

**Committee:** Overview and Scrutiny Commission

**Date:** 24 April 2019

**Wards:** All

**Subject:** Planning the Commission's 2019/20 work programme

**Lead officer:** Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services

**Lead member:** Councillor Peter Southgate, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

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## **Recommendations:**

- A. That the Commission reviews its 2018/19 work programme (set out in the appendix), identifying what worked well, what worked less well and what the Commission would like to do differently next year;
  - B. That the Commission suggests items for inclusion in the 2019/20 work programme – both agenda items and potential task group review topics;
  - C. That the Commission re-establishes the financial monitoring task group and makes recommendations regarding its work programme;
  - D. That the Commission advises on agenda items for its meeting on 3 July 2019.
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## **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To enable the Commission to plan its work programme for the forthcoming municipal year and, in particular, to agree agenda items for the first meeting of the municipal year.

## **2. DETAILS**

### Identifying issues for the 2019/20 work programme

- 2.1 The scrutiny officers are currently gathering suggestions for issues to scrutinise, either as Commission agenda items or task group reviews. Suggestions are being sought from members of the public, councillors and partner organisations including the Police, NHS and Merton Voluntary Service Council. The council's departmental management teams have been consulted in order to identify forthcoming issues on which the Commission could contribute to the policymaking process.
- 2.2 The Commission is therefore invited to suggest items for inclusion in the 2019/20 work programme – both agenda items and potential task group review topics.
- 2.3 All the suggestions received will be discussed at the Commission's topic workshop on 21 May 2019. As in previous years, participants will be asked to prioritise the suggestions using criteria so that the issues chosen relate to:
  - the Council's strategic priorities;
  - services that are underperforming;
  - issues of public interest or concern;
  - issues where scrutiny could make a difference

### Financial monitoring scrutiny task group

- 2.4 In previous years the Commission has established a financial monitoring task group to lead on the scrutiny of financial monitoring information on behalf of the Commission, with the following terms of reference:
- to carry out scrutiny of the Council's financial monitoring information on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission;
  - to advise on other agenda items as requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission;
  - to report minutes of its meetings back to the Overview and Scrutiny Commission;
  - to send via the Commission any recommendations or references to Cabinet, Council or other decision making bodies.
- 2.5 The task group has met four times a year to enable the financial monitoring information to be examined on a quarterly basis. The meetings are held in public and the agenda and minutes are published on the Council's website.
- 2.6 It is recommended that the Commission agrees to re-establish the task group for 2019/20. The Commission would then formally appoint members at its meeting on 3 July 2019.
- Planning the first meeting of the 2019/20 municipal year
- 2.7 A note of the workshop discussion and draft work programme will be reported to the first meeting of the Commission in the new municipal year. The Commission will be requested to discuss this draft and agree any changes that it wishes to make.
- 2.8 Last year the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive attended the first meeting of the municipal year to outline their priorities and challenges for the year ahead. The Merton Partnership annual report was also presented at that meeting so that members could ask the Leader and Chief Executive questions on issues arising from the report.
- 2.9 The Commission also received an analysis of the Members' annual scrutiny survey and a scrutiny improvement plan at its July meeting last year.
- 2.10 It is therefore recommended that the Commission should include the following items on the agenda for the meeting on 3 July:
- priorities and challenges for 2019/20 – Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive
  - Merton Partnership Annual Report - Head of Policy, Strategy & Partnerships
  - analysis of Members' annual scrutiny survey – Head of Democracy Services
  - discussion of questions for the Borough Commander
- 2.11 The Commission is asked to advise on any other items that it would be helpful to include on the agenda for its 3 July meeting.

