

PICK Priority Setting

P for Public Interest

Members' representative roles are an essential feature of Scrutiny. They are the eyes and ears of the public, ensuring that the policies, practice and services delivered to the people of the District, by both the Council and external organisations, are meeting local needs and to an acceptable standard. The concerns of local people should therefore influence the issues chosen for scrutiny. This could include current issues. For example, dignity is consistently cited as a high priority for service users (e.g. Mid Staffordshire Enquiry, care in Winterbourne hospital) and scrutiny committees are well placed to influence the agenda locally and drive forward better quality services). Members themselves will have a good knowledge of local issues and concerns. Surgeries, Parish Councils, Residents Associations and Community Groups are all sources of resident's views. Consultation and Surveys undertaken by the Council and others can also provide a wealth of information.

I for Impact

Scrutiny is about making a difference to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area. Not all issues of concern will have equal impact on the well-being of the community and there may be issues which are important to residents but where the Council can exert little or no influence. This should be considered when deciding the programme of work, giving priority to the big issues that have most impact and where scrutiny can tangibly influence the outcome. To maximise impact, particularly when scrutinising external activity, attention should also be given to how the committee could influence policy and practice.

C for Council Performance

Scrutiny is about improving performance and ensuring the Council's customers are served well. With the abolition of external inspection regimes, scrutiny has an even more important role to play in self-regulation. Members will need good quality information to identify areas where the Council, and other external organisations, are performing poorly. Areas where performance has dropped should be our priority. As well as driving up Council performance, scrutiny also has an important role in scrutinising the efficiency and value for money of Council services and organizational development. In the current financial climate, the challenge for scrutiny is investigating whether improvements can be made within existing resources or with less resource and identify ways that demand for services can be reduced.

K for Keep in Context

To avoid duplication or wasted effort priorities should take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered. Is there another review happening or planned? Is the service about to be inspected by an external body? Are there major legislative or policy initiatives already resulting in change? If these circumstances exist Members may decide to link up with other approaches or defer a decision until the outcomes are known or conclude that the other approaches will address the issues. Reference should also be made to proposed programmes of work in the Council's plans and strategies and whether topic suggestion is in line with the Council's four policy principles.

Policy Principles

All topic suggestions should be in line with the Council's agreed policy principles:

- **Protecting the vulnerable through targeted intervention**, particularly those people in our communities who are subject to, or at risk of harm, people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and those who are financially excluded or whose circumstances make them vulnerable.

- **Promoting equality of opportunity through targeted intervention**, specifically in relation to tackling health inequalities, meeting the skills gap and improving access to job opportunities, tackling fuel poverty, improving education and training opportunities, access to affordable housing and financial and digital inclusion.
- **Developing strong and healthy communities** through the provision of mainstream and preventive services that are available to all those who choose to access them.
- **Creating economic prosperity** across the Borough

Outcome

Greater weighing will be given to those suggestions where it is clear that scrutiny will make a tangible difference, can exert influence, achieve savings and reduce pressure on demand for services.

Scoring System

- **P**ublic Interest: the concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen

Score	Measure
0	no public interest
1	low public interest
2	medium public interest
3	high public interest

- **I**mpact: priority should be given to the issues which make the biggest difference to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area

Score	Measure
0	no direct impact
1	low impact
2	medium impact
3	high impact

- **C**ouncil Performance and efficiency: priority should be given to the areas in which the Council, and other agencies, are not performing well or proposals will identify efficiencies/ savings and reduce pressure on demand for services.

Score	Measure
0	'Green' on or above target performance
1	'Amber',
2	low performance 'Red'

- **K**eep in Context: work programmes must take account of what else is happening in the areas being considered to avoid duplication or wasted effort.

Score	Measure
0	Already dealt with/ not a Council/ public sector priority
1	Longer term aspiration or plan
2	Need for review acknowledged and worked planned elsewhere
3	Need for review acknowledged

In addition, extra weighting will be given to suggestions which are in line with the Council's priorities and where it is clear that scrutiny can achieve a positive outcome:

- **P**riority

Score	Measure
0	Not a Council policy priority
1	Council policy priority but worked planned elsewhere
2	Council policy priority and need for review acknowledged

- **O**utcome

Score	Measure
1	Low value added
2	Medium value added
3	High value added