

Committee/Date:	Council 19 October 2023
Report Title:	Scrutiny Annual report
Directorate:	Finance and Governance
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Wards affected:	None specifically
Public Access	Open
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23 Appendix 2 – Scrutiny Forward Plans 2023-24

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1. Article 6 of the Waltham Forest Council Constitution sets out the Terms of Reference of Overview and Scrutiny. The Overview & Scrutiny Committees must conduct their proceedings in accordance with the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules set out in Part 6 of the Constitution. Part 6, Section 4, Paragraph 4.1, requires that the annual work programmes for scrutiny committees are agreed by full Council. These forward plans are being presented to Council for its agreement.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1. That the Council notes the scrutiny annual report 2022-23 (**appendix 1**)
- 2.2. That the Council endorses the proposed 2023-24 work plans for each of the committees as set out in **appendix 2**.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1. Scrutiny Committees make an annual report to Council, this report is attached as **appendix 1** and sets out the work undertaken by the Committees in the year 2022-23.
- 3.2. The report sets out the activity undertaken by each committee, a summary of the recommendations made throughout the year and the impact of those recommendations.
- 3.3. Looking forward, scrutiny committees met in the summer to discuss service priorities and identify items for their forward plans. Cabinet members, senior officers and their teams have been consulted

throughout this process. These forward plans are attached as **appendix 2**.

- 3.4. The current list of committees and chairs is as follows:
- Adult Social Care (Cllr Richard Sweden)
 - Budget and Performance (Cllr Keith Rayner)
 - Children and Families (Cllr Miriam Mirwitch)
 - Climate (Cllr Tony Bell)
 - Communities (Cllr Yusuf Patel)
 - Growth (Cllr Marie Pye)
 - Health (Cllr Karen Bellamy)
 - Housing (Cllr Andrew Dixon)
- 3.5. The scrutiny committees are also able to undertake a "themed review" enabling them to explore an issue in more detail and from different perspectives. Work is carried out over several meetings, with an expectation that it will result in a report with recommendations for consideration by Cabinet. The Themed Reviews this year are:
- Communities Scrutiny Committee – Serious Violence
 - Growth Scrutiny Committee – Inclusive Growth & Economy
 - Housing Scrutiny Committee – Homelessness Prevention and Housing Support
- 3.6. In addition, the Budget and Performance Scrutiny Committee will continue to maintain a strategic focus on the financial sustainability of council services and contribute to the delivery of the Medium Term Financial Strategy through effective scrutiny and supporting the principles of good governance.
- 3.7. Committee forward plans may need to change during 2023-24 to accommodate new items, such as where a request for pre-decision scrutiny is made or an urgent report to scrutiny is required. Likewise, deferrals may be requested for some items dependent on circumstances. For expediency, the chair of the relevant committee will be asked to agree its addition to the forward plan.
- 3.8. The Council is also a member of 3 Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees (JHOSC) which agree their own work programmes.
- Whipps Cross JHOSC
Chair: Cllr Richard Sweden
[Work Plan](#)
 - Inner North East London JHOSC
Chair: Cllr Richard Sweden
[Work Plan – currently in draft](#)
 - Outer North East London JHOSC
Chair: rotating Waltham Forest Member: Cllr Richard Sweden

- 3.9. In 2023, the Council has also looked at its own scrutiny arrangements and commissioned the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) to conduct a review with a view to supporting continuous improvement.
- 3.10. Using a mixture of qualitative and quantitative data, CfGS consulted the Senior Leadership Team, Monitoring Officer, Young Advisors, Scrutiny Chairs, Group Leaders, Cabinet members, and has surveyed 65% of all members of the Council. This allowed them to ascertain both points for improvement and examples of good practice.
- 3.11. The recommendations of the review have been considered and an action plan drafted with the support of a cross party advisory group made up of Councillors Goldie, Littlejohn, Mirwitch, Moss, Patel, Pye, Sweden and Terry. Scrutiny Chairs and the Constitution Working Group have also fed into this development of the action plan.
- 3.12. The Scrutiny Advisory Group will report further on the review recommendations, their action plan and activity so far at the Ordinary Council meeting in December 2023.

4. PROPOSAL

- 4.1. Council is asked to note and endorse appendices 1 and 2.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1. The committees consulted with officers and Cabinet in order to prepare the forward plans. Committees will also meet with key stakeholders and partners to discuss the forward plan and how they could contribute to various items throughout the year. Young Independent Advisory Group and Young Advisor members have also had an opportunity to feed into the forward plans.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1. Finance, Value for Money and Risk

- 6.1.1 There are no financial, value for money or risks resulting from this report specifically.

6.2. Legal

- 6.2.1 As set out in the report, Article 6 of the Waltham Forest Council Constitution sets out the Terms of Reference of Overview and Scrutiny. The Overview & Scrutiny Committees must conduct their proceedings in accordance with the Overview & Scrutiny Procedure Rules set out in Part 6 of the Constitution. Part 6, Section 4, Paragraph 4.1, requires that the annual work programmes for scrutiny committees are agreed by full Council. These forward plans are being presented to Council for its agreement.

6.3. Equalities and Diversity

- 6.3.1 While all committees will consider the implications for equality and diversity of council policies, there are no direct equalities and diversity implications from the work programme. Each themed review is assessed in accordance with the council's equalities impact assessment processes before it is referred to Cabinet.

6.4. Sustainability (including climate change, health, crime and disorder)

6.4.1 There are no sustainability implications as result of Council reviewing the committee work programmes. However, each committee will need to undertake its work considering the impact its recommendations and activity may have regard to sustainability.

6.5. Council Infrastructure (e.g. human resources, accommodation or IT issues)

6.5.1 There are no infrastructure implications as result of Council reviewing the committee work programmes. However, each committee will need to undertake its work considering the impact its recommendations and activity may have regard to Council infrastructure.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION (as defined by Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985)

None.