.

2.11 To assist with the efficient management of the work programme, it is suggested that each Committee spends a short time, as part of this item, giving some thought to the key lines of enquiry or information requirements for upcoming items, enabling Officers to prepare information to meet those requirements and facilitate effective scrutiny.

3.0 Conclusions & Recommendations

3.1 Members are asked to:

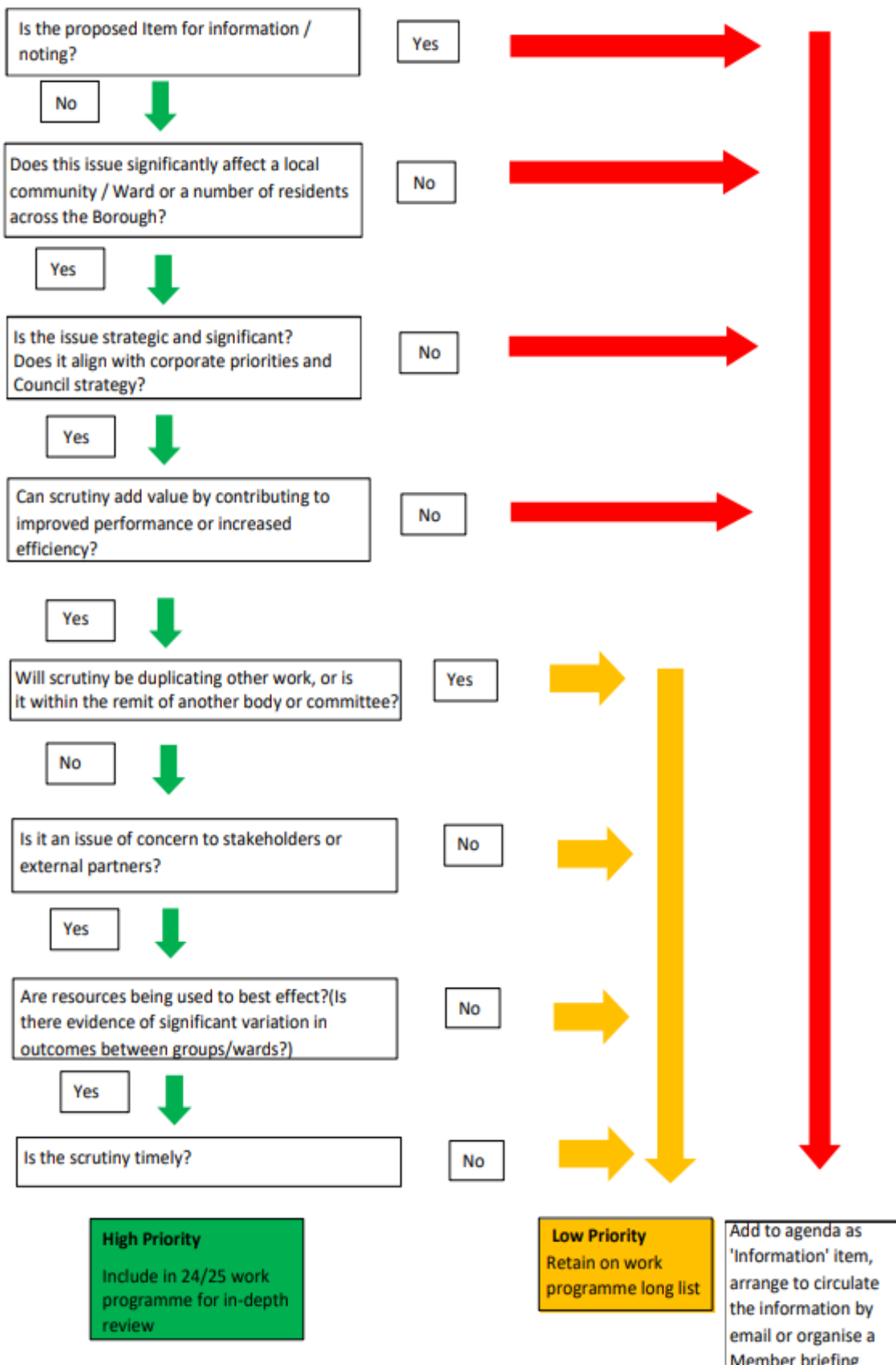
1. Note the work programmes for 2024/25 for their relevant Scrutiny and Improvement Committee.
2. Consider the key lines of enquiry or information requirements for upcoming topics.

4.0 Appendices

Appendix A – Prioritisation flow chart.

Appendix B – Proposed Scrutiny & Improvement Committee work programme.

Flow Chart for Prioritisation of Scrutiny Review Topics



Appendix B

Meeting date	Report	Officer/Lead	Scrutiny role
09 September 2024	Q1 reports - six monthly Corporate Plan/Strategy delivery update report	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Monitoring and Oversight
	Health and Wellbeing Strategy	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Pre-decision Scrutiny
	Adult Safeguarding Annual Report 2023/24	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Monitoring and Oversight
	Adult Social Care Strategy	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Pre-decision Scrutiny
	Scrutiny Review of Unpaid Carers	Director of Adults & Communities	Strategy and Policy Development/Review
	Work Programme 24/25	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	Outside Bodies Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	Health Partners Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
21 October 2024	Scrutiny Review of Unpaid Carers	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Strategy and Policy Development/Review
	Public Health Update	Director of Public Health	Information Items
	Work Programme 24/25	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	Outside Bodies Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	Health Partners Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
02 December 2024	Q2 reports - six monthly directorate specific performance report	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Monitoring and Oversight
	Scrutiny Review of Unpaid Carers	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Strategy and Policy Development/Review
	Work Programme 24/25	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	Outside Bodies Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	Health Partners Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
03 February 2025	Q3 reports - six monthly Corporate Plan/Strategy delivery update report	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Monitoring and Oversight
	Scrutiny Review of Care Services	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Strategy and Policy Development/Review
	Public Health Update	Director of Public Health	Information Items
	Annual Safeguarding Adults Report	Chair, TSAB	Monitoring and Oversight
	Work Programme 24/25	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items

Meeting date	Report	Officer/Lead	Scrutiny role
	Outside Bodies Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	Health Partners Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
10 March 2025	Scrutiny Review of Care Services	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Strategy and Policy Development/Review
	Work Programme 24/25	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	Outside Bodies Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	Health Partners Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	ASCOF	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Monitoring and Oversight
21 April 2025	Scrutiny Review of Care Services	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Strategy and Policy Development/Review
	Public Health Update	Director of Public Health	Information Items
	Work Programme 24/25	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	Outside Bodies Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	Health Partners Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
02 June 2025	Corporate Performance Annual Overview report	Head of Strategic Performance, Policy and Improvement / Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Monitoring and Oversight
	Q4 reports - six monthly directorate specific performance report	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Monitoring and Oversight
	Scrutiny Review of Care Services	Executive Director for Adults and Communities	Strategy and Policy Development/Review
	Principal Social Worker's Report	Principal Social Worker	Monitoring and Oversight
	Work Programme 24/25	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	Outside Bodies Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items
	Health Partners Update	Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer	Information Items