

Vulnerable Adults, Health and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Thursday 18 January 2024
Classification:	General Release
Title:	2023/2024 Work Programme
Report of:	Head of Governance and Councillor Liaison
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	All
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report asks the Vulnerable Adults, Health and Communities Policy and Scrutiny Committee (“the Committee”) to discuss topics for the 2023/2024 work programme. The proposals set out in Appendix 1 have been developed in consultation with Members, Senior Officers as well as Members of the Executive (Cabinet) on their plans for the year ahead to ensure scrutiny is focused on those areas where it may have most impact.
- 1.2 This report also considers the work of the Committee since 27 September 2023.

2. Formal Meeting Dates for the 2023/2024 Municipal Year

- 2.1 The Committee is advised that the remaining scheduled meeting date for the 2023/2024 year is:
 - Thursday 7 March 2024

3. Background

- 3.1 This is the first meeting of the Committee after the independent review of Policy and Scrutiny and the subsequent structural changes, and amended Terms of References, that were agreed at Full Council on 20 September 2023 and came into effect on 27 September 2023.

- 3.2 As a result of the changes, an in-year refresh of the work programmes has been undertaken by each Committee.
- 3.3 The Policy and Scrutiny team have supported the Committee in this work programme refresh exercise and the Committee considered items on those areas where the Council is currently working to develop new policy, where policies previously implemented are ready for strategic review or where scrutiny plays an overall role in assurance. The overall emphasis was to provide scrutiny with maximum opportunity to have impact and influence Council policy.
- 3.4 When drawing up the new work programme, the Committee considered the vision and purpose of scrutiny at Westminster, which is as follows.

Scrutiny is a vital function to promote transparency and accountability. On behalf of Westminster's communities and stakeholders, local non-Executive Councillors will endeavour to ensure services in the City not only meet people's needs but enhance lived experiences by:

1. *Championing the best possible outcomes for communities and stakeholders.*
2. *Holding the Council, its partner organisations and external bodies to account for decisions taken and the impacts on our communities.*
3. *Examining Council priorities, actively engaging in policy development and offering constructive challenge prior to decisions being taken.*
4. *Working strategically across the city to focus our efforts on policy and service areas where scrutiny can make the biggest impact.*
5. *Demonstrating integrity and commitment by adhering to the Nolan Principles of Public Life.*

4. Work Programme for 2023/24

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to consider the work programme for the remainder of the municipal year, 2023/2024, set out in Appendix 1. The Committee is requested to discuss the proposed topics listed as well as provide comments and suggestions.
- 4.2 The Committee's attention should be drawn to the Terms of Reference, set out in Appendix 2, which may assist the Committee in identifying issues to be included in the work programme.
- 4.2 When considering the work programme, and agreeing an overall programme of scrutiny activity, the Committee should have regard to whether the work programme is achievable in terms of both Officer and Member time, taking into account that the Committee is scheduled to meet four times per year. Members are also reminded that it is advisable to hold some capacity in reserve for any urgent issues that might arise.

5. Task Groups and Single Member Studies

- 5.1 Each Committee has discretion to establish Task Groups and Single Member Studies to examine key issues in more detail. The Committee should be advised that both Members and Officers will only be able to successfully take part in and

support a finite number of Task Groups and Single Member Studies at any one time.

6. Monitoring recommendations and actions

- 6.1 The recommendations and actions arising from each meeting will be recorded in a Recommendation and Action Tracker. Members will be invited to review the work undertaken in response to those recommendations and actions in due course.

If you have any queries about this report or wish to inspect any of the background papers, please contact Clare O'Keefe.

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Appendix 1: Work Programme

Appendix 2: Terms of Reference