



City of Westminster

# Westminster Scrutiny Commission

**Meeting:** Westminster Scrutiny Commission

**Date:** 22 March 2018

**Classification:** For General Release

**Title:** Policy and Scrutiny - Induction

**Financial Summary:** There are no financial implications

**Report of:** Mick Steward, Head of Committee and Governance Services, Tel: 020 7641 3134;  
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## 1. Executive Summary

1.1 A comprehensive induction programme is being prepared for implementation following the City Council elections on Thursday 3 May 2018. The programme will include reference to the powers of Policy and Scrutiny (P&S) Committees and best practice in regards to scrutiny, but not the duties of each of the P&S Committees. It is accordingly proposed that details of the key issues within Cabinet Member portfolios, together with an overview of the service area, would be carried out at the first meeting of the P&S Committees following the election.

## 2. Key Matters for the Commission's Consideration

- Are there any specific topics or skills that the commission thinks should be included in the induction programme?
- Does the commission have any comments on the proposed induction programme?

## 3. Background Information

3.1 The Council is arranging a comprehensive induction programme for all Councillors elected at the City Council elections on 3 May 2018. This will include insight into all aspects of the Council and will be followed by more in-depth sessions as part of the ongoing Member Development Programme.

- 3.2 Scrutiny will be covered as part of two sessions. The first will be the governance session, which will include:
- How Member level decisions are taken by the Executive and in the case of non-executive functions the relevant committee or sub-committee.
  - How Cabinet/Cabinet Member decisions are notified to P&S Committee Members.
  - Call-in and how it works.
  - The right of Committee Members to have an item added to the agenda of a policy and scrutiny committee.
- 3.3 There will be second session; possibly delivered by an external trainer, which will cover the importance of scrutiny, best practice and key skills. Topics covered will include:
- Principles of good scrutiny;
  - Topic selection and work programming;
  - Questioning skills;
  - The importance of external witnesses
- 3.4 The governance and scrutiny sessions will not cover details of the key issues within cabinet member portfolios or an overview of the service area. It is up to members to decide how to conduct their meetings; however, it is proposed that in the first cycle of meetings of 2018/19, each committee receives reports from chief officers and cabinet members detailing the service areas within the committee's terms of reference. These presentations would assist the committee in developing its work programme for the year.

#### **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report.

#### **5. Legal Implications**

- 5.1 The City Council is required to have at least one committee exercising the overview and scrutiny function.

#### **6. Other Implications**

- 6.1 None.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact: Mick Steward, Tel: 020 7641 3134  
Email: [msteward@westminster.gov.uk](mailto:msteward@westminster.gov.uk)**

**BACKGROUND PAPERS – none.**