

Birmingham City Council

City Council

12 July 2022



Subject: Scrutiny Business Report

Report of: Cllr. Sir Albert Bore, Chair of Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? ☐ Yes ☒ No

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the priorities and issues identified for the planned work programmes of Overview & Scrutiny Committees for the forthcoming year.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 That the report be noted.

3 The Start of the Year

- 3.1 At the beginning of the municipal year the Council welcomed new members to the Scrutiny Committees and the following Chairs were appointed:

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| Co-ordinating O&S Committee | Cllr. Sir Albert Bore |
| Commonwealth Games, Culture and Physical Activity O&S Committee | Cllr. Jack Deakin |
| Economy and Skills O&S Committee | Cllr. Saima Suleman |
| Education and Children's Social Care O&S Committee | Cllr. Kerry Jenkins |
| Health and Social Care O&S Committee | Cllr. Mick Brown |
| Housing and Neighbourhood O&S Committee | Cllr. Mohammed Idrees |
| Resources O&S Committee | Cllr. Akhlaq Ahmed |
| Sustainability and Transport O&S Committee | Cllr. Chaman Lal |

- 3.2 During June each O&S Committee held an informal meeting and received information on the development of the Council's Corporate Plan, the City Observatory and Indicators and the priorities of the relevant service areas to inform the development of the committee work programmes. Each of the informal meetings also considered how the data and analysis that will be available from the City Observatory will be used to inform the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and ensure that equalities are integral to their work.
- 3.3 Some of the key issues that have been identified for the 2022/23 work programme are set out in Sections 4-10 below. In addition to the agenda items for the Committee meetings members also identified issues they would like to consider as part of an in-depth Inquiry. The proposed Inquiry will be considered and prioritised at the Co-ordinating Scrutiny Committee on the 8 July and a verbal update will be provided to City Council. Through these inquiries Overview and Scrutiny Committees can influence policy development and be a catalyst for change to deliver against the 5 Grand Challenges the city faces of:
- Unemployment, skills and the economy
 - Health and well being
 - Community cohesion and living standards
 - The climate emergency
 - Opportunities for children and young people

4 Scrutiny Priorities for 2022/23

Co-ordinating O&S Committee

- 4.1 At meeting in July, the Committee will focus on the Scrutiny Work Programme to confirm the items that will be considered at future meetings of the Co-ordinating O&S Committee and agree the Scrutiny Inquiry that will be carried out by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees during 2022/23. The Committee will continue to monitor the implementation of the recommendations from previous work and will receive reports in the Autumn on the Everyone's Battle, Everyone's Business Action Plan, recommendations of the Exempt Accommodation Inquiry and how the work on complaints has informed the Council's approach to Customer Services.
- 4.2 Other issues that may be considered as part of the Committee's work programme include the West Midlands Devolution Deal, the cost of living crisis, planning enforcement and the development of the Council's Corporate Communications Plan.
- 4.3 The Co-ordinating Scrutiny Committee remit aligns with work of the Leader, the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Members for Social Justice, Community Safety and Equalities, and Digital Culture, Heritage and Tourism. A key part of the work

programme will be to hear from each of these portfolio leads on how they are delivering against their priorities.

5 Commonwealth Games, Culture & Physical Activity O&S Committee

- 5.1 The Committee will receive an update report at the July meeting on the preparation and delivery of the Commonwealth Games. After the games have finished a report will be brought to the Committee in September to provide an overview of the delivery of the games and legacy plans, and at subsequent meetings the Committee will consider the legacy impact of the Games in more detail. The Cabinet Members for Digital, Culture, Heritage & Tourism and Health and Social Care will be invited to report on the delivery of their priorities.
- 5.2 In addition, the Committee identified the following issues for consideration in the work programme including a mapping of physical activity and cultural assets in neighbourhoods, the development of a new Culture Strategy 2023-2033, and a new Physical Activity Strategy.

