

**Report for:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 8 June 2021

**Title:** Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Scrutiny Panel Work Programme

**Report authorised by:** Ayshe Simsek, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager

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**Ward(s) affected:** N/A

**Report for Key/  
Non Key Decision:** N/A

**1. Describe the issue under consideration**

1.1 This report seeks approval of the work plans for 2021-22 for the Committee and its Panels.

**2. Recommendations**

2.1 To agree the work programmes for the main Committee and Scrutiny Panels, as set out in Appendix A.

**3. Reasons for decision**

3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) is responsible for developing an overall work plan, including work for its standing scrutiny panels. In putting this together, the Committee will need to have regard to their capacity to deliver the programme and officers' capacity to support them in this task.

**4. Background**

4.1 Following the completion of the Overview and Scrutiny work plan for 2018-20, work was begun on the development of plans for 2020-22. An on-line survey on was undertaken in February 2020 and a Scrutiny Café consultative event planned before the process was disrupted by the Covid pandemic.

4.2 The priorities and suggestions from the survey were incorporated into the work planning process for 2021-22. In addition, the Committee and its Panels each undertook consultative meetings during March with a range of community and voluntary sector organisations relevant to areas within their terms of reference.

4.3 The consultative meetings looked at and prioritised a range of suggestions that had come from the following:

- Responses to the on-line scrutiny survey undertaken in early 2020;
- Outstanding matters from current work plans; and
- Areas highlighted by the Fairness Commission.

- 4.4 There was also the opportunity to add additional issues. Following these, the Committee and its Panels have each met to finalise proposals. Relevant Council officers were invited to these meetings to provide feedback on proposals. Each scrutiny body was asked to prioritise issues and consider if there were any additional matters that also should be included. There is finite capacity within work plans and it will not be possible to cover everything within them in depth, hence the need to prioritise.
- 4.5 There are a number of options for how each issue can be scrutinised:
- In-depth scrutiny reviews;
  - “One-off” reports to Committee or Panel meetings; or
  - Questions to Cabinet Members.
- 4.6 Each scrutiny body was asked to decide on the following:
- A suitable topic for a scrutiny review. Whilst this is not obligatory, it will enable scrutiny bodies to look at an issue in detail. A key consideration in selecting issues is the extent to which reviews may be able to deliver tangible outcomes. Any review will need to have completed receiving evidence by the end of this calendar year in order to ensure that its final report is approved before the end of the current administration;
  - Items to prioritise for one-off items at scheduled meetings. Space for such items will be limited. It is recommended that sufficient space is allowed on each agenda for a meaningful discussion of issues selected by avoiding overloading agendas; and
  - Which item(s) to select for the agenda for the first meetings of 2021-22.
- 4.7 Local elections are due to take place in 2022 so it is very important that all outstanding work is completed before the end of the year. In particular, all reviews should be finalised in good time so they can be approved by the Committee. It is therefore advised that all evidence gathering activities as part of reviews be completed before the end of the calendar year. If a review is not finished before the end of the administration, it may be difficult to carry it over to the new administration due to the loss of continuity. An earlier deadline will need to be factored into work plans if Members wish their review reports considered by Cabinet before the end of the administration.
- 4.8 Copies of the draft work plans for the Committees and its Panel are attached as Appendix “A”. Further development of the plans will take place as the year progresses and progress will be reviewed on a regular basis.

#### *Forward Plan*

- 4.9 Since the implementation of the Local Government Act and the introduction of the Council’s Forward Plan, scrutiny members have found the Plan to be a useful tool in planning the overview and scrutiny work programme. The Forward Plan is updated each month but sets out key decisions for a 3-month period.

- 4.10 To ensure the information provided to the Committee is up to date, a copy of the most recent Forward Plan can be viewed via the link below:

<http://www.minutes.haringey.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RP=110&RD=0&J=1>

- 4.11 The Committee may want to consider the Forward Plan and discuss whether any of these items require further investigation or monitoring via scrutiny.

## **5. Contribution to strategic outcomes**

- 5.1 The contribution of scrutiny to the corporate priorities will be considered routinely as part of the OSC's work.

## **6. Statutory Officers comments**

### **Finance and Procurement**

- 6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations set out in this report. Should any of the work undertaken by Overview and Scrutiny generate recommendations with financial implications these will be highlighted at that time.

### **Legal**

- 6.2 There are no immediate legal implications arising from the report.
- 6.3 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the approval of the future scrutiny work programme falls within the remit of the OSC.
- 6.4 Under Section 21 (6) of the Local Government Act 2000, an OSC has the power to appoint one or more sub-committees to discharge any of its functions. In accordance with the Constitution, the appointment of Scrutiny Panels (to assist the scrutiny function) falls within the remit of the OSC.
- 6.5 Scrutiny Panels are non-decision making bodies and the work programme and any subsequent reports and recommendations that each scrutiny panel produces must be approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Such reports can then be referred to Cabinet or Council under agreed protocols.

### **Equality**

- 6.6 The Council has a public sector equality duty under the Equalities Act (2010) to have due regard to:
- Tackle discrimination and victimisation of persons that share the characteristics protected under S4 of the Act. These include the characteristics of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex (formerly gender) and sexual orientation;
  - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share those protected characteristics and people who do not;

- Foster good relations between people who share those characteristics and people who do not.
- 6.7 The Committee should ensure that it addresses these duties by considering them within its work plan and those of its panels, as well as individual pieces of work. This should include considering and clearly stating;
- How policy issues impact on different groups within the community, particularly those that share the nine protected characteristics;
  - Whether the impact on particular groups is fair and proportionate;
  - Whether there is equality of access to services and fair representation of all groups within Haringey;
  - Whether any positive opportunities to advance equality of opportunity and/or good relations between people, are being realised.
- 6.8 The Committee should ensure that equalities comments are based on evidence. Wherever possible this should include demographic and service level data and evidence of residents/service-users views gathered through consultation.

## **7. Use of Appendices**

Appendix A: Work Plans for the Committee and the scrutiny panels.

## **8. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

N/A