

MELTON BOROUGH COUNCIL SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2023/24

SCRUTINY REVIEWS

These are dealt with through a combination of specific evidence gathering meetings that will be arranged as and when required and other activities, such as visits. There should only be a maximum of three reviews considered annually and review topics may be changed throughout the year as topical issues arise. Once considered, these issues will be subject to further development and scoping.

Should there not be sufficient capacity to cover items which are brought to the attention of Scrutiny they could instead be addressed through a “one-off” item at a scheduled meeting of the Committee.

Topics	Officer and Member Lead	Date	Notes	Requested by (Member)/ Date agreed for addition by Scrutiny Chairman	Portfolio Holder/Chief Officer consulted on date of report
Budget Scrutiny	Director for Corporate Services Assistant Director for Resources Scrutiny Lead: TBC	12 December 2023	A Budget Scrutiny Workshop is proposed to give Members an opportunity to view key changes to the budget prior to the publication of the budget papers at January’s formal Budget Scrutiny Committee meeting. The Workshop gives Members an opportunity to raise concerns with any proposals before they are finalised.	Requested by the Director for Corporate Services and Assistant Director for Resources. Agreed by Chairman on 22 August 2023.	N/A – There will be no final report but comments will be fed into budget papers.
Future Leisure Provision	Director for Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Lead: TBC	TBC	Workshop session proposed.	SLT suggested this should be a workshop instead of a Policy Development Group.	N/A – There will be no final report but comments will be fed into existing plans and work streams.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT GROUPS

Policy Development Groups in three areas have been set up for Members to discuss and comment upon topics. The results of the discussions and comments will feed into the development of the new Corporate Plan.

Topics	Officer and Member Lead	Date	Notes	Requested by (Member)/ Date agreed for addition by Scrutiny Chairman	Portfolio Holder/Chief Officer consulted on date of report
Asset Development Programme	Director for Growth and Regeneration Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources	Meeting 1 – 9 August 2023 Meeting 2 – 31 August 2023	This is an informal group set up by consensus. There will be 10 Members drawn from all 28 Members and will be politically balanced. It is anticipated there will be at least one Member of the Scrutiny Committee on the group who will be a conduit to Scrutiny. The findings and recommendations of the group will inform the development of the Council's Corporate Strategy for 2024-2028.	N/A – The Chief Executive explained the proposal for Policy Development Groups at the Scrutiny Work Programme Workshop, 15 June 2023.	N/A
Town Centre vitality & regeneration	Director for Growth and Regeneration Portfolio Holder for Town Centre, Growth and Prosperity	Meeting 1 – 2 August 2023 Meeting 2 – 22 August 2023	This is an informal group set up by consensus. There will be 10 Members drawn from all 28 Members and will be politically balanced. It is anticipated there will be at least one Member of the Scrutiny Committee on the group who will be a conduit to Scrutiny. The findings and recommendations of the group will inform the development of the Council's Corporate Strategy for 2024-2028.	N/A – The Chief Executive explained the proposal for Policy Development Groups at the Scrutiny Work Programme Workshop, 15 June 2023.	N/A

ONE OFF ITEMS/FORWARD PLAN(PRE-DECISION)/ANNUAL ITEM

These are dealt with at scheduled meetings of the Committee. The following are suggestions for when particular items may be scheduled.

