

Report for: Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel – 28 June 2022

Title: Housing and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel - Work Programme

Report

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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 sets out how the foundations will be laid for targeted, inclusive and timely work by the Panel on issues of local importance, where scrutiny can add value.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the overall approach for developing a work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Panels for 2022-24 as approved by the Committee at its meeting on 20 June and outlined at section 5, be noted; and
- 2.2 That, pending commencement of the finalised work programme, the Panel agree items for its next meeting, which will take place on 29 September 2022.

3. Reasons for decision

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny work planning process for 2022-24 is unlikely to be completed by the time of the next meeting of the Panel. The Panel therefore needs to agree provisional items for its next meeting, pending formal agreement of the work plan..

4. Describe the issue under consideration

- 4.1 Following the election, the new Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the opportunity to develop a work programme for itself and the scrutiny panels that ensures the Council's scrutiny function is used to its best effect.
- 4.2 The Council's Cabinet will now be looking to implement their manifesto from the recent election. This provides an opportunity Scrutiny to consider whether it would like to look at how the manifesto commitments can be implemented most effectively and at the greatest benefit to residents – fulfilling the Overview and

Scrutiny Committee's role in supporting policy development - as well as how it wishes to monitor the Cabinet's performance at implementing its manifesto.

- 4.3 In previous years, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has held a "Scrutiny Café" that brings together Council officers and community and stakeholder representatives to discuss the matters that they believe would merit further consideration from Overview and Scrutiny, based on the concerns and views of the community and the expected areas of priority for the Council and its partners. This has also been helpful in developing a good level of engagement with key external representatives and cultivating relationships that allow on-going ad hoc communication.
- 4.4 At the start of the last administration and after discussion with the incoming Chair of Overview and Scrutiny, it was agreed that the input of the local community would be enhanced within the work planning process. To this end, an online scrutiny survey was developed, and a "Scrutiny Café" event was set up during September 2018 to consider the responses to it in detail and other relevant matters. A large number of community and voluntary sector organisations attended, and the event took place at the Selby Centre in Tottenham.
- 4.5 The outcomes of this process were used to put together the Overview and Scrutiny work plan for the first two years of the administration. A second Scrutiny Café took place in March 2021, after the completion of the previous workplan. The process was delayed by lockdown and the pandemic. This was a virtual event, held on MS Teams due to the pandemic. It was informed by a second online survey, which took place just before the start of the pandemic in January 2020.
- 4.6 A new work planning process is now under development. One of the key priorities of the new administration is engaging with the community in a more meaningful way. There is now an expectation that the Council will do things *with* local communities rather than *to* local communities. Community engagement will therefore be central to this process. Careful consideration will need to be given to how best to involve the community to maximise engagement and responses. In addition, consideration will also need to be given as to how engagement might best contribute to the development of the work plan.
- 4.7 A consultative Scrutiny Café event has been provisionally planned for Friday 9th of September. Potential venues are the 6th Form centre or Cypriot Centre. The first Scrutiny Café event took place during the daytime and was in person. Whilst this may exclude people who work full time or have caring responsibilities, representatives from community organisations may be in a position to speak on behalf of people unable to attend.
- 4.8 Previous work planning processes have included an online survey and it is intended that one is included this time as well. These can be a very useful way of getting feedback from a wide group of people. They work best in providing quantitative feedback but are less effective on qualitative matters. The survey will provide the Scrutiny Café with feedback on the issues that residents feel

should be prioritised as well as any specific matters that they think should be looked at in detail.

- 4.9 Given that it is likely that the process for creating a work programme will generate a large number of ideas, the work planning process will again lead to a two-year work programme. This will provide a broad framework for the Committee and Panels to follow over their first two years, leaving some room for any highly significant matters that may arise. This process can be repeated in 2024, at the mid-point of the current administration.
- 4.10 The proposed work programme will also include more routine matters, for example budget scrutiny, budget monitoring and performance monitoring, that the Committee and Panels carry out over the year. As usual, the Committee and its panels will use the Forward Plan of Key Decisions in identifying matters for consideration on a more immediate timescale.
- 4.11 There are meetings of the Committee and its Panels scheduled to take place before the new work plan for Overview and Scrutiny has been finalised. The final meetings of scrutiny bodies that took place before the local government elections were each asked to identify specific items for the first meetings of the new administration in anticipation of this so they should all therefore have already identified some suitable items. In addition, there are regular and routine items that can be considered. These can have the additional benefit of helping to inform the work planning process.
- 4.12 During the course of its previous work programme, the Panel identified a number of possible items on which it may wish to receive reports at future meetings, as well as a small number of items that it was not able to accommodate within its meetings. It is proposed that the Panel considered if it would like to have any of the following topics as possible agenda items:
- Procurement in the Housing sector (including the London Construction Programme)
 - Financing of housing developments
 - Monitoring of progress - Accommodation Strategy
 - Practice of separating social tenants from other private residents in the same housing developments
 - Fire safety in HfH estates
 - Policy on demolition of existing council housing in order to build new properties through the housing delivery programme
 - Tottenham Hale District Centre Framework
 - Converted Properties cleaning service charge
 - Decent Homes Plus
 - Housing support services provided by local community organisations
 - Asset Management Strategy
 - Homelessness

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

N/A

8. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

N/A