

29 June 2015

Audit, Scrutiny and Transformation Committee

Scrutiny Work Programme 2015/16

Report of: *Chris Leslie, Finance Director*

Wards Affected: *All*

This report is: *Public*

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The Audit and Scrutiny Committee will develop an annual work programme to guide its work for 2015/16. The work of the Audit, Scrutiny and Transformation 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.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 That the scrutiny work programme 2015/16 includes:

- **Review of the annual work programme**
- **Hackney carriage fare setting process**
- **Member/Officer communications and casework management**
- **Budget Scrutiny**
- **Revenues and Benefits shared service**
- **Annual Report of the Audit, Scrutiny and Transformation Committee**
- **William Hunter Way lessons learned Task and Finish Group**

2.2 That the Transformation and New Ways of Working Programme include:

- **Contact Centre performance and the progression of the Customer Access Strategy/ the integration of further service areas into the Contact Centre**
- **The progress and implementation of the New Ways of Working programme, highlighting major milestones achieved and to follow**
- **A review of the ICT work programme that supports both of the above**

- **Liaison with other Chairs (to ensure co-ordination particularly re any work to be undertaken pre-scrutiny)**

2.3 That the following from the 2014/15 work programme be removed for 2015/16:

- **An officer report on the Appointment of an Interim Chief Executive**
- **The creation of a task and finish group to consider member engagement with the press**

2.4 That the work programme be reviewed and updated at each meeting of the Committee.

2.5 That the Annual Report of the Committee at Appendix C be taken to the next meeting of Ordinary Council.

3. Introduction and Background

3.1 Changes to the governance structure were agreed at Annual Council on 20 May 2015, merging the audit and scrutiny functions with Transformation. The scrutiny work programme 2015/16 will be guided by part 4.4 of the constitution which sets out the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules.

3.2 At the beginning of the municipal year, the Audit, Scrutiny and Transformation Committee will be responsible for agreeing its own work programme which should be based on the established PICKET criteria (attached as Appendix B).

3.3 Committee members are invited by the Chair and Vice-Chair to propose topics for inclusion on the work programme. The Committee will be asked to agree to the inclusion of topics after considering PICKET and its resource implications.

3.4 The Audit, Scrutiny and Transformation 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.

3.5 The work programme of the Audit, Scrutiny and Transformation 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 2015/16, 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 It is proposed that the Audit, Scrutiny and Transformation Committee agree its scrutiny work programme 2015/16 at Appendix A.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 To enact the provisions of Part 4.4 of the Constitution that the Audit and Scrutiny Committee prepare an annual scrutiny work programme.

6. Consultation

- 6.1 The Chair of the Audit, Scrutiny and Transformation Committee were consulted about the work programme for the Committee.
- 6.2 This report seeks to consult with the Audit and Scrutiny Committee on its work programme.

7. References to Corporate Plan

- 7.1 The priority area A Modern Council 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 at present.

9. Background Papers

- 9.1 None

10. Appendices to this report

Appendix A – Scrutiny Work Programme 2015/16

Appendix B – PICKET scoring criteria

Appendix C – Annual Report of the Committee

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