

Classification	Item No.
Open	

Meeting:	Overview and Scrutiny
Meeting date:	04 th June 2025
Title of report:	Development of a work programme for 2025/2026
Report by:	Josh Ashworth Senior Scrutiny Officer
Decision Type:	For Information
Ward(s) to which report relates	All

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report sets out details the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee along with a Work Programme Prioritisation Protocol to assist in the development of a Work Programme for 2025/26

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Option 1 (Recommended)

1. Note the contents of the report

Option 2 (Not recommended)

1. Reject the above recommendation

1.0 SUMMARY

This report sets out details the remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee along with a Work Programme Prioritisation Protocol to assist in the development of a Work Programme for 2025/26

2.0 MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION/DECISION

Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are requested to:

Agree and set an Annual Work Programme for the 2025/26 Municipal Year, in accordance with Committee's remit, previous work and the Work Programme and Prioritisation Protocol.

3.0 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

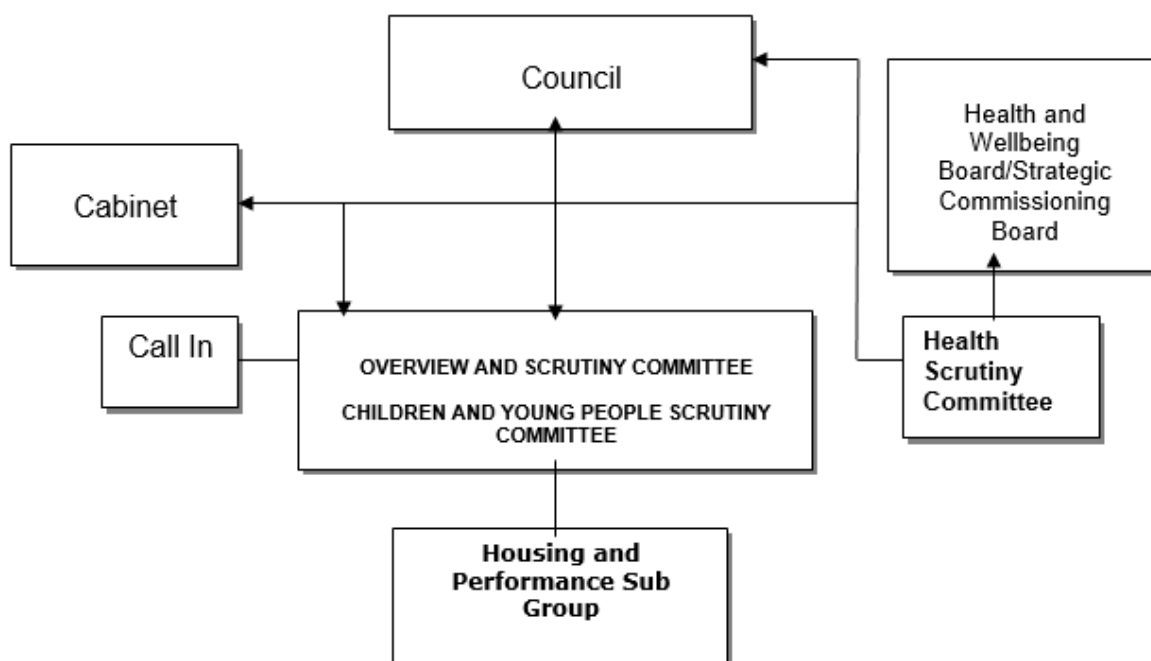
3.1 Terms of reference

- To review and scrutinise the decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions.
- To review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and all particular service areas.
- To set up, appoint and monitor Scrutiny Panels (set up to carry out reviews of policies, services or the impact of decisions).
- To make recommendations to the Cabinet and/or appropriate Committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the Scrutiny process.
- To review or scrutinise decisions made or other action taken in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions.
- Oversight of the provision, planning and management of the Council's resources including its budget, revenue borrowing assets and audit arrangements.

- Oversight of the Council's corporate plans and strategies and the monitoring of the corporate plan and departmental plans.
- To scrutinise outside bodies and partners relevant to the Council.
- To receive all reports from external inspectors.

3.2 Scrutiny Structure

The diagram below sets out the current scrutiny structure.



* Overview Project Group

4.0 WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26

4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is required to set a work programme for 2025/2026

4.2 A well thought out and effective Work Programme will allow work to be time-tabled to ensure completion and help determine when and what resources may be needed.

