

LONDON BOROUGH OF CROYDON

REPORT:	Scrutiny & Overview Committee	
DATE OF DECISION	25 July 2023	
REPORT TITLE:	Scrutiny Work Programme 2023-24	
CORPORATE DIRECTOR / DIRECTOR:	Stephen Lawrence-Orumwense Director of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer	
LEAD OFFICER:	Adrian May Interim Head of Democratic Services	
LEAD MEMBER:	Councillor Rowenna Davis - Chair of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee	
AUTHORITY TO TAKE DECISION:	<p>In accordance with paragraph 1.2 (vi) of Part 4E - Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules, in the Council's Constitution, the Committee should agree an initial scrutiny work programme at its first full meeting after the Annual Council meeting.</p> <p>At the first meeting of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee on 6 June 2023, the principles that would underpin the work programme were agreed, with the intention that a draft work programme would be brought back to the next meeting for sign off.</p>	
CONTAINS EXEMPT INFORMATION?	No	Public
WARDS AFFECTED:	N/A	

1. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24

- 1.1. This report sets out for the agreement of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee the work programmes of the Committee and its Sub-Committees. This follows on from a report considered by the Committee at its previous meeting on 6 June 2023, which agreed that the financial sustainability of the Council would be a key focus. It was also agreed that the following principles would be used as the basis for the work programme:-
1. **The Public's Money.** Scrutiny wants reassurance that taxpayers' money is put to best use. At a time when the Council is making cuts to balance the books, it has no money to waste. In the middle of a cost-of-living crisis, every pound of public money should be valued. Scrutiny will aim to look at the impact of any financial

decisions on the public and the Council's finances, including knock-on effects. We will aim to research best practice and to provide suggestions as well as criticism.

2. **The Public's Services.** Scrutiny wants reassurance that services are improving. This is about leadership, culture and organisation as much as it is about budgets. We will seek reassurance that even in difficult financial circumstances, we are still meeting our duty of care to the most vulnerable. Scrutiny will listen and learn from the public's experiences of service performance to guide its work on Croydon's transformation.
3. **The Public's Voice.** Scrutiny wants to make sure that the Council is transparent, open and engaging with the people it exists to serve. Scrutiny will monitor the planned improvements in governance for Croydon's local democracy, as well as inviting public voices into the Scrutiny process itself. The Mayor was elected on a mandate to "listen to Croydon" and Scrutiny will hold the executive to account for this pledge.

- 1.2. By the time of the Scrutiny & Overview Committee meeting on 25 July, each of the Sub-Committee's will have met to review their draft work programmes. These, along with the draft work programme for the Committee are appended to this report for the agreement of the Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. The Scrutiny & Overview Committee is asked to: -
 1. Agree the Scrutiny Work Programme for 2023-24 (as set out in Appendix 1)
 2. Consider whether there are any other items that should be provisionally added to the work programme as a result of the discussions held during the meeting.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. Agreeing a work programme to guide Scrutiny throughout the year is a requirement in the Council's Constitution and considered to be best practice. Adjustments can be made to the work programme throughout the year and are agreed by the Scrutiny Chairs & Vice-Chairs, in line with the arrangements in the Constitution, and an update provided at each Committee meeting.

4. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

- 4.1. As noted above, in accordance with paragraph 1.2 (vi) of Part 4E - Scrutiny and Overview Procedure Rules, in the Council's Constitution, the Committee should agree an initial scrutiny work programme at its first full meeting after the Annual Council meeting. In line with the principle followed at the start of the last municipal year, at its first meeting on 6 June 2023, the Scrutiny & Overview Committee agreed the guiding principles that will form the underlying basis for including items in the work programme (see para 1.1 above). These principles have been used by the Committee and its sub-committees filter items for inclusion in the work programme for the year ahead.

- 4.2. Since the meeting on 6 June 2023, the Sub-Committees (Children & Young People Sub-Committee, Health & Social Care Sub-Committee, Homes and Streets & Environment Sub-Committee) will each hold their own meetings. The discussions at these meeting, along with other informal discussions, will be used by the Scrutiny Work Programming Group to draft a outline work programme for the agreement of the Committee on 25 July.

5 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 None. It is a requirement in the Council's Constitution for the Scrutiny & Overview Committee to set a work programme for itself and its sub-committees at the start of each municipal year.

9 CONSULTATION

- 9.1 Each of the sub-committee's has had the opportunity to feed into their respective work programmes for the year ahead. Scrutiny Chairs have also met with officers to also gather their feedback on the programme.

10. CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

- 10.1 This report contributes to priority 1: The Council balances its books, listens to residents and delivers good sustainable services.

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1: Draft Scrutiny Work Programme 2023-24