### Involving young people in scrutiny

- 2.12 One of the outcomes of the scrutiny exercise carried out jointly with the Youth Parliament during Local Democracy Week 2018 was a recommendation to involve young people more in scrutiny in future. This should include an opportunity to get involved in suggesting and scrutinising a wide range of issues that are of concern to young people and should not be restricted to those within the remit of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Panel.
- 2.13 Youth Parliament members are elected each year in February and then develop their work programme in March/April.
- 2.14 Scrutiny topic suggestion forms are sent to all school councils and to the Youth Parliament each year so that they can suggest topics for inclusion in the Panels' and Commission's work programmes. Visits by Scrutiny Officers and/or councillors are also offered so that suggestions can be discussed face to face.
- 2.15 Scrutiny task group topics are generally agreed at Panel/Commission meetings in June/July and commence work in September. It is proposed that an invitation should be sent to the Youth Parliament so that they may co-opt young people to a scrutiny task group that is of interest to them.
- 2.16 The scrutiny work programmes will also be shared so that Youth Parliament representatives can send in a written submission or attend to join in the discussion of agenda items in which they have an interest. In particular, the Youth Parliament may wish to submit the results of consultation that they carry out so that this can inform any of the items on the agenda of any scrutiny panel or of the Commission.

### **3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission can select topics for scrutiny review and for other scrutiny work as it sees fit, taking into account views and suggestions from officers, partner organisations and the public.

### **4. CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

Scrutiny topic suggestions are being sought from members of the public, councillors, council officers and partner organisations including the police, NHS and Merton Voluntary Service Council.

### **5. FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None for the purposes of this report.

### **6. LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 There are none specific to this report.

### **7. HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 It is a fundamental aim of the scrutiny process to ensure that there is full and equal access to the democratic process through public involvement and engaging with local partners in scrutiny reviews. Furthermore, the outcomes of reviews are intended to benefit all sections of the local community.

**8. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 The Police and Justice Act 2006 requires every Council to have a scrutiny committee with the power to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken by the Council and the other responsible authorities in the exercise of their crime and disorder functions. The other responsible authorities are the police, the police authority (Metropolitan Police Authority), the fire and rescue authority and the NHS (Merton Clinical Commissioning Group and local NHS Trusts).

8.2 In Merton the responsible committee is the Overview and Scrutiny Commission.

8.3 Under the 2006 Act, the responsible committee is required to “meet to review or scrutinise decisions made, or action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions, no less than once every twelve months”. In doing so, it may require the attendance of officers from the Council, the police and co-operating authorities.

**9. RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 None relating to this report.

**10. APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT**

10.1 Appendix 1 - 2018/19 work programme

**11. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

11.1 None

Meeting date – 11 July 2018

Scrutiny category	Item/Issue	How	Lead Member/ Lead Officer	Intended Outcomes
Holding the executive to account	Leader and Chief Executive – vision, key priorities & challenges for 2018/19	Presentation	Leader of the Council Ged Curran, Chief Executive	Context for Commission's work programme
	Merton Partnership annual report	Report	Chief Executive John Dimmer, Head of Policy, Strategy & Partnerships	Context for Commission's work programme
Scrutiny reviews	Analysis of Members' annual scrutiny survey 2018	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	Discuss findings and agree action plan for 2018/19
	Overview and Scrutiny Commission work programme 2017/18	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan	To agree work programme and task group reviews

**Meeting date – 19 September 2018**

<b>Scrutiny category</b>	<b>Item/Issue</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Lead Member/ Lead Officer</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Borough Commander	Report and in-depth discussion	Borough Commander	Update on crime figures & discussion of policing in Merton.
	Safer Merton Update	Report	Neil Thurlow, Community Safety Manager	Progress report
Scrutiny reviews	Potential task group review for 2018/19 – road safety around schools	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan	Decision on whether to commence a task group review on road safety
	Recruitment and retention of teachers task group	Cabinet response and action plan	Jane McSherry, Head of Education	To receive Cabinet response and action plan
	Financial monitoring task group	Minutes of meeting on 30 August 2018	Chair of task group Julia Regan	To note minutes of meeting held on 30.08.18

