

Scrutiny Board	Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board
Report Title	Work Programme 2025/26
Date of Meeting	5 February 2026
Report Author	John Swann Democratic Services Officer
Lead Officer	James McLaughlin Assistant Chief Executive
Wards Affected	All wards
Appendices	1. Work Programme 2025/ 26

1. Executive Summary

1.1 The work programme details the work of the Safer Neighbourhoods and Active Communities Scrutiny Board for the 2025/ 26 municipal year and is reviewed periodically.

2. Recommendations

2.1 To note the Board's Work Programme for the 2025/ 26 municipal year.

3. Background and Context

3.1 A strong and effective work programme underpins the work and approach of Scrutiny. It is good practice for work programmes to remain fluid, to allow for scrutiny of new and emerging issues in a timely manner.

3.2 Scrutiny is a member led, driven by members' commitment to improve services and thereby people's lives.

3.3 Boards have responsibility for their own work programmes, and it is good practice to keep them under review, to allow for new and emerging issues to be scrutinised in a timely manner.

3.4 Scrutiny Procedure Rules allow any member to request that an item is added to a scrutiny board's work programme. Each request should be carefully assessed, using the agreed process, to ensure that resources can be prioritised and that the scrutiny activity will add value.

4. Consultation

4.1 A public consultation ran on the Consultation Hub from 4 April to 9 May 2025. The link to the consultation was shared via the Council's Facebook page, in staff comms, with elected members and with schools.

- 4.2 Chief officers were also consulted at the leadership meetings on their views on where scrutiny could have a valuable input into their strategic priorities.
- 4.3 At an annual work programming event, held in June 2025 and involving chief officers, executive members and key partners, the Board considered the consultation responses and curated the work programme for the 2025/ 26 municipal year.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The Scrutiny function is directly supported by the Council's Statutory Scrutiny Officer and Democratic Services Officers within the Council's Law and Governance directorate. Additional technical expertise and evidence on specific matters will be provided by officers within the various directorates of the authority.
- 5.2 The strategic resource implications of topics selected for scrutiny will be identified and reported to the Board as required.

6. Legal and Governance Implications

- 6.1 The Local Government Act 2000 states that Councils operating executive arrangements must also make provision for the appointment of overview and scrutiny committees.
- 6.2 Further powers relating to overview and scrutiny are set out in the Police and Justice Act 2006, the Localism Act 2011, the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 and the Health and Social Care Acts 2012 and 2022.
- 6.3 The Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board has oversight of all scrutiny work programmes to ensure that there is efficient use of resources, and that the potential for duplication of effort is minimised.
- 6.4 The legal and governance implications of topics selected for scrutiny will be identified and reported to the Board as required.

7. Other Relevant Implications

- 7.1 Relevant implications arising from scrutiny activity will be set out in individual reports presented to the Board.

8. Background Documents

None.

9. How does this deliver the Outcomes in the Council Plan?

9.1 The scrutiny function supports all of the objectives of the Council Plan by seeking to improve services for the people of Sandwell. It does this by influencing the policies and decisions made by the Council and other organisations involved in delivering public services:-

- Growing up in Sandwell
- Living in Sandwell
- Healthy in Sandwell
- Thriving Economy in Sandwell
- One Council One Team Approach.

9.2 The work programme details the specific outcome/s linked to each item.

9.3 Effective governance arrangements support the delivery of all corporate objectives.