- 4.3 Within the Programme it is important to ensure that there is the capacity to provide an urgent response to issues that arise during the year and need to be dealt with at short notice. Scrutiny of Key Executive decisions will form a large element of the Committee's work during the year and it is important that flexibility is built into the Work Programme to allow for this to take place.
- 4.4 To assist in the development of an outcome focussed, measureable, realistic and timely Work Programme, a Prioritisation Protocol is set out below. The Protocol sets out some initial questions to be asked of proposed topics and includes further questions and filters to help achieve a prioritised and deliverable work programme.

4.0 SUGGESTED ITEMS ARISING FROM LAST YEAR

During last year's work, the Committee's work programme included the following items:

Regeneration

- Progress updates on key regeneration projects:
 - Local Plan
 - Northern Gateway
 - Radcliffe Hub
 - Prestwich Village
 - Bury Mill Gate
 - Bury Market and 'Flexi Hall'
 - Housing Development

Communities

- Community Safety Update from Greater Manchester Police (GMP), including:
 - Crime reduction initiatives
 - Technological advancements
 - Partnership working with local organisations
- Anti-Poverty Strategy
- Crime and Disorder

Housing

- 12-Month Housing Update
- Housing Subgroup Update

Finance

- Year-End/Quarter 4 Corporate Plan Performance Report 2023/24
- Submission of the Productivity Plan
- Budget Update Report
- Year-End Outturn Financial Position
- Quarter 2 Finance Report
- Housing Revenue Account Budget
- Medium Term Financial Plan and Revenue Budget
- Council Tax Base and Resolution and Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit Report
- 2025–26 Treasury Management Strategy
- 2025–28 Capital Strategy

- Dedicated Schools Grant
- Budget 2025/26 Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)
- Chief Finance Officer Statement
- Savings Templates

Corporate

- Health and Safety Annual Report
- Corporate Plan

Some of the above, particularly the financial and performance reporting mechanisms, will form part of this coming year's programme as a matter of course. The above list does not represent all the issues looked at during the year as consideration was also given to the issues of Ombudsman complaints regarding the Council.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The information contained in this report provides an outline of the terms of reference for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee along with a Work Programme Prioritisation Protocol to assist in setting an outcome based, focussed, balanced and deliverable work programme based on the priorities of Bury Council and its residents.

Appendix 1

Prioritising Topics for Scrutiny

When deciding which items to include on the Scrutiny Work Programmes it can sometimes become confusing and difficult to identify the topics which are most important or worthy of scrutiny.

Section 1 - At the outset

When topics have been identified as possible Scrutiny Work Programme items, Members and their support Officers should ask the following of each topic identified;

- **Does the issue have a potential impact for one or more sections of the population?** Yes – Leave on Work Programme
- **Is the issue strategic and significant?** Yes – Leave on Work Programme
- **Is there a clear objective for scrutinising this topic?** Can objective be identified – Yes leave on Work Programme
- **Is there evidence to support the need for scrutiny?** Yes – Leave on Work Programme
- **What are the likely benefits to the Council and its customers? What do we hope to achieve?** If identifiable – Leave on Work Programme
- **Are you likely to achieve a desired outcome?** Can benefits to Council and customers be achieved?
- **What are the potential risks?**
- **Are there adequate resources available to do the activity well?**
- **Is the Scrutiny activity timely?** Yes – Leave on Work Programme

Section 2 – Criteria to Reject

Once the questions above have been answered and the topics are still included on the Work Programme, Members should move onto the following rejection filters:-

Reject if;

- The issue is being examined elsewhere e.g. officer group, other Councillor group.
- Issue was reviewed less than 2 years ago
- New legislation or guidance expected within the year
- No scope for scrutiny to add value/make a difference
- The objective cannot be achieved in the specified timescale
- Changes are currently being /have recently been implemented

Section 3 – Prioritisation of Topics

The following questions should be asked when looking to prioritise potential work programme items.

Public interest

- Has the issue been identified by Members through surgeries and other contact with constituents?(on how many occasions – more occasions warrants a higher score).
- Has a user dissatisfaction with the service been identified? (complaints).
- Topic identified through Market Surveys/Citizens Panel.
- Has the issue been covered in the local media?

Internal Council priority

- Council Priority area?
- There is a high level of budgetary commitment to the service/policy area (as percentage of total expenditure)
- There has been a pattern of budgetary overspends
- The service is a poor performer (evidence from performance indicators/benchmarking).

External Factors

- Central Government priority area
- Issues raised by External Audit Management Letter/External Audit Reports.
- Key reports or new evidence provided by external organisations on key issue.

Community impact/links with Community Strategy

Equality Impact and considerations:

Assessment of Risk:

The following risks apply to the decision:

Risk / opportunity	Mitigation

Consultation:

Legal Implications: N/A

Financial Implications: N/A

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