**Meeting date – 14 November 2018**

<b>Scrutiny category</b>	<b>Item/Issue</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Lead Member/ Lead Officer</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>
Holding the executive to account	Assessing the impact of Brexit on the Council and the Borough	Report and discussion	Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To receive and comment on Cabinet report. Verbal update on scrutiny work carried out by Cllr Carl Quilliam
	Target Operating Model (TOM)	Report	Sophie Ellis, Assistant Director of Business Improvement	Overview to set context for budget scrutiny
	Business rates retention	Report	Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	Update on the Londonwide pilot – to set context for budget scrutiny
Budget scrutiny	Business Plan 2019/23 - information pertaining to round one of budget scrutiny	Report	Cllr Mark Allison Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To send comments to Cabinet budget meeting 10 December
Scrutiny reviews	Local Democracy Week – joint scrutiny with the youth parliament	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	To receive report and agree next steps

**Meeting date – 23 January 2019 – scrutiny of the budget**

<b>Scrutiny category</b>	<b>Item/Issue</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Lead Member/Lead Officer</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>
Budget scrutiny	Business Plan 2019/23	Report – common pack for Panels and Commission	Cllr Mark Allison, Cabinet Member for Finance Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To report to Cabinet on budget scrutiny round 2
	Business Plan update - latest info from Cabinet 14 January (if any)	Report	Cllr Mark Allison, Cabinet Member for Finance Caroline Holland, Director of Corporate Services	To report to Cabinet on budget scrutiny round 2
	Scrutiny of the Business Plan 2019-2023: comments and recommendations from the overview and scrutiny panels	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan, Head of Democracy Services	To report to Cabinet on budget scrutiny round 2
Scrutiny reviews	Financial monitoring task group	Minutes of meeting	Cllr Stephen Crowe, Chair of task group Julia Regan	To note minutes of meeting held on 13.11.18

**Meeting date – 20 March 2019**

<b>Scrutiny category</b>	<b>Item/Issue</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Lead Member/Lead Officer</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>
Holding the executive to account	Access to services through the council's website	Report	Sophie Ellis, Assistant Director of Business Improvement	Progress report for comment
	General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)	Report	Karin Lane, Head of Information Governance	Briefing for information and comment
Performance management	Select Committee Review of Overview and Scrutiny	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan	To receive government's response to the Select Committee's recommendations
Scrutiny reviews	Recruitment and retention of teachers task group	Updated action plan	Jane McSherry, Head of Education	To scrutinise progress with implementation of task group recommendations
	Financial monitoring task group	Minutes of meeting	Chair of task group Julia Regan	To note minutes of meeting held on 25.02.19
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Discussion of questions for the Borough Commander	Discussion	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan	Discussion to plan line of questioning for meeting on 24 April

**Meeting date – 24 April 2019**

<b>Scrutiny category</b>	<b>Item/Issue</b>	<b>How</b>	<b>Lead Member/Lead Officer</b>	<b>Intended Outcomes</b>
Scrutiny of crime and disorder	Borough Commander	Report and in-depth discussion	Borough Commander	Update on crime figures and local policing issues
	Travellers unauthorised encampment protocol	Report and discussion with affected residents	Howard Joy, Property Management & Review Manager	To scrutinise response to recent encampments and the timeline for review of the protocol
	CCTV service update	Report	Cathryn James, Interim Assistant Director of Public Protection	Update on CCTV service and results of Londonwide review
Holding the executive to account	Equality and Community Cohesion Strategy 2017-20	Action plan	Evereth Willis, Equality and Community Cohesion Officer	To comment on progress made with action plan
Performance management	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan	To approve and forward to Council
	Planning the Commission's 2019/20 work programme	Report	Cllr Peter Southgate Julia Regan	To include proposals for involving young people in scrutiny
Scrutiny review	Safety of young people in Merton – response from Cabinet plus update on action plan	Report	Rachael Wardell, Director Children Schools and Families	To comment on progress made with action plan