

London Borough of Waltham Forest

Report Title	Scrutiny Annual Report 2024-25
Meeting / Date	Council, 16 October 2025
Directorate	Resources
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Wards affected	None specifically
Public access	Open
Appendices	Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Annual Report 2024-25 Appendix 2 – Scrutiny Forward Plans 2025-26

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report outlines the Scrutiny Annual report for 2024-25, which contains a summary of committee activity for the last municipal year.
- 1.2. Article 6 of the Waltham Forest Council Constitution sets out the Terms of Reference of Overview and Scrutiny. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee 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. Recommendation

- 2.1. That the Council notes the scrutiny annual report 2024-25 (appendix 1)
- 2.2. That the Council endorses the proposed 2025-26 work plans for each of the committees (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 2024-25.
- 3.2. The report outlines the activity undertaken by each committee and a summary of the recommendations and key impacts made throughout the year. It also includes an overview of the Scrutiny Reviews conducted and summarises the work and impact of the Council's Young Advisors and the Youth Independent Advisory Group on scrutiny committees.

- 3.3. The implementation of the Scrutiny Improvement Review, which took place in 2023 is outlined, updating on the change of remits and the development of the training programme.
- 3.4. At the Council's AGM on 22 May 2025, the membership for scrutiny committees for 2025-26 was agreed. The current list of committees and chairs is as follows:
- Coordinating Scrutiny Committee (Cllr Yusuf Patel)
 - Adult Social Care and Health (Cllr Karen Bellamy)
 - Budget (Cllr Miriam Mirwitch)
 - Children and Families (Cllr Sharon Waldron)
 - Climate (Cllr Caramel Quin)
 - Communities and Public Protection (Cllr Jack Phipps)
 - Housing and Inclusive Economy (Cllr Whitney Ihenachor)
 - Joint Health Lead Member (Cllr Richard Sweden)
- 3.5. The Council is a member of 2 Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees (JHOSC), with members electing a Chair at the start of each year.
- 3.6. The 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.
- 3.7. The Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees (JHOSC) agree their own work programmes.
- 3.8. Committee forward plans may need to change during 2025-26 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.

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 also engaged with key stakeholders and partners to establish any items which they could contribute throughout the municipal 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.