

Corporate Scrutiny Committee – WORK PROGRAMME (as at 09/02/24)

Date of Meeting	Item	Lead Officer	Witnesses	Agenda Item Duration
May 2024				
23 May 2024	<p>Annual Scrutiny Report</p> <p>To summarise the work of the Scrutiny Committees for the civic year 23/24.</p>	<p>Andy Barton Strategic Director</p>	-	30 minutes
23 May 2024	<p>Performance Monitoring Report</p> <p>To report on Q4 performance, in line with the Council Delivery Plan.</p>	<p>Mike Murphy, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p>	-	30 minutes
23 May 2024	<p>Employee Resourcing</p> <p>To feedback on issues raised by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee in relation to conditions for staff, the use of agency workers, and the impacts on service delivery.</p>	<p>Mike Murphy, Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development</p>	-	30 minutes
23 May 2024	<p>2023/24 Quarter 3 General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Finance Update</p> <p>To provide members of the Corporate Scrutiny Committee with information on the Quarter 3 financial position for the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA).</p>	<p>Anna Crouch, Head of Finance</p>	-	30 minutes

Work requests considered by the Scrutiny Work Programming Group

Work Request	Status/Progress	Committee date to be considered (provisional)
Housing Repairs Update Report	Report to be considered towards the end of 2024.	To be confirmed once new meeting schedule is agreed.
Staffing Resources	Scheduled for Committee.	23 May 2024

Principles and Criteria used for Assessing Items Put Forward

Identify Issues for consideration by Scrutiny

- Consulting with members of Scrutiny Committees, senior officers, Cabinet members – horizon scanning on policy development
- Looking at the corporate priorities, Council Delivery Plan and Cabinet Forward plan – identify key issues/topics for investigation/inquiry
- Considering events and decisions in the Council’s calendar which could require an input/consultation via scrutiny – eg budget setting, CDP development
- Considering requests from members – eg via another forum or scoping report submitted
- Evaluating the Council’s performance – eg quarterly reports, end of year reports, reviewing success of a particular scheme or initiative
- Reviewing any follow up work required after previous scrutiny work

Prioritise the potential list of scrutiny topics based on factors including

- the resources required to deliver it (from members, offices and financially)
- the value and level of impact which could be achieved
- link to the council’s priorities
- whether it is a regular recurring item which requires consideration before Cabinet/Council approval
- consideration of the guidance for selecting scrutiny topics

Topics are suitable for Scrutiny when	Topics are not suitable for Scrutiny when
Scrutiny could have an impact and add value	The issue is already being addressed elsewhere and change is imminent
The topic is of high local importance and reflects the concerns of local people	The topic would be better addressed elsewhere (and will be referred there)
The resources are available that would be required to conduct the review – staff and budget	Scrutiny involvement would have limited or no impact on outcomes
It avoids duplication of work elsewhere	The topic would be sub-judice or prejudicial to the councils interests
The issues is one that the committee can realistically influence	The topic is too broad to make a review realistic
The issue is related to an area where the council or one of its partners is not performing well	New legislation or guidance relating to the topic is expected in the next year

PREVIOUS SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS TO CABINET

Damp and Mould Task & Finish Group Report – Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 4 January 2024

Members received the report of the Task and Finish Group and supported the following recommendations to Cabinet:

1. A stand alone policy on damp and mould is produced and agreed as soon as possible.
2. Steps are taken to improve the materials provided to tenants about damp and mould drawing on best practice as outlined in this report.
3. The Council participates in benchmarking of damp and mould cases as soon as such benchmarking is available through Housemark and build the results into our standard reporting arrangements.
4. The Housing Service is instructed to scope a specification to use external contractors to supplement the inhouse workforce capacity to specifically address the damp and mould cases and associated repairs and works and to proceed to procure a preferred contractor.
5. Cabinet note the outcome of the review and identifies if they want the Task and Finish Group to continue its work on damp and mould in any capacity.

At its meeting on 31 January, Cabinet considered the recommendations and agreed the following:

Recommendation 1 – Cabinet agreed. It was accepted that a separate policy for damp and mould would provide greater clarity for tenants. The service would develop a draft policy as suggested and consult with tenants and members of the Task and Finish Group. This policy would be delivered within Q1 of 2024/25.

Recommendation 2 – Cabinet agreed. The service had already redrafted some elements of the communication material to tenants but would take on board the comments from the Task and Finish Group and its comments on the form and style of these. This would launch alongside the new policy once developed.

Recommendation 3 – Cabinet agreed. This was always the intention to ensure that the Council are aware of where its service sits within the wider work of all housing providers. This action was, however, dependant on third party data publication but would be included as an indicator within the Housing Service Plan which forms part of the wider performance management framework of the Council.

Recommendation 4 – Cabinet agreed. Supplementing in-house resources via third party has been under consideration for some time. Elsewhere on the Cabinet meeting's agenda the appointment of a contractor for such services (and to address overall levels of high work in progress jobs) is to be considered. Subject to that item being agreed by Cabinet, work to mobilise the contractor should commence in February 2024.

Recommendation 5 - The work of the Group was noted and gratefully received. Regarding further specific action, the proposed policy in Recommendation 1 above would come back to the Task and Finish group in due course to provide comment on. Cabinet was also aware that a further update on Housing

Repairs progress is due to come to the Committee later this year. In that report officers would also provide an update on progress with these actions. As such Cabinet is content that the work has been completed and nothing in addition to those set out in this response is required at the current time.

Cabinet also formally thanked the group for its work in examining the issue of Mould and Damp.

The reports and minutes for both meetings can be found below:

[Corporate Scrutiny Committee – 4 January 2024](#)

[Cabinet – 31 January 2024](#)