



Haringey Council

Report for:	Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 27 July 2015	Item Number:	16
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Title:	Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2015/16
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Report Authorised by:	Bernie Ryan, Assistant Director Corporate Governance
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Ward(s) affected: All	Report for Key/Non Key Decisions: N/A
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1 Describe the issue under consideration

- 1.1 Following a wide ranging consultation exercise, this report outlines the indicative 2015/16 scrutiny work programme for approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2 Cabinet Member introduction

N/A

3 Recommendations

- (a) That the Committee discuss and agree the indicative scrutiny work programme for 2015/16 attached at **Appendix A**.
- (b) That, during August 2015, in respect of the items agreed for inclusion in the 2015/16 scrutiny work programme the Chair of OSC, and Chairs of each Scrutiny Panel, meet with appropriate Cabinet members and senior officers to further clarify the work programme (section 5.5).
- (c) That the Committee consider an appropriate time to meet collectively with Cabinet to support the development and monitoring of the scrutiny work programme (section 5.5).
- (d) That the Committee consider how it might review its effectiveness in developing and delivering an effective work programme at the end of 2015/16 (section 5.6 – 5.11).



4 Alternative options considered

- 4.1 Suggestions for inclusion in the 2015/16 scrutiny work programme have been discussed, and prioritised in a number of ways. Over 90 suggestions, including those from members of the public (attached at **Appendix B**), were discussed by scrutiny members, council officers, partners, and community representatives at the Scrutiny Cafe on 15 June, 2015.
- 4.2 In addition, suggestions have been prioritised following discussions with Cabinet Members, senior officers, and with input from scrutiny panel members during the first round of meetings.

5 Background information

- 5.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) is responsible for developing an overall scrutiny work programme, including work for its four standing scrutiny panels.

Selection and Prioritisation

- 5.2 A new work programme is produced each year. The careful selection and prioritisation of work is essential if the scrutiny function is to be successful, achieve added value and retain credibility.
- 5.3 At its first meeting of the 2015/16 municipal year the Committee agreed an outline process for developing its work programme. [At this meeting \(8 June 2015\) OSC considered a report that set out some principles behind good work programming, paying particular attention to:](#)
- Key features of an effective work programme
 - The criteria for selecting/prioritising topics for inclusion in the 2015/16 scrutiny work programme
 - The consultative processes / timetable employed to support the development of the scrutiny work programme.
 - Training and development requirements to support the delivery of the work programme
 - Ways to monitor the work programme, including the use of regular agenda planning meetings.
- 5.3 Since the 8 June a number of activities have taken place to support the development of the work programme.



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- 5.4 To ensure issues considered by scrutiny are both important and relevant to the local community, an online survey was distributed to local residents, community groups and other local stakeholders to assess their views. This was administered for a three week period from mid-May and generated approximately 60 individual qualitative responses. Further to the completion of the survey, the Chairs of all scrutiny bodies met with relevant Cabinet members and senior officers to discuss issues arising from the survey.
- 5.5 From these activities, and work rolled over from last year, a summary of suggestions – attached at **Appendix B** – was prepared for discussion at the Scrutiny Cafe. This event took place on 15 June.
- 5.6 The aim of the Scrutiny Cafe was to bring together key local stakeholders (scrutiny members, council officers, partners, and community representatives) for round table discussions to further inform the development of the scrutiny work programme. Discussions were themed around the council's corporate priorities:
- Enable every child and young person to have the best start in life, with high quality education
 - Enable all adults to live healthy, long and fulfilling lives
 - A clean, well maintained and safe borough where people are proud to live and work
 - Drive growth and employment from which everyone can benefit
 - Create homes and communities where people choose to live and are able to thrive
- 5.7 From discussions at the Scrutiny Cafe, a number of issues were identified for possible scrutiny involvement. These were further discussed, in late June / early July, by each of the panels during the first round of meetings.
- 5.4 From these activities a range of issues have now been prioritised for inclusion in the 2015/16 scrutiny work programme. These are summarised, by the relevant scrutiny body, at **Appendix A**.
- 5.5 To ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's and Scrutiny Panels' time is effectively and efficiently utilised, once the indicative work programme has been agreed it is recommended that, during August, the Chair of OSC and the Chairs of each Scrutiny Panel, meet with appropriate Cabinet members and senior officers to further clarify the work programme. Scoping reports for any in-depth scrutiny projects agreed will be considered by the relevant scrutiny panels during late September / early October and by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee OSC on the 19th October 2015. In addition, and following a recommendation from the CfPS Haringey Review (2014) the Committee may wish to consider an appropriate time to



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meet collectively with Cabinet to support the development and monitoring of the scrutiny work programme.

