



Co-ordinating Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report of the Head of Scrutiny Services

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:
- i. Provides "critical friend" challenge to executive policy-makers and decision-makers;
 - ii. Enables the voice and concerns of the public and its communities to be heard;
 - iii. Is carried out by 'independent minded members' who lead and own the scrutiny process;
 - iv. Drives improvement in public services.
- 2.2 The functions and remits of the scrutiny committees are set out in the Constitution and are included on your agenda under item 5.
- 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 under the Constitution.
- 2.5 To support members, scrutiny training sessions will be set up in late June/early July.



3 The Committee's Remit

3.1 The Co-ordinating Committee has a mixture of work essentially consisting of two elements. This includes making sure that the work of all O&S Committees is properly planned, co-ordinated, progressed and prepared for any developments in the role of scrutiny itself; and acting as an O&S Committee in its own right, focussing on matters largely within the portfolios of the Leader and the Deputy Leader.

3.2 In summary these include:

Leader	Deputy Leader
Strategic policies	Business Change
Structure and Governance of the Council	Efficiency and improvement for the Council
Lord Mayor's office	Risk Management
Communications	Customer Services
Council Wide Efficiency and Improvement	External Scrutiny and Local Government Ombudsman
Policy and Partnerships	Open data and Information systems
Combined Authority and the West Midlands Mayoral Combined Authority	Whistleblowing and Corporate Complaints Procedure
	Emergency Planning

3.3 Transparency, equalities and improvement will be cross-cutting themes for all O&S Committees.

3.4 Changes in the make-up of Cabinet portfolios and O&S Committees were confirmed at the City Council's AGM on 22nd May. A full summary of O&S Committee remits mapped against Cabinet portfolios is attached in Appendix 1.

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.

Reports to City Council

- 4.4 There is clearly an expectation on O&S Committees that there are regular reports to City Council meetings. Reporting to City Council is a key line of accountability and one area where Birmingham is ahead in terms of good practice (the recent CLG Select Committee on Scrutiny recommended that where councils do not already, “overview and scrutiny committees should report to an authority’s Full Council meeting rather than to the executive, mirroring the relationship between Select Committees and Parliament”).
- 4.5 However, members of the Review of Scrutiny group in March 2018 were clear that “producing reports for City Council was not scrutiny’s only role”. There is a balance to be struck and Co-ordinating O&S Committee will have a key role in managing this.
- 4.6 Most of the Scrutiny reports that have been presented at the City Council meeting in the past have been inquiry reports. However, the Scrutiny Inquiry into the City Council Meeting, conducted by the former Corporate Resources O&S Committee in April 2016, suggested that there were other ways for scrutiny to engage with the City Council meeting. It was proposed that two new forms of report to City Council, in addition to inquiry reports, to widen the scrutiny offer to City Council:
1. Debate reports: short reports summarising work undertaken in Committee (or on visits); not necessarily with recommendations but with a motion or suggested actions; this could include more contentious issues, or where policy is not yet resolved, and act as a way of prompting wider policy debate in the chamber;
 2. Proposal: short reports introducing potential inquiry work for scrutiny to get early member input into direction, key questions and potential witnesses; the debate would inform the terms of reference and form part of the evidence base for the inquiry, rather than getting that wider member input at the end of the process.
- 4.7 It is suggested that the Co-ordinating O&S Committee agrees a programme of reports to City Council at its July meeting.



