

13 June 2016

Audit and Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme 2016/17

Report of: *Chris Leslie, Finance Director*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The work of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee will be delivered both by Members working in groups and through formal committee reports. The Audit and Scrutiny Committee will make recommendations to decision making committees and Council as necessary. Audit and Scrutiny Committee are invited to consider its 2016/17 work programme.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 That the Audit and Scrutiny work programme 2016/17 at appendix A be approved.**
- 2.2 That a working group be created to review the arrangements for Members' appointed to outside organisations.**

3. Introduction and Background

- 3.1 Committee members are invited by the Chair and Vice-Chair to propose topics for inclusion on the work programme.
- 3.2 The Audit and Scrutiny Committee will have particular regard to the Budget, Corporate Plan, Forward Plan, Council policy and significant national issues. The Committee will also seek to include the scrutiny of external facing matters that are of significant interest to local communities.
- 3.3 The work programme of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee should not include management or staffing issues which are the responsibility of the Head of Paid Service.

4. Issue, Options and Analysis of Options

4.1 The Scrutiny function works best when the committee undertakes its work both in member groups and by receiving formal committee reports. It is proposed that in 2016/17, where possible, member working groups be set up as Task and Finish Groups under the terms of reference of the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

4.2 The advantages of this approach include:

- Task and Finish groups would provide a structure to make recommendations to the relevant committee which member working groups do not have currently.
- They would provide Audit and Scrutiny with a clear purpose, a robust work plan and appropriate officer support for its pre-scrutiny role; reports and information would be prepared by Officers.
- Consultation would be built into the policy making process ensuring robust policy development and would avoid delays at the end of the process from last minute call ins.
- A wider group of members would be included in any policy making.
- The decision making committee, or the Lead Officer in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, would request the Audit & Scrutiny Committee appoint a task and finish group, and would provide background information to the project and would make any suggestions about the terms of reference, process and timetable.
- Task and finish groups may be informal, they may invite interested parties to meetings and will submit reports directly to the Audit and Scrutiny Committee. The Audit and Scrutiny Committee will, if required, make recommendations to decision making committees.
- Membership for any task and finish group may be from across the whole Council, not just the Audit and Scrutiny Committee.

4.3 The work programme at Appendix A carries on the scrutiny tasks from the approved 2015/16 work programme of the Audit, Scrutiny and Transformation Committee.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 The Constitution requires that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee agrees its work programme at each meeting of the Committee.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 This report seeks to consult with the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on its work programme.

7. References to Corporate Plan

- 7.1 The vision of Transformation includes an action to improve the Council's governance arrangements, leading to faster, more effective decision-making. An effective scrutiny function is an essential element of that priority.

8. Implications

Financial Implications

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- 8.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

Legal Implications

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- 8.2 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

9. Background Papers

- 9.1 None

10. Appendices to this report

Appendix A – Work Programme 2016/17

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