6 Economy and Skills O&S Committee

- 6.1 At the July meeting the Committee will receive an update on the East Birmingham Inclusive Growth Strategy and major developments including the Our Future City Plan. The Committee has identified the following items for consideration at future meetings: Apprenticeships including for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), Engagement with Council for SMEs, Night-time economy & impact on the city and the role of universities in the city economy. Members also identified the Commonwealth Games employment and skills legacy as a potential item. This may be considered jointly with the Commonwealth Games Scrutiny Committee.
- 6.2 The Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Members for Children & Young People and Digital, Culture, Heritage & Tourism will be invited to Committee meetings to report on their priorities.
- 6.3 The Committee has proposed an Inquiry focussing on the skills agenda for Birmingham and ensuring that this provides the skills employers need now and in the future.

7 Education & Children's Social Care O&S Committee

- 7.1 At July Committee meeting members will receive a report on the SEND Improvement and the Accelerated Progress Plan (APP), the Children's Travel Service and the Youth Justice Strategic Plan. During the year the Committee will receive reports from the Children's Trust, the SEND Commissioner, and the Birmingham Children's Safeguarding Partnership on the work on inclusion with schools.
- 7.2 The Cabinet Members for Children & Young People and Health & Social Care will be invited to the Committee to report on their priorities.

- 7.3 The Committee agreed to work with the Health and Social Care Scrutiny Committee on the impact of the pandemic on the mental health of children and young people and decided that their Inquiry to go forward for consideration at the Co-ordinating Scrutiny Committee will focus on Child Exploitation and County Lines.

8 Health and Social Care O&S Committee

- 8.1 The Integrated Care System (ISC) will formally be established on the 1 July 2022 and replace the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) as commissioners of health services – this will be a focus of the work for both the Joint Birmingham/Solihull Health Scrutiny Committee and the Birmingham Health and Social Care O&S Committee (HOSC) which will have an important part to play in engaging and commenting on emerging plans that will impact on the people of the city.
- 8.2 At the informal meeting in June the Committee agreed that the Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care will be invited to attend a future meeting and the Committee will continue to monitor the performance of adult social care services, Forward Thinking Birmingham, Substance Misuse Services CGL, Birmingham Sexual Health Services, and receive the Birmingham Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report. Members also identified further issues for consideration in the work programme that will be confirmed at the July meeting.
- 8.3 The Committee will also monitor the implementation of the recommendations from the previous work on Period Poverty and Raising Period Awareness and infant mortality.
- 8.4 In addition to these the Committee proposed 3 issues for consideration by the Co-ordinating Scrutiny Committee as in-depth inquiries
- Proposed joint Scrutiny Inquiry with Commonwealth Games, Culture and Physical Activity focussing on the health and wellbeing legacy of the Commonwealth Games.
 - Proposed joint Scrutiny Inquiry with Education and Children's Social Care focussing on mental health in young people including the impact of the pandemic.
 - Proposed HOSC Inquiry focussing on why dementia is different for women.

9 Housing and Neighbourhoods O&S Committee

- 9.1 At the July meeting the Committee will consider the scope of an in-depth inquiry on cleaner streets. Other key items identified for consideration in the work programme to date included, improving the standards of Birmingham City Council void properties, the new tenant engagement strategy and progress towards on localisation and the Working Together in Birmingham's Neighbourhoods policy. The Committee will continue to consider the performance reports provided by Housing and City Operations. Further items for the work programme are likely to be identified in July.

- 9.2 Following the motion agreed at City Council on the 14 June the Committee will receive an update at the September meeting on how Birmingham City Council is engaging and working with the Coroner, partners and communities to eliminate the delays in release of deceased for burial and in the registration processes for births and deaths. The committee will also receive an update on work to develop a new mortuary facility for the city, which will include a permanent digital autopsy scanner.
- 9.3 The Leader and Cabinet Members for Housing and Homelessness; Environment; and Social Justice Community Safety and Equalities will be invited to attend to report on the delivery of their priorities.
- 9.4 This Committee is the statutory Crime and Disorder Committee and as such receives an annual report from the Birmingham Community Safety Partnership. This is currently scheduled for November 2022.