5 Priorities for the Coming Year

- 5.1 In setting the direction and tone for all scrutiny committees, members may want to focus on some cross-cutting priorities for the year:
- Contributing to the big strategic issues facing the council with a view to ensuring that long term issues are captured; e.g. prevention, challenging the pattern of inequalities across the city;
 - Supporting improvement in performance;
 - Developing scrutiny's participation in policy development – working with the Executive to ensure early involvement to support robust policy-making by exploring options early on and presenting alternatives;
 - Championing citizen issues, ensuring that scrutiny responds to issues of public concern.
- 5.2 Another focus for this committee will be to follow up on the recommendations made in the Review of Scrutiny (March 2018).
- 5.3 Other key areas within the remit of the Co-ordinating O&S Committee are discussed below.
- 5.4 ***Governance, Business Change and Improvement:*** following the Kerslake Report, published in 2014, and the Birmingham Independent Improvement Panel, established in January 2015, the City Council has undergone significant change in the leadership of the organisation. That **improvement journey** continues, some of which focuses on specific services areas (e.g. Children's Social Care and Waste Management), alongside a focus on the corporate governance of the organisation, emphasising a change in culture to enable the council to play the effective leadership role needed to help the city to realise its full potential.
- 5.5 There are five key strands to this :
- Effective political leadership and managerial leadership, working as a constructive partnership;
 - A good understanding of the local context which informs a shared long-term vision and a clear set of priorities understood by the workforce and partners;
 - Effective governance and decision-making arrangements that respond to challenges and manage performance, change, transformation and disinvestment;
 - Capacity and resources focused in the right areas in order to deliver the agreed priorities, supported by relevant organisational and workforce development; and
 - A financial plan in place to ensure its long-term viability and evidence it is being implemented successfully.
- 5.6 There is some cross-over with other O&S Committees here: the latter two fall within the Resources O&S Committee remit.



- 5.7 Other governance priorities include **developing policy on working with neighbourhoods**, which responds to the scrutiny inquiry completed by the former Corporate Resources and Governance O&S Committee on *Partnership Working: BCC and parish/town councils*. The recommendations from that report are to be tracked, and the committee may also wish to be engaged in the emerging approach, which will include engaging with stakeholders; sharpening up the operational response; and developing guidance and principles for working with parish councils. This area will be shared with the Housing & Neighbourhoods O&S Committee, which has responsibility for localisation.
- 5.8 Another area for consideration is the recommendation from the Review of Scrutiny in March, to *undertake a review of the City Council meeting, including roles, functions and operation*. This would build on an on-going internal governance review of City Council processes.
- 5.9 **Performance:** also supporting the improvement journey will be a renewed approach to performance management, including a refreshed set of performance indicators that will be published on the website so that the council can be held to account for its performance. Scrutinising performance overall is increasingly challenging as the council's delivery mechanisms become more complex and the committee will want to be assured of the arrangements for this.
- 5.10 **Partnerships:** the Council Plan 2018 sets out the intention to build on existing partnerships, learning from recent experiences and listening to organisations and individuals throughout the city.
- 5.11 **Customer Services:** previous scrutiny committees have taken an in-depth look at citizens' experiences of contacting the City Council. Committee members have been keen to see maximum improvement in customer services and in end-to-end service delivery, i.e. not just the quality of the call but whether the request was completed to the citizen's satisfaction. The last scrutiny inquiry on this topic was concluded in February 2016 and since then a number of activities were delivered in 2017-18 which led to an improvement in the citizen experience, including the implementation of "One and Done" for Council Tax enquiries, increasing what is dealt with at the first point of contact and reducing avoidable contact, and continued focus on coaching and quality to maximise customer satisfaction, supported by working with services to identify and implement improvements to end to end service delivery. The last update to scrutiny was in February 2018.
- 5.12 Key Priorities for 2018/19 include the expansion of online services to include the go live of the BRUM Account leading to increased channel migration.
- 5.13 **Citizen Engagement:** the former Districts and Public Engagement O&S Committee completed an inquiry in 2014, and there are still outstanding actions that *could be considered alongside the forthcoming Community Engagement strategy currently being developed*.
- 5.14 **Transparency:** the council is committed to ensuring that decision making is open, including greater use of webcasting, public consultation and by ensuring that our strategies and policies are publically available and easily accessible.
- 5.15 A summary of the committee's remit and proposed priorities is set out in Appendix 2.