Monitoring the work programme

- 5.6 It is important to note that successful work programming is not a “start-stop” process just for the start of the year. It should be kept under regular review to ensure it remains relevant.
- 5.7 Once the work programme is agreed, there are both formal and informal systems in place to ensure effective monitoring of the work programme. Regular agenda planning meetings (between the Chair and senior officers, among others) and discussion at Committee itself gives an opportunity to:
- Discuss the format, structure and priority of future items/meetings;
 - Discuss the rules and procedures for formal meetings – ensuring clarity, consistency, and good time keeping;
 - Discuss what other information is required, including the identification and of witnesses which may include external experts, service-users, community groups, amongst others;
 - Consider options for getting out and about including site visits to other authorities and front-line service visits;
 - Develop key lines of enquiry or a questioning strategy;
 - Ensure the right people attend the right meetings at the right time;
 - Follow up on any actions agreed, ensuring outcomes from recommendations;
 - Consider member development needs to enable activities to be planned that take into consideration items included on the future work programme.
- 5.8 To assist in work programme development and monitoring, a new work programme template – attached at **Appendix C** - has been created to ensure the details and desired outcomes of items on the work programme can be kept under review. Once the indicative work programme has been approved by OSC each scrutiny body will be responsible for creating its own work programme using the template.
- 5.9 Moving forward, as is currently the case, the work programme will be a fixed item on the agenda for each scrutiny body. This will enable each scrutiny panel, and the Committee itself, to oversee and monitor its programme throughout the year.



Work Programme Effectiveness

- 5.10 With regard to Scrutiny itself, given recent significant changes in membership, at the end of the year Scrutiny may wish to consider how effective it has been. OSC is asked to consider how it might review its role and effectiveness to ensure Scrutiny provides robust, evidence-based challenge to service delivery and performance that draws on the views and experiences of residents and service-users. Such a review should involve some independent external assessment, for example, using a peer challenge approach or drawing on the Centre for Public Scrutiny's "[Accountability Works for You](#)" methodology for assessing scrutiny's effectiveness.
- 5.11 Any review should also consider the briefing notes (attached at **Appendix D**) prepared by Tim Young, facilitator for the Scrutiny Cafe.

6 Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications

- 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.

7 Comments of the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and legal implications

- 7.1 There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.
- 7.2 Under Section 21 (6) of the Local Government Act 2000, an Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the power to appoint one or more sub-committees to discharge any of its functions.
- 7.3 In accordance with the Councils Constitution, the approval of the future scrutiny work programme and the appointment of Scrutiny Panels (to assist the scrutiny functions) falls within the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 7.4 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.

8 Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments

- 8.1 Overview and Scrutiny has a strong community engagement role and aims to regularly involve local stakeholders, including residents, in its work. It seeks to do this through:
- Helping to articulate the views of members of the local community and their representatives on issues of local concern.



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- Bringing local concerns to the attention of decision makers and incorporating¹ them into policies and strategies.
- Identifying and engaging with hard to reach groups
- Helping to develop consensus by seeking to reconcile differing views and developing a shared view of the way forward.

8.2 The evidence generated by scrutiny reviews / committee work helps to identify the kind of services wanted by local people. It also promotes openness and transparency as meetings are held in public and documents are available to local people.

9. Head of Procurement Comments

N/A

10. Policy Implication

10.1 This report sets out how the work of Overview and Scrutiny will contribute and add value to the work of the Council and its partners in meeting locally agreed priorities.

11. Use of Appendices

Appendix A – Indicative Scrutiny Work Programme 2015/16

Appendix B – Suggestions for Overview and Scrutiny (Scrutiny Cafe Booklet)

Appendix C – Work Programme Template

Appendix D – Scrutiny Cafe Briefing Notes

12. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

12.1 External web links have been provided in this report. Haringey Council is not responsible for the contents or reliability of linked websites and does not necessarily endorse any views expressed within them. Listings should not be taken as an endorsement of any kind. It is your responsibility to check the terms and conditions of any other web sites you may visit. We cannot guarantee that these links will work all of the time and we have no control over the availability of the linked pages.