

**REPORT FOR: OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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**Date of Meeting:** 17 September 2018

**Subject:** Scrutiny Work Programme 2018-2022

**Responsible Officer:** Alex Dewsnap, Divisional Director,  
Strategic Commissioning

**Scrutiny Lead  
Member area:** All

**Exempt:** No

**Wards affected:** All

**Enclosures:** Scrutiny Work Programme 2018-22

## Section 1 – Summary and Recommendations

This report accompanies the scrutiny work programme 2018-2022.

### Recommendations:

Councillors are recommended to approve the scrutiny work programme 2018 - 2022

## Section 2 – Report

The Council's Constitution provides that, in years when whole-borough elections take place, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should consider its work programme at the first suitable meeting. As time has been required for discussions with the newly-appointed Scrutiny lead Members following the election, the report on the work programme is being reported to the September Overview and Scrutiny Committee with full Council consideration in November.

In 2017, a Centre for Public Scrutiny review of how we could improve scrutiny in Harrow recommended that: *'Steps should be taken now to begin to set the framework for a new scrutiny work programme whose priorities derive directly from scrutiny's agreed role, engages with the council's ambitions and benefits from a range of inputs so it is less council-centric and has a greater outward focus. It would provide a framework with rigorous principles of topic selection to enable members to be able to populate an annual forward plan'*.

In response to the recommendation, Members agreed the role of scrutiny is defined as:

***'Cross-party investigation of issues and decisions that are important to local residents'***

Based on this, Council officers and the Scrutiny Leadership Group have researched and developed the attached work programme for 2018-2022. This work programme aims to strike a more equal balance between looking at decisions the Cabinet are taking and holding them to account and looking at some of the bigger, longer-term issues facing the borough or that concern residents, where scrutiny can play a more influential role in highlighting issues and shaping the response.

### Research input sources

The background research conducted for this work programme drew upon on a range of quantitative and qualitative information and data sources to form a list of key strategic areas for the Scrutiny Leadership Group to consider and which the Leader, Leader of the Opposition and Chief Executive have also endorsed. The research sources were:

- Harrow Resident Survey 2017 (telephone survey of 501 residents, July 2017)
- Local media monitoring data, including press articles and social media posts
- Complaints data over the last two years
- Issues/ themes arising from the Harrow Ambition Plan 2017 refresh
- Common issues raised with local councillors (via Group offices) over the last two years
- Common issues raised with London Assembly Member (Brent & Harrow) and local MPs
- Review of manifestos for local elections
- Issues / themes arising from discussion at the council's Corporate Strategic Board (CSB) in the last year, and areas where the Board wish to focus on in future
- Review of think tanks and local government publications
- Review of government plans and announcements
- Insight from council officers
- Harrow Contracts Register

### Principles for topic selection

The principles used for selecting topics for the work programme were:

- Is it an area of significant concern to local people or of public interest?
- Is it an area where significant change or budget cuts are being proposed?
- Is it a topic that would span electoral cycles and therefore benefit from cross-party collaboration?
- Is it an area of poor performance?
- Is it a source of a high level of complaints?
- Is it an area in which the council or partners wish to develop or significantly change policy?
- Is it an area where Government legislation is being developed?
- Could scrutiny's investigation help identify solutions and lead to real impact?

### Work Programme 2018 - 2022

The attached document sets out the themes and issues Scrutiny wishes to consider over the next four years through scrutiny leads, reports to committee and scrutiny reviews. The Scrutiny Leadership Group comprising the chairs and Vice-Chairs of the scrutiny committees and scrutiny leads are the guardians of the work programme and will meet quarterly to review and prioritise the items on it, taking into account any new, emerging or topical issues that may arise during the course of the year and warrant Scrutiny's attention.

The items in the work programme for the various scrutiny committees will be turned into a forward plan that also takes into account the routine and statutory items that also come to committee such as petitions, scrutiny reviews and progress reports, policies that are part of the Council's statutory policy framework, items from health etc.

## **Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this report.

## **Performance Issues**

There are no performance issues associated with this report.

## **Risk Management Implications**

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

## **Equalities implications**

An Equalities Impact Assessment has not been undertaken for this report as it summarises the activities of Scrutiny and does not propose any changes to service delivery.

## **Corporate Priorities**

All

## **Section 3 - Statutory Officer Clearance**

Not required for this report

## **Section 4 - Contact Details and Background Papers**

**Contact:** Rachel Gapp, Head of Policy, 0208 416 8774  
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**Background Papers:** None