5.16 A draft work programme is attached in Appendix 3.

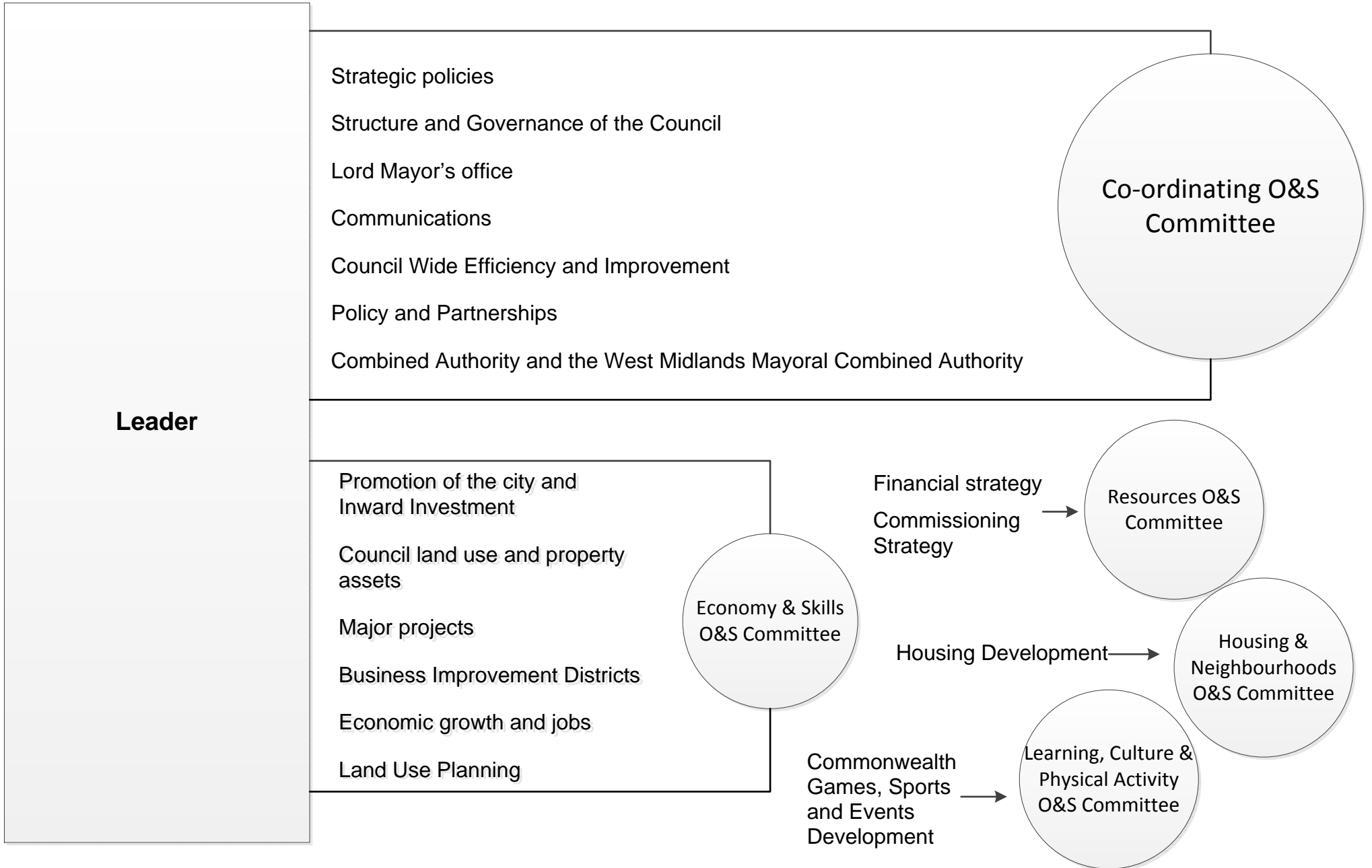
6 Recommendations

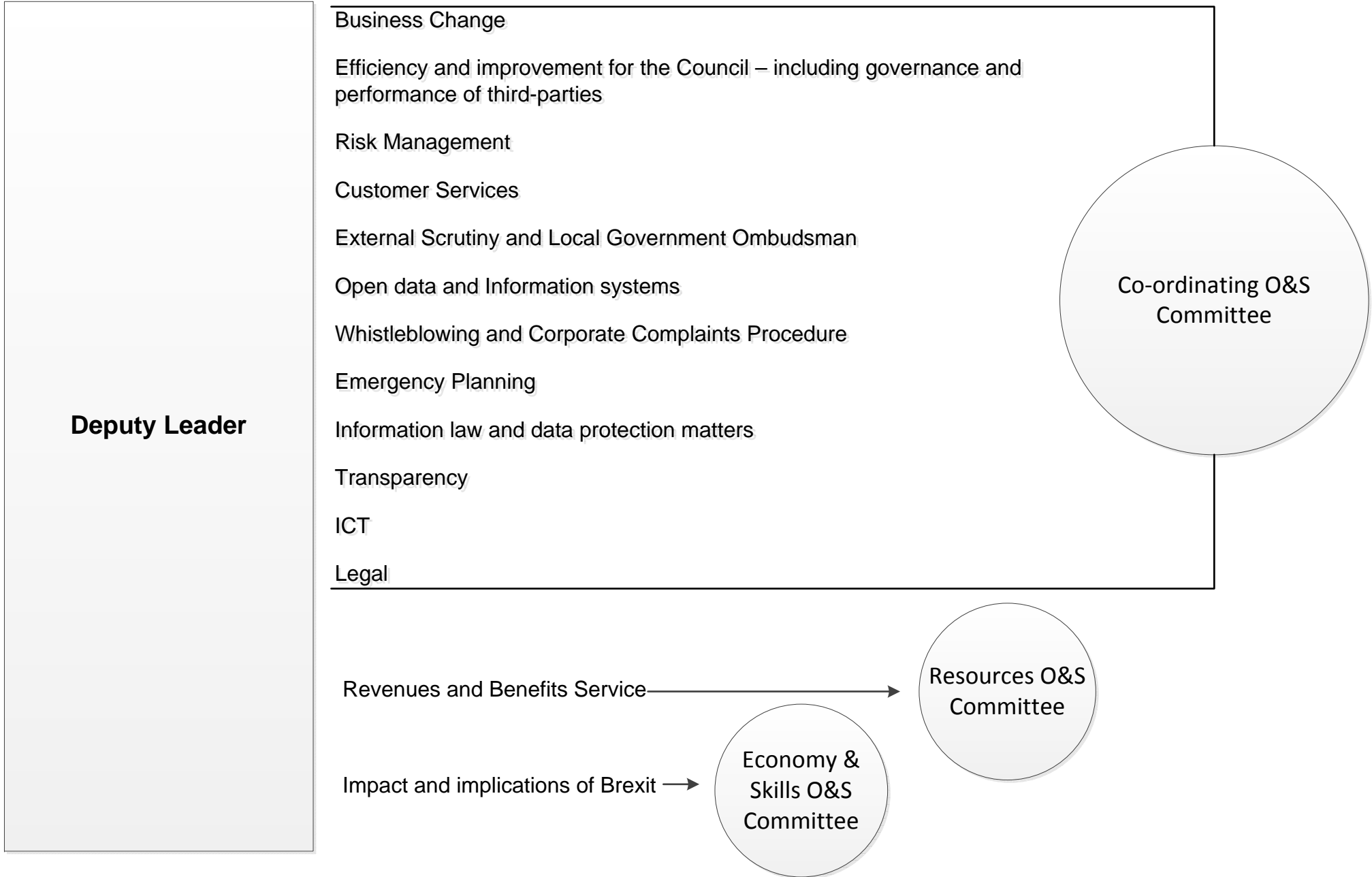
6.1 The Co-ordinating O&S Committee is recommended to:

1. Agree the priorities for the committee over the next year;
2. Agree items for the work programme;
3. Identify any new areas of work which should inform the work programme for the forthcoming year.

Emma Williamson
Head of Scrutiny Services

May 2018





**Cabinet Member for
Finance and Resources**

- Finances
- Human Resources
- Birmingham Business Charter for Social Responsibility
- Commercialism
- Procurement
- Contract Management
- Internal Trading Operations



**Cabinet Member for
Health and Social Care**

- Adult Social Care and Health
- Public Health
- Healthy Communities
- Domestic Violence



Cabinet Member for Children's Wellbeing

- Lead Member for Children's Services (LMCS)
- Safeguarding Children and Young People
- Children's Services
- Overseeing the Children's Trust
- Overseeing Early Years
- Corporate Parenting
- Lead Member for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Inclusion

Children's Social Care O&S Committee

Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture

- Education of Children and Young People
- Arts and Culture and Tourism
- The Library of Birmingham and Community Libraries
- Museums
- Youth Engagement and Youth Service
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Inclusion

