

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date:	Wednesday 13 March 2024
Classification:	General Release
Title:	2024/2025 Work Programme
Report of:	Head of Governance and Councillor Liaison
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	All
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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report asks the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (“the Committee”) to discuss topics for its work programme.
- 1.2 This report also considers the work of the Committee since its last meeting on 14 December 2023.

2. Formal Meeting Dates for the 2023/2024 Municipal Year

- 2.1 The Committee is advised that this is the last scheduled meeting date for the 2023/2024 year.

3. Background

- 3.1 The Policy and Scrutiny team supports the Committee in creating the work programme and the Committee considers items on those areas where the Council is currently working to develop new policy, where policies previously implemented are ready for strategic review or where scrutiny plays an overall role in assurance. The overall emphasis is to provide scrutiny with maximum opportunity to have impact and influence Council policy.
- 3.4 When drawing up work programmes, the Committee considers the vision and purpose of scrutiny at Westminster.

Scrutiny is a vital function to promote transparency and accountability. On behalf of Westminster’s communities and stakeholders, local non-Executive

Councillors will endeavour to ensure services in the City not only meet people's needs but enhance lived experiences by:

- 1. Championing the best possible outcomes for communities and stakeholders.*
- 2. Holding the Council, its partner organisations and external bodies to account for decisions taken and the impacts on our communities.*
- 3. Examining Council priorities, actively engaging in policy development and offering constructive challenge prior to decisions being taken.*
- 4. Working strategically across the city to focus our efforts on policy and service areas where scrutiny can make the biggest impact.*
- 5. Demonstrating integrity and commitment by adhering to the Nolan Principles of Public Life.*

4. Work Programme for 2024/25

- 4.1 The Committee is asked to discuss and propose topics of interest for the next municipal year's work programme in 2024/25.
- 4.2 The Committee's attention should be drawn to the Terms of Reference, set out in Appendix 1, which may assist the Committee in identifying issues to be included in the work programme.
- 4.3 The Committee is due to meet on 9 May 2024 to discuss items for its work programme after the Cabinet Member Annual Updates held between Monday 15 April to Tuesday 30 April. The Committee will use the Updates to help identify possible issues for future investigation by scrutiny.
- 4.x When considering the work programme, and agreeing an overall programme of scrutiny activity, the Committee should have regard to whether the work programme is achievable in terms of both Officer and Member time, taking into account that the Committee is scheduled to meet four times per year. Members are also reminded that it is advisable to hold some capacity in reserve for any urgent issues that might arise.

5. Task Groups and Single Member Studies

- 5.1 Each Committee has discretion to establish Task Groups and Single Member Studies to examine key issues in more detail. The Committee is asked to consider whether they would like to establish a Task Group or commission a Single Member Study. The Committee should be advised that both Members and Officers will only be able to successfully take part in and support a finite number of Task Groups at any one time.

6. Monitoring recommendations and actions

- 6.1 The recommendations and actions arising from each meeting are recorded in the Committee Tracker attached as Appendix 2. Members are invited to review the work undertaken in response to those recommendations and actions.

7. Committee activity

- 7.1 Since the previous meeting of the Committee on 14 December 2023, and the meeting on 13 March 2024, the Committee will have been on two site visits in preparation for the Westminster After Dark item.
- 7.2 On Friday 1 March, through to Saturday 2 March, the Committee visited Soho along with: the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development (Councillor Barraclough), Cabinet Member for Communities, Children and Public Protection (Councillor A Less), the Nighttime Champion (Councillor I Less), the Lead Member for Soho (Councillor Lilley), as well as colleagues from Westminster After Dark, Public Protection and Licensing and Policy and Scrutiny. The visit included meeting the Night Stars volunteers, the HOLBA security team, the Head of Security at Kingly Court from Shaftesbury Capital and the police. The visit took in the diverse needs of busy areas in the early night time, viewed well-run premises and also areas of concern.
- 7.3 At the time of writing, the Committee is due to visit, on Thursday 7 March, areas in the City which have different needs to Soho, including where residential areas are often not well-lit, there is ASB, litter, rough sleeping, noise disturbances. The Committee is due to visit Marylebone, Marble Arch and Edgware Road, Queensway, Westbourne Park and Harrow Road. The visit will include participants including the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development (Councillor Barraclough), Cabinet Member for Communities, Children and Public Protection (Councillor A Less), the Nighttime Champion (Councillor I Less), the Lead Member for Edgware Road (Councillor Chowdhury), as well as colleagues from Westminster After Dark, Public Protection and Licensing and Policy and Scrutiny.

If you have any queries about this report or wish to inspect any of the background papers, please contact Clare O'Keefe.

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Appendix 1: Terms of Reference

Appendix 2: Committee Tracker