

<p>Non-Executive Report of the:</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>09 July 2024</p>	 <p>TOWER HAMLETS</p>
<p>Report of: Afazul Hoque, Head of Strategy & Communities</p>	<p>Classification: Unrestricted</p>
<p>Draft Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2024-25</p>	

Originating Officer(s)	<p>Afazul Hoque, Head of Corporate Strategy & Communities</p> <p>Daniel Kerr, Strategy & Policy Lead</p>
Wards affected	All Wards

Executive Summary

This report sets out the draft Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2024-25 for:

- Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- Health & Adults Scrutiny Sub-Committee;
- Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Sub-Committee; and
- Children & Education Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

This report also details the work programmes for the Scrutiny Leads:

- Resources & Finance;
- Community Safety;
- Environment & Community Safety

The draft work programme has been informed by the Members workshop session held on Wednesday 19th July 2024 which involved co-opted members across all scrutiny committees.

Strategy and Policy officers also held initial discussions with the DLTs and gathered intelligence from a range of sources including council performance reports, annual complaints data and horizon scanning on key national, regional and local issues that scrutiny may want to engage.

Recommendations:

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Note the draft Scrutiny Work Programme 2024-25
2. Provide any further thoughts or comments on the draft Scrutiny Work Programme 2024-25

1. REASONS FOR THE DECISIONS

- 1.1 The work programme of Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC), its three sub-committees, and three Scrutiny Leads sets out focus areas that scrutiny members have identified as important to scrutinise over this municipal year.

2. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 2.1 The scrutiny work programme is delivered on an ad hoc basis. This is not recommended as it is unfocused and is not an efficient use of members and officers time and will not have an impact on improving outcomes for residents.

3. DETAILS OF THE REPORT

- 3.1 For 2024/25, the scrutiny function is undertaken by an Overview and Scrutiny Committee and three scrutiny sub-committees (Health & Adults, Housing & Regeneration, and Children's & Education). There is also a dedicated Scrutiny Lead for Resources & Finance, Community Safety, and Environment and Climate Change.

Developing the work programme

- 3.2 Members of the OSC, and Co-opted Members across the scrutiny committees, held a workshop on 19 June 2024 to discuss the work programme for 2024-25. This was a joint workshop across all Scrutiny committees to develop a coordinated approach to delivering Scrutiny in 2024/25.
- 3.1 In preparation for the workshop, all Directorate Leadership Teams (DLT) were engaged and asked to highlight areas where Scrutiny will add value to their work, identify key challenges, areas of policy development and key decisions. This included a consideration of the timing of items and how to engage partners or independent experts. There was a specific focus on items where scrutiny could help shape policy development and allow input into strategies

and key decisions whilst in their drafting stages. This will provide scrutiny with an opportunity to add value and ensure the robustness and transparency of key policies and decisions. Scrutiny Members and supporting officers will prioritise early and regular engagement with DLTs to ensure the strategic focus of the work programme is maintained throughout the year.

- 3.2 Scrutiny Leads have also met (or will shortly meet) with Corporate Directors, Divisional Directors, and Cabinet Members to discuss their portfolios, consider how they can best work with each other, and understand where the efforts of scrutiny can be put to best use. Scrutiny Leads will continue to meet with Corporate Directors and Cabinet Members every quarter to help embed scrutiny as a tool for continuous improvement. It will also provide a space outside of formal committee meetings to discuss key issues and prioritise, scope, and agree the format of scrutiny activities throughout the year.
- 3.3 The first meeting of each Sub-Committee is framed as a Members induction and provides members across all Committees with an opportunity to feed into the development of the work programme. This includes a brief overview of the portfolio from services, with officers given the opportunity to sign post members to areas where they can support their work through scrutiny. This is followed by a members discussion to put forward topics they would like to see considered and included in the work programme.

OSC Work Programme Workshop

- 3.4 To identify areas of focus for the committee, the workshop considered:
 - Scrutiny values;
 - Prioritisation methods and tools;
 - Council priorities, performance information and horizon scan information;
 - How to engage residents and partners more effectively;
 - Priorities and outcomes the committees wish to achieve.
- 3.5 Members also discussed the Scrutiny Improvement Plan and considered the actions needed to enhance the scrutiny function.
- 3.6 Members voted on their priorities for each Committee and produced a list of the top five areas for each Committee to cover. In developing the work programme, OSC were clear that they wanted to look at fewer issues in more depth and be clear about what outcomes they want to achieve and how they can add value to allow them to make more effective recommendations.

Next Steps

- 3.7 Following discussion at this meeting, Strategy and Policy officers will take the draft work programme 2024-25 to:
 - Scrutiny leads for further discussions and consider any resident feedback on scrutiny topics;

- Discuss the WP at Sub-committees' and seek any further comments and feedback;
- Discuss with Corporate Directors / Divisional Directors and seek further comments and feedback;
- Discuss with DLTs and seek any further feedback and incorporating and reflecting any key timelines; and
- Prepare the O&S Work Programme 2024-25 for OSC to agree at the September's meeting.