

AGENDA ITEM**REPORT TO EXECUTIVE
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****5 MARCH 2024****REPORT OF THE HEAD
OF DEMOCRATIC SERVICES****SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25 – SELECTION OF IN-DEPTH SCRUTINY
REVIEWS****SUMMARY**

The report presents proposals for the scrutiny work programme for 2024/25 for consideration and approval by Executive Scrutiny Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive Scrutiny Committee is asked to approve the Work Programme for 2024/25.

WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

1. The current year's work programme is summarised below. This includes an indication of when current reviews are scheduled to conclude.

Select Committee	In-Depth Review Topics	Standing Items
Adult Social Care and Health	Access to GP and Primary Care (due to conclude June 2024) Adult Safeguarding (not started)	Annual Monitoring Consideration of NHS Service Changes (as and when required) Overview and Performance Reports Frontline visits (To be resumed) (Members also involved in Joint Scrutiny arrangements)
Children and Young People	Narrowing the Gap in Educational Attainment (due to conclude June 2024) HAF Programme (not started)	Annual Monitoring Overview and Performance Reports Frontline visits (To be resumed)
Crime and Disorder	Play Area Distribution, Maintenance and Accessibility (due to conclude May 2024) Vaping (not started)	Annual Monitoring Overview (and Performance) reports

People	Cost of Living Response (complete)	Annual Monitoring
	Disabled Facilities Grants (not started)	Overview (and performance) reports
	Adult Carers' Service (not started)	
Place	Domestic Waste Collections, Kerbside Recycling and Green Waste Collections (complete)	Annual Monitoring Overview (and performance) reports
	Roadside Advertising (due to conclude July 2024)	

SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2024/25

2. In previous years, it has been the practice for the Chair of Executive Scrutiny Committee to write to all Members in January each year to invite suggestions for in-depth scrutiny review topics. The suggestions received are prioritised by the Scrutiny Team using the PICK scoring system. The topic suggestions are reported to Scrutiny Liaison Forum (comprising Cabinet Members, Select Committee Chairs and CMT). Executive Scrutiny Committee are the decision-making body that sets the priorities and programme for the year ahead, allocating in-depth reviews to individual Select Committees. The setting of an annual work programme does not preclude topics being added to the programme mid-year where the need arises.

3. Over the years, we have sought to ensure that topics selected align with the priorities of the Council and this has been reflected in the prioritisation of the topics by Members. In 2009, cross-party support was secured to devoting the entire scrutiny work programme to support a three-year programme of EIT (Efficiency, Improvement & Transformation) reviews. The programme included Member-led scrutiny reviews alongside officer-led work. The programme delivered significant savings and transformation and ensured that all Members were able to input into reviews and influence decision making.

4. A similar approach is now proposed in relation to the Council's Powering our Futures Programme (including transformation reviews). The Chair of the Committee has communicated this proposal to all Members and at the same time inviting Members to advise of any urgent matter, or any issue already listed on the programme, that they feel should still be reviewed in 2024/25.

5. In January 2024, Cabinet received an update on the Powering our Future programme. A copy of the Cabinet report is attached at **Appendix 1**. Cabinet agreed:

- a) the draft Mission Statement and Council Missions set out at Sections 2 & 3
- b) the approach to Communities Powering Our Future, set out at Section 4
- c) the areas of focus for Team Stockton, set out at Section 5
- d) in principle the scope of Phase 1 Transformation reviews set out at Section 6. It was also agreed that the Powering Our Future Programme Board has responsibility to agree the final scope, based on the outcome of the rapid review (detailed in Section 6) and consideration of full Project Initiation Documents
- e) to note the findings from the Employee Survey, and agree the priority work strands for the Workforce Development Strategy (Section 7)
- f) the Smart Working Policy set out at Section 7 and attached as an appendix to the Cabinet report
- g) to note the areas of focus for Regeneration Powering Our Future (Section 8) and agree to receive future updates on individual areas of activity.

6. The following review areas are proposed for scrutiny review:

Committee	Potential In Depth Review Topic
Adult Social Care and Health Select Committee	Transformation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reablement Service
Children and Young People Select Committee	Transformation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HAF Programme • Corporate Parenting
Crime and Disorder Select Committee	Regeneration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcoming and Safe Town Centres
People Select Committee	Transformation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disabled Facilities Grants
Place Select Committee	Regeneration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable Housing

7. The usual pro forma have been completed in respect of all of the proposed topics. These are attached at **Appendix 2**. If agreed by Executive Scrutiny Committee, work on the above topics would commence at the conclusion of reviews that are already underway. Other reviews on the current scrutiny work programme would be deferred until the following year and the merits of completing that work revisited at that time.

8. Alongside the formal scrutiny process, forums such as Members' engagement sessions and informal working groups can be established to inform Transformation Reviews as appropriate. These can enable Members to inform policy development and proposals for change, ahead of Cabinet decision making.

CONSULTATION

9. Councillors have been asked to advise of any urgent matter, or any issue already listed on the programme, that they feel should still be reviewed in 2024/25.

FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10. The work programme is resourced within existing budgets. No legal implications are identified at this stage.

RISK ASSESSMENT

11. There is a need to meet legislative requirements and for the Council to put in place internal mechanisms to ensure the safety and quality of key services in addition to deploying resources in the most effective way. The selection of appropriate topics for review can help to support service improvement; the selection of inappropriate topics will lead to the waste of officer and Member time and resources.

Name of Contact Officer: Jonathan Nertney
Telephone No: 01642 526312
Email Address: jonathan.nertney@stockton.gov.uk

Name of Contact Officer: Judy Trainer
Telephone No: 01642 528158
Email Address: judy.trainer@stockton.gov.uk

Background Papers:

None

Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Not Ward Specific

Property Implications:

None