



Report to Scrutiny

Item Number:

Contains Confidential Or Exempt Information	No
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Subject of Report: Approach to Scrutiny in 2024-25

Meeting: Overview and Scrutiny Committee
14 May 2024

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Cabinet Responsibility: None – Scrutiny is not an executive function.

Director Responsibility: Helen Harris – Director of Legal and Democratic Services

Brief: This report sets out a change in approach for Scrutiny in 2024-25

The structure of four panels, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the standing Health and Adult Social Services panel will be retained. Each of the Scrutiny Panels will focus on a Strategic Directorate and will scrutinise the work of the Strategic Director and Cabinet Member (s) over the year. The panels will be redistributed so that each panel covers one strategic directorate, meaning the panels' agenda will be driven by a Strategic Director working closely with a Scrutiny Panel Chair.

Recommendations:

That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agrees the structure of Scrutiny for 2024/25, outlined in paragraph 1.4

1. Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

- 1.1 As this is the final meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for this municipal year the work programme for 2023/24 has now been completed. OSC therefore needs to agree the approach to scrutiny in 2024/25.
- 1.2 The Council's approach to scrutiny has evolved over the past few years, moving from a structure of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Health and Adult Services Panel and four Scrutiny Review Panels; to a structure with the same amount of panels but instead with them focussing on a strategic directorate. This resulted in panels being able to make recommendations throughout the year, as topics were considered, rather than waiting until the end of the year. This also allowed more pre-decision and policy development items to be taken to scrutiny panels.
- 1.3 The change to focussing on Strategic Directorates has received positive feedback from members and officers. Therefore it is proposed that this approach is retained for 2024/25. The difference being that instead of Panel 4 focussing on Crime and Disorder it should instead be assigned to scrutinising the Strategy and Change Strategic Directorate. This Directorate was previously assigned to OSC alongside the Resources Strategic Directorate. The statutory requirement for Health scrutiny will remain with Scrutiny Panel 1 and the statutory requirement to scrutinise the Safer Ealing Partnership will be assigned to Scrutiny Panel 1. This means Scrutiny Panel 1 will hold the statutory Crime and Disorder meeting at an appropriate time over the year.
- 1.4 The proposed structure, along with the assigned strategic directorate, will therefore be:
 - Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Resources
 - Health and Adult Social Services Panel – Adults and Public Health
 - Scrutiny Panel 1 – Housing and Environment
 - Scrutiny Panel 2 – Economy and Sustainability
 - Scrutiny Panel 3 – Children's Services
 - Scrutiny Panel 4 – Strategy and Change

Draft Scrutiny Work Programme 2024/25

- 1.5 A draft work programme has been drawn up for all of the panels for 2024/25. This work programme has been put together following a meeting with panel chairs and Strategic Directors earlier in April 2024. The work programme is purely a suggestion based on this year's panels, and next year's chairs and members will have an opportunity at the beginning of the municipal year to amend the work programme according to the interests and priorities for members in the following year.

Scrutiny Training

- 1.6 A training session will be held with Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs at the beginning of the municipal year. This will be delivered by Ealing Officers and co-produced with existing Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs.

2. Legal Implications

The general scrutiny functions and powers and specific role of Overview and Scrutiny Committee are set out in the Council Constitution.

3. Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Support to Overview and Scrutiny Committee is contained within the allocated budget. Value for money will come from scrutiny panels and committees having well-constructed work programmes with each topic for scrutiny having a considered brief and identified outcomes relating to the Council's strategic priorities.

4. Other Implications

There are no other implications.

5. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Scrutiny Work Programmes for 2024-25

Consultation

Name of consultee	Post held	Date sent to consultee	Date response received	Comments appear in paragraph:
Internal				
Helen Harris	Director of Legal and Democratic Services	19 April 24	25 April 24	
Cllr Yoel Gordon	Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	19 April 25	25 April 24	
Cllr Fabio Conti	Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	19 April 24		

Report no.:	Report author and contact for queries:
	Sam Bailey, Head of Democratic Services