

ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY, MAYORAL AND MEMBERS' SUPPORT COORDINATOR

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to consider and agree a work programme for the Committee for the municipal year 2023/24.

2. Background

- 2.1 The work programme is designed to set out the key issues to be addressed by the Committee during the year and provide it with a timetable of work. The Committee itself is responsible for setting its own work programme.

- 2.2 To be most effective, the work programme should provide a basis and framework for the work of the Committee, while retaining sufficient flexibility to respond to any important issues that emerge during the course of the year. The work programme is therefore intended to be a working document that the Committee can develop and refer to throughout the year.

- 2.3 In order to ensure that the Committee is able to undertake all of its business and respond to emerging issues, there will be scope for additional meetings or visits not detailed in the work programme.

- 2.4 The remit of the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee covers the following:-

To review and scrutinise the functions of the Council relating in particular to the budget, corporate plan, external assessments, performance monitoring, quality standards and value for money, property and facilities management, information technology, organisational development, workforce strategy, governance, customer service and communications. To act as the designated scrutiny committee for statutory purposes for crime and disorder and flood risk.

- 2.5 The work programme should reflect the remit of the Committee and the need to balance its responsibility for undertaking scrutiny, performance management and policy review (where necessary).

- 2.6 The work programme should also reflect and be aligned to the key priorities of the Council as set out in documents such as the City Plan and issues raised during the development session held on 15 June 2023.

3. DETERMINING THE SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

- 3.1 Topics for inclusion in the Scrutiny Work Programme will vary from single issue items for consideration such as policy and performance reports through to regular updates on issues that the committee have adopted a more focused monitoring role.

- 3.2 The table below summarises the relevant single item issues which are likely to be a regular feature of the work programme for 2023/24. The table also summaries a number of issues and topics that members of the committee have discussed at its recent development session. These items will be programmed into the work programme at relevant dates in discussion with the appropriate officers.

Regular Work Programme Items	
Performance Management <i>(Quarterly)</i>	To receive performance management information on a quarterly basis based around three key priorities of City, People and Council.
Compliments, Complaints and Feedback <i>(Quarterly)</i>	To receive a quarterly report detailing the compliments, complaints and feedback received by the Council in relation to the services it provides.
Council Budget Reports	To review and scrutinise the various budget reports before agreement by Cabinet and Full Council.
Scrutiny Coordinating Committee and the three thematic scrutiny committee work programmes <i>(Monthly)</i>	To receive the committee's work programme outlining future meetings of the committee and the items scheduled for those meetings. Also to receive the three thematic scrutiny committees work programmes as part of the coordinating role of the committee.
Review of Scrutiny	To continue to monitor and develop actions in respect of the recommendations from the independent review of scrutiny.
28 Day Notice of Key Decisions <i>(Monthly)</i>	To consider the Council's 28 Day Notice of Key Decisions which contains matters which are likely to be the subject of a key decision to be taken by the executive, a committee of the executive, individual members of the executive, officers, area committees or under joint arrangements in the course of the discharge of an executive function during the period covered by the plan. All decisions, where appropriate, are also subject to call-in.
Single Issue Items (Items to be scheduled as appropriate)	
Safer Sunderland Partnership	To receive the annual report from the Safer Sunderland Partnership outlining the previous year's work and the priorities for 2023/24.

Smart Cities Update	A further update on developments around the Smart City agenda including reviewing some of the innovative developments implemented in the City.
Cyber Security	A briefing for the Committee on the work undertaken around cyber security and how the Council looks to keep services safe from the threat of cyber-attack.
Strategic Advice Service	A report to provide an update on the cost-of-living crisis, how this is impacting on Sunderland residents and the work and support being provided to those most in need.
Residents Survey	A report on the most recent resident's survey highlighting key findings and areas of success and concern.
Land Acquisitions and Disposals	Proposed land transactions above the relevant financial threshold or which are proposed to be considered in private as "Part II" items are published in the Council's 28 Day Notice of Key Decisions and where appropriate subject to call-in procedures. It is recommended that specific transactions are considered via that process as appropriate.
Potential Task and Finish Working Topics	
Health and Wellbeing of Workforce	Looking at how council policies and initiatives support good mental and physical health to enhance the wellbeing of the organisation's workforce and improve sickness rates including key achievements, impacts and outstanding issues.
Customer Service Network	An in-depth look at the customer Service network including the physical and digital front door, contact centre, telecare etc. How CSN deals with customers and the process for dealing with calls and requests.
Equality Framework	To support the process of developing an Equality Framework for the organisation by providing challenge to the process and contributing to the development of policy and practical / operational procedures that deliver relevant improvement activity.

- 3.3 A draft Scrutiny Work Programme for 2023/24 is attached as **Appendix 1**, which following discussions with the Committee and officers will see the work programme populated further.
- 3.4 It should be noted that the work programme is a 'living' document and can be amended throughout the course of the municipal year. Any Elected Member can add an item of business to an agenda for consideration (Protocol 1 within the Overview and Scrutiny Handbook outlines this process).
- 3.5 It should also be noted that in terms of task and finish working we will look to run groups successively to manage member and officer capacity and ensure that each working group is completed prior to starting any further groups.
- 3.6 The Committee also has a coordinating role to avoid duplication, make best use of resources and to provide a corporate overview of the scrutiny function. As such the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee will also receive, on a monthly basis, the work programmes of the three thematic Scrutiny Committees. This will commence with the September 2023 agenda, following discussions taking place at the relevant committees.

4. Dedicated Scrutiny Budget

- 4.1 A small budgetary provision of £15,000 per annum is available to the Scrutiny Committees to deliver the agreed Scrutiny Committee Work Programmes. The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee will monitor the scrutiny budget on a regular basis through reports received at this committee.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 That the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee consider the range of topics and issues in the development of the work programme for 2023/24, including task and finish topics, and incorporates emerging issues as and when they arise throughout the forthcoming year.

6. Background Papers

- 6.1 Scrutiny Agendas and Minutes

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