10 Resources O&S Committee

- 10.1 At the July meeting the Committee will continue to scrutinise the quarterly financial monitoring and during the autumn will monitor the implementation of the recommendations from the Task and Finish Group on Procurement and Governance Arrangements. Other issues that the Committee have identified include monthly corporate exception reports, the planned procurement activities report, the outcome of the CIPFA Budget Sufficiency Review of Education and Skills Directorate (now the Children and Families Directorate), how the revenue and benefits service is mitigating the financial risk to the council of the cost of living crisis through early intervention, the council's approach to commercialisation and the performance management indicators that will be used to assess the quality of services provided within the remit of the Committee.
- 10.2 The Leader and Cabinet Members for Finance & Resources and Social Justice, Community Safety & Equalities will be invited to report on the delivery of their priorities.

11 Sustainability and Transport O&S Committee

- 11.1 At the July Committee meeting members will receive a report on the Low Traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) and the Cabinet Member for Transport has been invited to report on delivery of their priorities. Issues that the Committee identified for consideration at future meetings included the Clean Air Zone (CAZ), re-procurement of the Highways PFI Contract and the Parking Civil Enforcement Contract, a new Street Works Permit Scheme, the annual Flood Risk Management Report, the development of a new Road Safety Strategy and the procurement of the waste disposal contract.
- 11.2 The Cabinet Member for the Environment will be invited to report on delivery of their priorities.

12 Scrutiny Training

- 12.1 Chairs and members of Overview and Scrutiny Committees have been offered training provided by the Local Government Association (LGA) which will enable them to develop the skills required to undertake effective scrutiny that provides challenge and adds value. Training available to members includes:
- 12.2 Scrutiny for councillors: All councils must have an overview and scrutiny function. This is to ensure that decisions taken are robust and fulfil the needs of the local community. This module is aimed at councillors who sit on the Overview and Scrutiny committee of a council, involved in scrutiny work or wish to learn more about the overview and scrutiny function of a council.
- 12.3 Leadership Essentials: Effective Scrutiny: The Leadership Essentials: Effective Scrutiny 2-day programme is for new or aspiring scrutiny chairs or task-and-finish group review lead members covering:
- Leading and managing a scrutiny review
 - Chairing scrutiny meetings in all their forms
 - Increasing participation by members and the public
 - Ensuring impact of scrutiny recommendation
- 12.4 Further training from the LGA for all scrutiny members will also be available in person. The scope for this is still to be confirmed and details will be circulated when available.

13 Other Scrutiny Work: West Midlands Police & Crime Panel

- 13.1 The Council's Scrutiny team provides the officer support to the West Midlands Police & Crime Panel. The Panel is a joint scrutiny body of the West Midland authorities with a dual role to 'support and challenge' the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC). The Council's current representatives on the panel are Cllr Alex Aitken, Cllr Gareth Moore and Cllr Kath Scott.
- 13.2 The Panel acts as a critical friend to the PCC on behalf of West Midlands residents and must perform the following statutory functions:
- Review and comment on the PCC's draft Police and Crime Plan.
 - Review the PCC's Annual Reports.
 - Scrutinise decisions and actions by the PCC.
 - Review (with the power to veto) the PCC's proposed Council Tax precept.
 - Hold confirmation hearings before the PCC makes certain senior appointments (Chief Constable, Deputy PCC, Chief Executive and Chief Finance Officer), with the power to veto the Chief Constable appointment.
 - Handle non-criminal complaints about the conduct of the PCC and Deputy PCC, referring serious complaints to the Independent Office for Police Conduct (task delegated to the Birmingham Monitoring Officer).

- Appoint an acting PCC if required.
- Suspend the PCC if charged.

13.3 The Panel's work programme consists of statutory tasks (listed above) and wider exploratory work to build knowledge and insight into the strategic policing and the wider community safety and criminal justice landscape to fulfil its role to hold the PCC to account.

13.4 The Panel will meet for the first time in July. At this meeting, the Panel will consider its work programme for 2022-23.