

Non-Executive Report of the: Overview and Scrutiny Committee 23 rd April 2019	 TOWER HAMLETS
Report of: Will Tuckley, Chief Executive	Classification: Unrestricted
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2018 - 19	

Originating Officer(s)	Afazul Hoque, Head of Corporate Strategy & Policy Daniel Kerr, Strategy & Policy Manager
Wards affected	All Wards

Reasons for urgency

This is the last Overview & Scrutiny Committee meeting of the municipal year and this report captures all the activity that scrutiny has delivered. The Chair is minded to accept the report to ensure the current Committee are able to comment on the report.

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1. The annual report provides a summary of the work the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, the Health, Housing and Grants Sub Committees and Scrutiny Leads have delivered in the 2018-2019 municipal year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:
- Comment and agree the report for submission to Full Council in the new municipal year;
 - Authorise the Divisional Director Strategy, Policy & Performance amend the report in consultation with the Chair before submission to Full Council.

3. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 3.1. The report presents a summary of diverse range of scrutiny work conducted throughout 2018-19 by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Health, Housing and Grants Scrutiny Sub Committees.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 5.1. The committee may decline to agree the recommendations. This is not recommended as the report outlines work undertaken by scrutiny to identify areas of improvement.
- 5.2. The committee are invited to comment on the report which will be amended and finalised before submission to Full Council.

6. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 6.1. Under the Council's Constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) must report annually to Full Council documenting the committee's activities during the past year, including on the work of the Scrutiny Sub-Committees.
- 6.2. In developing a work programme for the year the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held a workshop in June 2018. To identify areas of focus for the Committee, the session included a reflection of:
 - Scrutiny values
 - Prioritisation methods and tools
 - Council priorities and horizon scan
 - How to engage residents and partners more effectively
 - Outcomes the Committee wishes to achieve
- 6.3. Discussions were also held with officers across the Council to explore how Overview and Scrutiny could add value to service delivery and improvements. This included considering the timing of items and how to engage partners or independent experts. Follow up discussions were also held with the Chair and Scrutiny Leads to prioritise, scope and agree the format of scrutiny activities for the year. The scrutiny work programme was developed using the following categories:
 - **Scrutiny Spotlight Sessions:** a Cabinet Member and/or a senior leader from a stakeholder organisation (e.g. the Borough Commander) provides an overview of their work, including key risks within their portfolio followed by discussions on service improvements.
 - **Strategic Performance Monitoring:** regular strategic monitoring reports, such as the Corporate Performance Report and Budget Monitoring, are submitted to the Committee for scrutiny to ensure progress in delivering the Strategic Plan and to flag risks;

- **Tracking Recommendations:** throughout the year the Committee reviewed progress on the implementation of 'Action Plans' arising from previous reviews and challenge sessions;
- **Scrutiny Reviews:** led by a scrutiny lead to examine a topic over multiple evidence gathering sessions, followed by a report with recommendations for service improvement;
- **Scrutiny Challenge Sessions:** led by a scrutiny lead to take a 'deep dive' evidence gathering session and followed by a report with recommendations for service improvement;
- **Budget & Policy Framework Scrutiny:** The Committee has a mandatory consultation role on all items that are the responsibility of Full Council to agree rather than the Executive, including the budget;
- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee Updates:** an opportunity for scrutiny leads to report back to the Committee on the work of the Sub-Committees or any wider work they are involved in, for example Improvement Boards;
- **Overview and Scrutiny Committee Reports:** additional items that are either requested, or referred to the Committee for consideration and input;
- **Pre-Cabinet Scrutiny:** consideration of items due at the next Cabinet meeting, which allows the Committee to raise questions that it wishes the Executive to take into account when making a decision.

6.4 The OSC also identified the following three focus areas which were considered through discussions and engagement with a range of stakeholders at Committee meetings:

- Education
- Employment
- Community Safety

6.5 In March 2019 the Committee held an Away day to reflect on their key achievements, challenges and priorities for the year ahead. Discussions from the away day will feed into the development of scrutiny in 2019-20.

- 6.6 The attached report (Appendix 1) highlights the range of work delivered by scrutiny during the municipal year this includes scrutiny spotlight on a range of topics including adults safeguarding, environment, housing, domestic violence. The scrutiny leads led on in-depth reviews and challenge sessions including on council tax reduction scheme, communications, school exclusions, green spaces in housing estate and review of diabetes services.
- 6.7 The OSC also considered 3 call-ins including 2 on the decisions on the phased closure of local authority day nurseries and outsourcing of community equipment services. All three were sent back to Cabinet for reconsideration with Cabinet agreeing to extend the consultation period for the proposed closure of day nurseries.
- 6.8 A key focus for OSC has been on the Children's Services Improvement agenda receiving quarterly update reports and engaging a diverse range of stakeholders to challenge and support the improvement work. The Committee also considered the Council's budget in January 2019 and made 9 recommendations on improving budget setting process and reducing implications for local residents.
- 6.9 In delivering the scrutiny work programme a diverse range of stakeholders were engaged including local schools, police, NHS, housing providers, voluntary and community sector organisations. The scrutiny meetings were held at different venues including a local secondary school and health centre. Across the committees 11 local residents were co-opted to bring local residents voice to the scrutiny process. Scrutiny were supported by the Centre for Public Scrutiny in developing the Committees skills focusing on particular areas with the Chair of OSC sharing Tower Hamlets scrutiny's experience of supporting the Council's improvement agenda at the Annual Centre for Public Scrutiny Conference.

7. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1. There are no direct equalities implications arising from the report. However, the focus of scrutiny has been to identify inequalities faced by different communities and how the Council and partners can help address these.

8. OTHER STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1. Best Value Implications
The activities highlighted in this report are made as part of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's role in helping to secure continuous improvement for the council, as required under its Best Value Duty.
- 8.2. Environmental (including air quality)

There are no direct environmental implications arising from the report

8.3. Risk Management

There are no direct risk management implications arising from the report or recommendations.

8.4. Crime Reduction

There are no direct crime reduction implication arising from the report

8.5. Safeguarding

There are no direct safeguarding implications arising from the report or

8.6. Data Protection / Privacy Impact Assessment

There are no direct data protection/ privacy impact assessment implications arising from the report

9. COMMENTS OF THE CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER

9.1. This report provides a summary of the work carried out by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during 2018-19.

9.2. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report

10. COMMENTS OF LEGAL SERVICES

10.1 Article 6.03 (e) of the Council's constitution provides that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee must report annually to Full Council on its work. This report complies with that requirement.

Linked Reports, Appendices and Background Documents

Linked Report

- NONE

Appendices

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2018-19

Local Government Act, 1972 Section 100D (As amended)

List of "Background Papers" used in the preparation of this report

List any background documents not already in the public domain including officer contact information.

- NONE

Officer contact details for documents:

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