

Committee Business Report:

- Task & Finish Inquiry of the Committee - Scrutiny Impact
 - Correspondence - 2018/19 work programme
 - Budget Scrutiny 2019/20 - training needs
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Reason for this Report

1. To deal with Committee business, specifically,
 - a. To seek Committee's agreement to the commencement of an inquiry into Scrutiny Impact, and for the Terms of Reference that will form the focus of its work.
 - b. To advise Members of the correspondence between Committee and Cabinet since commencing the 2018/19 work programme.
 - c. To seek Members 2019/20 budget training needs.

Task & Finish Inquiry

2. The Committee developed its work programme for 2018/19 over the summer, during which the need to evaluate and evidence the impact of the work of the five scrutiny committees on the delivery of Council services was identified as a priority for an inquiry focus.
3. At its meeting on 12 September 2018, the Committee agreed its work programme, to include proceeding with an inquiry into the Impact of Scrutiny across the Council. Three Members volunteered to undertake this inquiry on behalf of the Committee. Councillor David Walker (Chair), Councillor Joe

Boyle, and Councillor Norma Mackie comprise this politically balanced Task and Finish group.

4. Attached at **Appendix 1** is a proposed Scoping Summary Sheet for the inquiry, setting out the Terms of Reference, timescales, and potential contributors to the inquiry.

Correspondence

5. Following Scrutiny Committee meetings, the Chair writes a letter on behalf of all Members, to the relevant Cabinet Member or senior officer, summing up the Committee's comments, concerns and recommendations regarding the issues considered during that meeting. The Committee are routinely copied in to the letter when it is forwarded to the Cabinet Member. Depending on the issues highlighted, the letter usually asks for a response from the Cabinet Member to any recommendations made, and sometimes requests further information.
2. Attached to this report at **Appendix 2a-2g** are copies of all correspondence since September 2018. For ease of reference, this is summarised in the table below.

Committee	Scrutiny	Appendix
12 September	Budget Strategy – social services	2a
	Cabinet Response	2b
12 September	Sickness Absence	2c
	Cabinet Response	2d (i)&(ii)
3 October	WAO Annual Improvement Report 2017-18	2e
	Cabinet Response	2f

3 October	WAO Scrutiny Review – Fit for the Future	2g
	Cabinet Response	outstanding
3 October	Statutory Well-being Report 2017-18	2h
	Cabinet Response	outstanding/ not requested

Budget Scrutiny Training 2019/20

6. The Democratic Services Committee on 1 October 2018 agreed the delivery of a Member development session on Budget Scrutiny in 2019. The intention is that this session should focus on skills required for formal scrutiny of the budget, however should be open to all Members to attend.
7. Scrutiny Committees will formally consider the Draft Budget between 18 and 20 February 2019, and it is suggested that member development activities are held between 28 January and 15 February 2019, providing all members with the opportunity to attend a briefing before the scrutiny committees formally consider the Draft Budget.
8. Members will recall a similar session bespoke to scrutiny in February 2018 ensuring a clear understanding of the Budget setting process, the structure and terminology used within budget reports and documents, the potential impacts and risks to the Authority and its services when considering budget proposals.
9. The intention is that the training content will be interactive where possible and designed to assist Members in their scrutiny role. It will also aim to consider how the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (WFGA) can be applied to scrutiny of the budget setting process.

Way Forward

10. If the Committee, or an individual Member of the Committee, identifies additional training and development needs in respect of budget scrutiny, they are invited to make representation to the Chair, who will facilitate discussion during this item. The Committee's scrutiny officer will then liaise with the Resources Directorate and make the necessary arrangements to address the identified need.

Legal Implications

11. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct legal implications. However, legal implications may arise when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any legal implications arising from those recommendations. All decisions taken by or on behalf of the Council must (a) be within the legal powers of the Council; (b) comply with any procedural requirement imposed by law; (c) be within the powers of the body or person exercising powers on behalf of the Council; (d) be undertaken in accordance with the procedural requirements imposed by the Council e.g. Scrutiny Procedure Rules; (e) be fully and properly informed; (f) be properly motivated; (g) be taken having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its taxpayers; and (h) be reasonable and proper in all the circumstances.

Financial Implications

12. The Scrutiny Committee is empowered to enquire, consider, review and recommend but not to make policy decisions. As the recommendations in this report are to consider and review matters, there are no direct financial implications at this stage in relation to any of the work programme.

However, financial implications may arise if and when the matters under review are implemented with or without any modifications. Any report with recommendations for decision that goes to Cabinet/Council will set out any financial implications arising from those recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is recommended to

- a. Consider the scope, the proposed approach, and agree the Terms of Reference for the Scrutiny Impact inquiry.
- b. Note correspondence between the Committee and the Cabinet
- c. Agree preferred arrangements for budget scrutiny training.

Davina Fiore

Director Governance & Legal

8 November 2018