Learning, Culture and Physical Activity O&S Committee

- Skills and Entrepreneurship in Schools / Employment Opportunities

Economy & Skills O&S Committee

**Cabinet Member for
Transport and
Environment**

Transport Strategies

Highways

Advice to Planning Committee (Highways)

Air Quality*

Green City

Climate Change

Sustainability & Transport
O&S Committee

* cross over with Health O&S Committee in
relation to the *Impact of Poor Air Quality on
Health* inquiry

**Cabinet Member for
Clean Streets, Waste
and Recycling**

Waste Strategy and Services

Pest Control

Cleaner Neighbourhoods

Recycling

Enforcement

Housing and
Neighbourhoods O&S
Committee

**Cabinet Member for
Homes and
Neighbourhoods**

Parks and Allotments

Council housing management services

Registered Social Landlords

Private Rented Sector

Housing Options

Tenant engagement in social housing

Neighbourhood Management

Bereavement Services

**Cabinet Member for
Social inclusion,
Community Safety and
Equalities**

Safer Communities

Social Cohesion and Inclusion

Domestic Violence

Tackling Inequality

Equalities within the Community

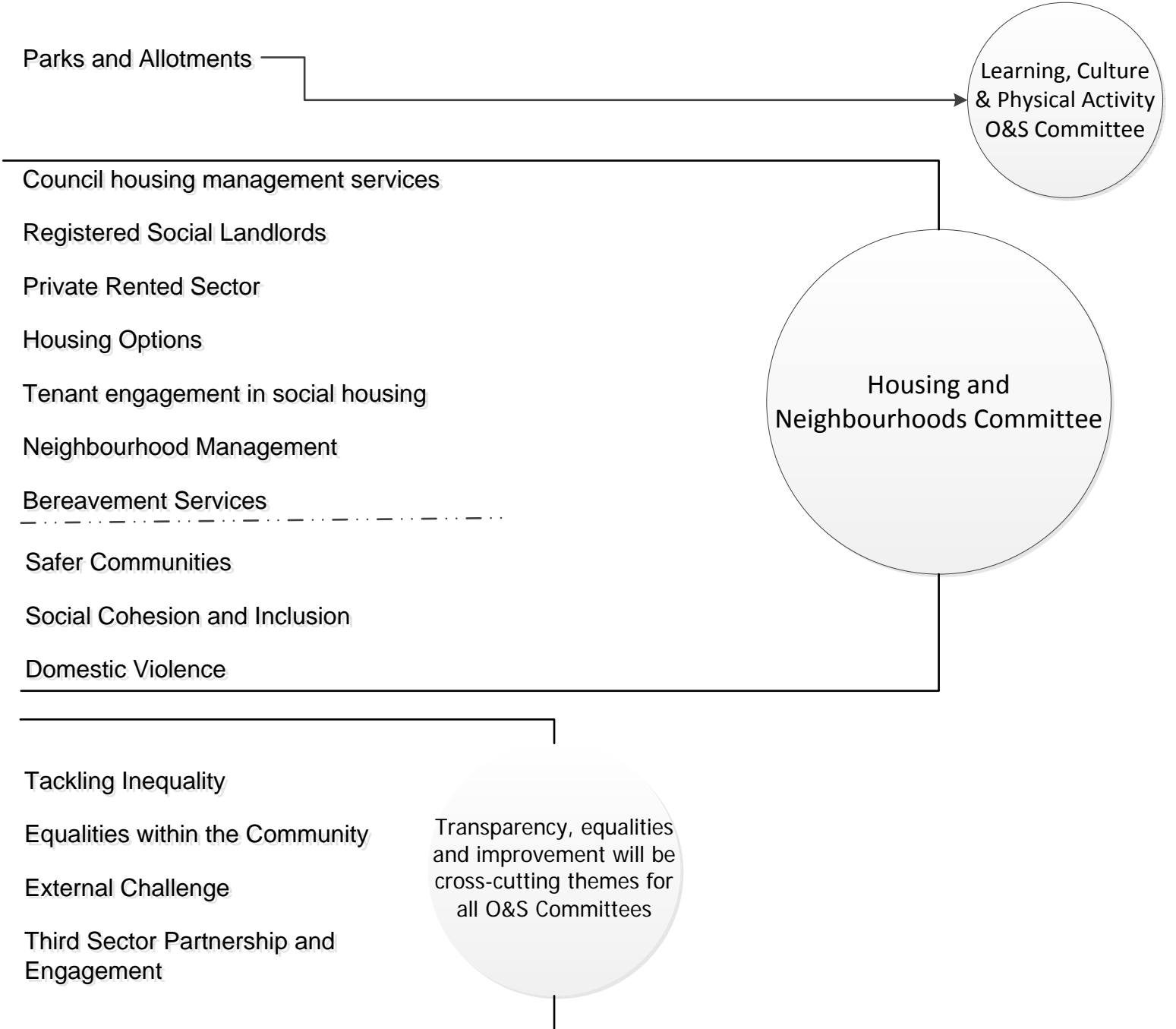
External Challenge

Third Sector Partnership and
Engagement

Learning, Culture
& Physical Activity
O&S Committee

Housing and
Neighbourhoods Committee

Transparency, equalities
and improvement will be
cross-cutting themes for
all O&S Committees



Co-ordinating O&S Committee - Summary

Appendix 2

Cabinet Portfolio Links

Leader:

Strategic policies; Governance; Policy and Partnerships;
Citizens (including communications and public
engagement)

Deputy Leader:

Performance; business change, customer services, open
data and emergency planning

Specific functions

Planning and co-ordinating scrutiny work, including:

- Allocating responsibilities;
- Ensuring proper attention paid to cross cutting issues, e.g. equalities, transparency and improvement
- Publishing an Annual Programme of major scrutiny inquiries;
- Agreeing the establishment of any task & finish groups; and
- Considering overview and scrutiny development, working practices and constitutional arrangements

Key Areas for 2018/19

Contributing to the big strategic issues facing the council

Supporting Birmingham's improvement journey

