

Council
11 July 2023

Title	Work Programmes for Overview and Scrutiny 2023/24
Date of meeting	11 July 2023
Report of	Head of Governance
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Appendices	<p>Appendix A – Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2023/24 Work Programme</p> <p>Appendix B – Adults and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2023/24 Work Programme</p> <p>Appendix C – Children and Education Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2023/24 Work Programme</p>
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Summary

The report sets out the Work Programmes for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Sub-Committees for 2023/24 which have been considered at their first meetings in June 2023.

Work programmes will be considered at every meeting of the Committee and Sub-Committees. Committee and Sub-Committees can make any amendments necessary, to enable it to respond to issues of concern or to request new pre-decision items ahead of their consideration by Cabinet/Council.

Under the Committee Procedure Rules, the Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme should be reported to Full Council.

Recommendations

1. That Council receives the agreed 2023/24 Work Programmes for:
 - a) Overview and Scrutiny Committee
 - b) Adults and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee
 - c) Children and Education Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee
2. To note that the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Sub-Committee have commissioned Task and Finish Group Reviews to take place during 2023/24 on
 - a) Youth Homelessness
 - b) Elective Home education
 - c) Primary Care (GP) Access
 - d) The Discharge to Assess Model
 - e) Barnet Homes
 - f) Barnet Roads
 - g) Safe Parks
 - h) Culture Strategy
3. To note that the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Sub-Committee will make amendments to the work programme in response to issues of concern or to request new pre-decision items ahead of their consideration by Cabinet/Council.

1. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 1.1 This report sets out the process that was followed for developing the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2023/24.
- 1.2 The Council's Constitution (Committee Procedure Rules, Section 36) states:

"36.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider its outline work programme, and that of the Overview and Scrutiny sub-committees, at its first meeting following the Annual Meeting of Council, except in years where there are whole borough elections, where the work programme will be considered at the first suitable meeting.

36.2 In setting the outline work programme, account will be taken of the need to scrutinise forthcoming policy, for example, the budget and other major policies or strategies in development, whilst leaving flexibility to allow additional items to be added to the agendas for committees and sub-committees and to commission task and finish group reviews during the year in response to new requests for scrutiny.

36.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will report the agreed outline work programme to the first available ordinary meeting of the Council."
- 1.3 The work programme includes suggestion and input from Councillors, officers, members of the public, community groups and the voluntary sector.

A strong and effective work programme underpins the work and approach of Scrutiny. But work to develop and refine the work programme requires support. The input of executive members, senior officers, and external partners will all assist scrutiny Members to effectively fulfil their role as critical friends constructively challenging decision makers. [CfGS 2022]

1.4 The work programme should reflect the Council’s priorities and should be targeted on issues where scrutiny can add real value. Good practice guidelines for setting overview and scrutiny work programmes state that if scrutiny is to be effective in driving service improvement and making a real difference to outcomes for local people, its work programme must be:

- Informed by the priorities and concerns of local people.
- Led by scrutiny members.
- Manageable and realistic
- Integrated effectively with corporate budget-making and strategic planning and policy setting processes and add value in contributing to the achievement of the Council’s corporate objectives.
- Reflect a proactive approach to driving service improvement, rather than being simply reactive in response to decisions of the Executive.

1.5 The attached work programmes reflect this approach.

2. Alternative Options Considered and Not Recommended

2.1 None.

3. Post Decision Implementation

3.1 The agreed work programmes and scrutiny reviews will be undertaken throughout 2023/24.

4. Corporate Priorities, Performance and Other Considerations

Corporate Plan

4.1 This report is aligned with the key priorities in the new corporate plan. Built on the pillars of “caring for people, our places and the planet” and underpinned by a foundation of being Engaged and Effective. The work of Overview and Scrutiny will support the Council in becoming a ‘listening council’ collaborating and building a continuous dialogue with residents and communities. In doing so, residents are involved in decision-making and Scrutiny acts to amplify the voice of the public, on issue of concern.

Corporate Performance / Outcome Measures

4.2 This item will support delivery of the measure how of “We act on concerns of local residents and involve them in decision making.”

Sustainability

4.3 None in the context of this report.

Corporate Parenting

4.4 In line with Children and Social Work Act 2017, the council has a duty to consider Corporate Parenting Principles in decision-making across the council. This duty will be considered when including items to the work programme. This is especially relevant for the work programme for the children and education sub-committee.

Risk Management

4.5 None in the context of this report.

Insight

4.6 Insight data and evidence will be used to support scrutiny reviews on the work programme.

Social Value

4.7 None in the context of this report.

5. Resource Implications (Finance and Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT and Property)

5.1 As part of the Governance review a dedicated team has been created to support the Overview and Scrutiny function and this will be delivered within the existing Governance Service budget.

6. Legal Implications and Constitution References

6.1 Council Constitution, Article 2A, Terms of Reference of Council, Section 1.23 states that Full Council has responsibility for “to receive reports and consider recommendations from ... Scrutiny...as appropriate.”

6.2 The Council’s Constitution Part 2B – Terms of Reference and Delegation of Duties to Committees and Sub-Committees of the Council, Section 10 (Overview & Scrutiny) – section 10.1 states that the Overview and Scrutiny has the following powers and duties:

“10.1.1 states that the Committee will oversee an agreed work programme that can help secure service improvement through in-depth investigation of performance issues and the development of an effective strategy/policy framework for the council and partners.”

6.3 Council’s Constitution (Committee Procedure Rules, Section 36) states as detailed in section 1.2.

6.4 This report complies with the requirements of the constitution.

7. Consultation



7.1 Consultation and engagement of Councillors, officers, citizens, community groups and the voluntary sector was undertaken to provide input into the work programme and will be ongoing as the work programme is implemented.

7.2 The Scrutiny team has engaged with Councillors through the Political Assistants and officers. The team also undertook a public consultation exercise on engage Barnet and in the Barnet First eNews letter. The results of the consultation can be found here - [Appendix B.I Proposed Scrutiny Review Topics for 2023-2024.final.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)

8. Equalities and Diversity

8.1 Pursuant to the Equality Act 2010, the Council and all other organisations exercising public functions on its behalf must have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act; advance equality of opportunity between those with a protected characteristic and those without; promote good relations between those with a protected characteristic and those without. The relevant protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. It also covers marriage and civil partnership with regard to eliminating discrimination. The work of overview and scrutiny will be transparent and accessible to all sectors of the community.

9. Background Papers

- 9.1 Council Constitution: [Agenda for Constitution on Tuesday 23rd May, 2023 \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)
- 9.2 Children and Education Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee 8 June 2023 – agreed Task and Finish Reviews
- [Appendix Ci – Proposed Task and Finish - Scoped items for Committee approval , item 11.](#)  PDF 91
KB – Youth Homelessness
- [Appendix Cii – Proposed Task and Finish - Scoped items for Committee approval , item 11.](#)  PDF 86
KB – Elective Home Education
- 9.3 Adults and Health Overview and Scrutiny Sub-Committee 28 June 2023 – agreed Task and Finish Reviews
- [Appx A Primary Care GP Access.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)
- [Appx B Discharge to Assess - Scrutiny Scoping Topic v2.pdf \(moderngov.co.uk\)](#)