



Housing and Neighbourhoods Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To enable the Committee to set the overall direction of Scrutiny work for the year ahead and plan its work programme.

2 The Role of Scrutiny

- 2.1 The City Council's Overview and Scrutiny function:
- Provides "critical friend" challenge to executive policy-makers and decision-makers;
 - Enables the voice and concerns of the public and its communities to be heard;
 - Is carried out by 'independent minded members' who lead and own the scrutiny process;
 - Drives improvement in public services.
- 2.2 The functions and remits of the scrutiny committees are set out in the Constitution and are attached as Item 5 to your agenda.
- 2.3 The role of a scrutiny member is not formally defined; however the responsibility includes:
- To personally contribute time and effort to both the development and the carrying out of the scrutiny work programme by attending and contributing to committee meetings and inquiries or task & finish groups including hearing evidence, considering conclusions and making recommendations in a final report;
 - To be fair and open, not take a party political stance and not make party political points;
 - To be independent minded and to not pre-judge issues coming to scrutiny nor use the meeting to promote narrow or parochial interests;
 - To challenge the evidence by asking probing questions where necessary in order to get the information needed without being confrontational and to actively seek ideas and opinions;
 - To attend relevant training as appropriate.
- 2.4 It is for individual Scrutiny members to declare any interests or conflicts of interest as per the Constitution.



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3 The Committee's Remit

- 3.1 The Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee's remit is to "fulfil the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee as they relate to any policies, services and activities concerning housing; social cohesion; waste management; neighbourhood management; parks and allotments; localisation; bereavement services and community safety."
- 3.2 This Committee shall be the Crime and Disorder Committee (Police and Justice Act 2006).
- 3.3 The Committee's remit falls mainly within three Cabinet portfolios. In summary these include:

Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods	Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Parks	Cabinet Member for Social Inclusion, Community Safety and Equalities
Council housing management services Registered Social Landlords Private Rented Sector Housing Options Tenant engagement in social housing Neighbourhood Management Bereavement Services	Waste Strategy and Services Pest Control Cleaner Neighbourhoods Recycling Enforcement Parks and Allotments	Safer Communities Social Cohesion and Inclusion Domestic Violence

- 3.4 In addition, the Committee's remit covers Housing Development which is in the Leader's portfolio.
- 3.5 Transparency, equalities and improvement will be cross-cutting themes for all O&S Committees.
- 3.6 Changes in the make-up of Cabinet portfolios and O&S Committees were confirmed at the City Council's AGM on 21st May 2019. A full summary of O&S Committee remits mapped against Cabinet portfolios is available from the Scrutiny Office on request.

4 Work programming

- 4.1 Effective work programming is the bedrock of an effective Scrutiny function. Done well, it can help lay the foundation for targeted, incisive and timely work on issues of local importance where Scrutiny can add real value. Done badly, Scrutiny can end up wasting time and resources on issues where the impact of any work is likely to be minimal.
- 4.2 Each Scrutiny Committee work programme is determined by the members of that committee. The work programme is discussed at the start of each year; and is updated throughout the year. Whilst Scrutiny Committees are independent from the Executive, there are benefits in aligning priorities,



particularly when resources are scarce. The following section outlines some key areas for the forthcoming year.

Prioritisation

4.3 Members often have a number of topics suggested to them and are therefore required to prioritise matters for consideration. The following factors could be considered:

- *Public interest*: concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen;
- *Ability to change*: priority should be given to issues that the Committee can realistically influence;
- *Performance*: priority should be given to areas in which the Council and Partners are not performing well;
- *Extent*: priority should be given to issues that are relevant to all or a large part of the city;
- *Replication*: work programme must take account of what else is happening to avoid duplication.

5 Priorities for the coming Year

5.1 Members are asked to discuss their priorities for the coming year. Matters raised in the last municipal year include:

- Performance Monitoring;
- Neighbourhood Management;
- Tenant and Resident Engagement;
- Selective Licensing/Article 4 Direction;
- Waste Management Service;
- Social Cohesion – update on summit and strategy.

5.2 Continuing work from the previous year:

- Private Rented Sector

5.3 As this is the statutory Crime and Disorder Committee, the Annual Report of the Community Safety Partnership will also need to be programmed.

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