Developing scrutiny's participation in policy development;

Championing citizen issues, ensuring that scrutiny responds to issues of public concern

Work remaining from last year

Tracking: Partnership Working: BCC and Parish/Town Councils

Review of Scrutiny – monitoring and follow up



Co-ordinating O&S Committee: Work Programme 2018/19

Chair	Cllr John Cotton
Deputy Chair	TBC
Committee Members:	Cllrs Aikhlaq, D. Alden, Ali, Bore, D. Clancy, Clements, Cornish, Harmer, M Khan, Holbrook and Pocock
Committee Support:	Scrutiny Team: Emma Williamson (464 6870) Committee Manager: TBC

1 Meeting Schedule

Date	Item	Officer contact
08 June 2018 10.00 am Committee Room 6	Work Programme Discussion <i>Outcome:</i> to determine the work programme priorities for the year	Emma Williamson, Scrutiny Office
27 July 2018 10.00am Committee Room 2	Leader of the Council Priorities for the year Response to Review of Scrutiny	
07 September 2018 10.00am Committee Room 3&4		
05 October 2018 10.00am Committee Room 3&4	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Tracking Report Partnership working BCC and Parish/Town Councils2. Localism in Birmingham-Update	Jonathan Tew, Assistant Chief Executive Rebecca Grant, Leaders Office
09 November 2018 10.30am Committee Room 3&4		
07 December 2017 10.00am Committee Room 3&4		



Date	Item	Officer contact
11 January 2018, Committee Room 3&4		
08 February 2018, Committee Room 3&4		
08 March 2018 Committee Room 3&4		
05 April 2018, Committee Room 3&4		

2 Items to be scheduled

2.1

3 Other Meetings

Call in

None scheduled

Petitions

None scheduled

Councillor Call for Action requests

None scheduled

Informal meetings

4 Forward Plan

4.1 Below is an extract of the Forward Plan, detailing those decisions relating to this Committee's remit.



Leader		
000318/2015	Discharge of Accountable Body Arrangements for AMSCI - Standing Item	26 Jun 18
005193/2018	Birmingham City Council Plan 2018-2022	26 Jun 18
005195/2018	Securing the long term future for Sutton Coldfield Town Hall	24 Jul 18
005192/2018	West Midlands Growth Company (WMGC) – Provision of Relocation Services	14 Aug 18

Deputy Leader		
003681/2018	Outturn Report 2017/18	24 May 18
003665/2018	Performance Monitoring - April 2017 to March 2018	26 Jun 18

DRAFT