

Scrutiny Work Programme (draft)

Our Council Scrutiny Panel

2021-2022

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Scrutiny – A New Approach

1. **Roles and expectations** have been defined for the Chairs of Scrutiny Panels, Strategic Executive Board (SEB) leads and Scrutiny Officers; creating a collective understanding of scrutiny's role within the Council. These can be seen in Appendix A.

2. Effective **work planning and agenda setting** will take place to produce **jointly owned work plans.**

3. Regular briefings will be arranged with the Scrutiny Panel Chair, Vice Chair, SEB lead and scrutiny officer to enable a shared understanding of priorities and reviews of progress and recommendations.

4. **Improved communication:** 'You said we did' updates and publicity (including social media)

5. Creation of a **strong organisational culture** that supports scrutiny work that **adds real value** and **evidences impact**.

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Work Programme considerations:

1. Is the issue in the public interest?
2. How can scrutiny add value by looking at it?
3. Where is the evidence to support looking at this issue?
4. Can we evidence impact?
5. Is there a change to National Policy?
6. Does it affect citizens across the City?
7. Are there performance concerns?
8. Is it a safety issue?

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Our Council Scrutiny Panel

The scrutiny of organisation and performance of the human, financial, technical and material resources to support the delivery of Council services.

Specific responsibilities

The Panel will have responsibility for scrutiny functions as they relate to:

- Strategic Finance
- Revenues and Benefits
- Procurement
- The Hub
- Audit
- Human Resources
- Organisational Development
- Democratic & Support Services
- Corporate Landlord
- ICT

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General Role of the Scrutiny Board and Scrutiny Panels

Within the terms of reference set out in the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, the Scrutiny Board will:

1. Co-ordinate the work of the Scrutiny Panels and Scrutiny Review Groups.

2. Receive annual reports from the Councillor Champion and give consideration to the work undertaken and issues that the Councillor Champion wishes scrutiny to consider investigating further.

3. Maintain regular dialogue with the Cabinet on service improvement, performance management of cross-cutting issues, policy development and budgetary provision.

4. Oversee and ensure access to appropriate learning and development for scrutiny Councillors.

5. Discharge the call-in procedures relevant to its overarching role.

The Scrutiny Panels will:

1. Maintain regular dialogue with the Cabinet, Scrutiny Board and Councillor Champions.

2. Ensure that members of the public and stakeholders are informed of and involved in issues within the remit of each Panel.

3. Discharge the call-in procedure relevant to their terms of reference.

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Appendix A:

1. **Chair of Scrutiny Panel:**
    - To attend fortnightly meetings with the SEB lead and Scrutiny Officer
    - To attend agenda setting meetings and other relevant briefings on a regular basis
    - To contribute to the work planning for the panel and to bring forward relevant topics and issues for inclusion
    - To chair meetings in a fair and open way and to encourage participation from panel members
    - To attend Scrutiny Board (where appropriate) to provide feedback and updates on progress
    - To prepare, when possible, questions in advance of a meeting to allow for healthy debate and to ensure that clear resolutions are made that add value and show impact
    - To act as champion for scrutiny and to represent the best interests of the citizens of Wolverhampton

2. **SEB Lead:**
    - Meet with the Chair, the Vice Chair and the Scrutiny Officer fortnightly to discuss upcoming issues, updates from previous meetings, workplans and any other relevant business as agreed by all parties.
    - Recommend topics for inclusion on the workplan, working proactively with the Chair, Vice Chair and Scrutiny Officer to address any issues/opportunities/challenges that fit with the remit of the panel.
    - To advise on the viability of any issues put forward by the panel for inclusion on the work plan.
    - To attend relevant Scrutiny Panel meetings and provide an update at each meeting on any relevant issues within the remit of the panel. Also, attending Scrutiny Board (as appropriate) to provide feedback.
    - To act as a champion for scrutiny in the Council and to encourage engagement with the scrutiny function and promote a healthy culture within which scrutiny can thrive

3. **Scrutiny Officer:**
    - Provide support and guidance to the panel, its members, officers, partners and other stakeholders regarding the scrutiny function
    - To ensure openness and transparency in the scrutiny function and to make sure that information is continuously shared and communicated between all relevant parties in a timely and suitable fashion
    - To ensure that the appropriate persons are invited to meetings and that they are given adequate time to prepare and to provide guidance and support where appropriate
    - To manage the administration of all relevant panels and meetings within statutory timescales
    - To carry out research and information gathering exercises when required
    - To provide advice on policy and legislation where appropriate
    - To ensure that all resolutions are followed up and responses or actions fed back, monitored and recorded
    - To act as liaison between the Chair and the SEB lead to ensure a shared understanding of priorities and work planning.
    - To manage the agreed work plan and its outcomes to show impact and added value

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Our Council Scrutiny Panel

Chair: Cllr Zee Russell	Vice Chair: Cllr Udey Singh	SEB Lead: Claire Nye	Scrutiny Lead: Earl Piggott-Smith

Date of Meeting	Agenda Publication	Item Description	Lead Report Author	Council Plan Priority	Notes
29 September 2021	21 September 2021	1. Our Assets Programme 2. Update on Cyber Security 3. Council Contract Management update 4. Specific Reserves Working Group – membership and approval of terms of reference 5. Housing Strategy - Landlord Services Report	Mark Bassett Charlotte Johns Claire Nye/ Parvinder Uppal Earl Piggott-Smith Jenny Lewington		
November 2021 - tbc		EDI report on consultation findings and update on actions	David Pattison/Jin Takhar		

December 2021 tbc		Specific Reserves Working Group	Alison Shannon		
19 January 2022	11 January 2022	1. Treasury Management Strategy – 2. Specific Reserves Working Group report – 3. Our Assets Programme – Update -	Alison Shannon Alison Shannon Mark Bassett		

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