Suggested Topics	FORMAT	Portfolio Holder/Officer	Meeting Date	Notes	Requested by (Member)/ Date agreed for addition by Scrutiny Chairman	Portfolio Holder/Chief Officer consulted on date of report
(1) Preparedness for regulatory change in housing	One-off	Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services Director for Housing and Communities	21 September 2023	The Committee's role in this context could be to seek assurance of the Council's preparedness for regulatory change, and to comment on areas requiring further improvement. Feedback and / or recommendations to Cabinet would directly inform the next steps in the Council's housing improvement journey.	Scrutiny Workshop, 15 June 2023	Yes
(2) Cattle Market/Stockyard Leases	One-off	Portfolio Holder for Town Centre, Growth and Prosperity Director for Growth and Regeneration	21 September 2023	The Committee is to consider the current arrangements and whether these need to be reviewed or modified in advance of long-term contracts being agreed. Members will also ensure that income to the Council is maximised and best value for the Levelling Up Fund investment is realised.	Scrutiny Workshop, 15 June 2023, agreed by Chairman, 13 July 2023	Yes
(3) Crime and Disorder	Annual	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources Director for Housing and Communities	19 October 2023	The new Local Police Inspector, Inspector Darren Richardson, has been invited to this meeting.	N/A as Statutory Function	Yes
(4) Homelessness Strategy	One-off	Portfolio Holder for Customers, Communities and Neighbourhoods Director for Housing and Committees	23 November 2023	Scrutiny Committee review of the draft homelessness strategy will add value and will enable feedback and / or recommendations to cabinet for consideration. In this context, the Committee would be well placed to fulfil a consultative function.	Scrutiny Workshop, 15 June 2023	Yes
(5) Climate Change Strategy	One-off	Portfolio Holder for Governance, Environment and Regulatory Services Director for Growth and Regeneration	23 November 2023	A Scrutiny Committee workshop was held in March 2023 to review the Council's work and the progress on the climate change strategy. Following the comments received, the draft strategy is being prepared. It is proposed for the Committee to review the draft Climate Change Strategy as part	Scrutiny Workshop, 15 June 2023	Yes

Suggested Topics	FORMAT	Portfolio Holder/Officer	Meeting Date	Notes	Requested by (Member)/ Date agreed for addition by Scrutiny Chairman	Portfolio Holder/Chief Officer consulted on date of report
				of the consultation process. The feedback and comments from the committee will inform the final strategy for consideration by the Cabinet and approval by the Council later this year.		
(6) Budget	Annual	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources Director for Corporate Services	25 January 2024	One item only agenda Scrutiny of the Budget. <i>All Members are invited to participate.</i>	N/A	Yes
(7) Lightbulb – 5 Year Plan	One-off	Portfolio Holder for Customers, Communities and Neighbourhoods Director for Housing and Communities	21 March 2024 <i>Could be December or February</i>	Scrutiny committee involvement in the development of the five-year business plan will be advantageous for the whole partnership. It will also enable the committee to provide feedback to cabinet on the opportunities and constraints for Lightbulb as a service (eg: eligible spend guided by legislative framework and ringfence, leading to underspend). <i>This is a partnership piece of work.</i>	Scrutiny Workshop, 15 June 2023	Yes
(8) Regulatory change in housing review	One-off	Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Landlord Services Director for Housing and Communities	21 March 2024	This slot is on hold for a potential review on the effects of the regulatory change in housing upon Melton.	Scrutiny Workshop, 15 June 2023	Yes
(9) Annual Scrutiny Report	Annual Item	Scrutiny Officer Chairman of Scrutiny Committee	25 April 2024	Report detailing the work of the Scrutiny Committee over the previous 12 months.	N/A	Yes

PENDING ITEMS These items are awaiting further discussion or additional research before being added to the work programme

Topics (One-off or Review Item?)	Officer and Member Lead	Date	Notes	Requested by (Member)/ Date agreed for addition by Scrutiny Chairman
(1) Leader's Annual Presentation	Chief Executive Leader	TBC	-	Scrutiny Work Programme Workshop, 15 June 2023
(2) Portfolio Holder for Governance, Environment and Regulatory Services Annual Presentation	Monitoring Officer Portfolio Holder for Governance, Environment and Regulatory Services	TBC	-	Scrutiny Work Programme Workshop, 15 June 2023
(3) Portfolio Holder for Customers, Communities and Neighbourhoods Annual Presentation	Director for Housing and Communities Portfolio Holder for Customers, Communities and Neighbourhoods	TBC	-	Scrutiny Work Programme Workshop, 15 June 2023
(4) Portfolio Holder for Town Centre, Growth and Prosperity Annual Presentation	Director for Growth and Regeneration Portfolio Holder for Town Centre, Growth and Prosperity	TBC	-	Scrutiny Work Programme Workshop, 15 June 2023
(5) Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources Annual Presentation	Director for Corporate Services Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance, Property and Resources	TBC	-	Scrutiny Work Programme Workshop, 15 June 2023
(6) Connected with our Rural Communities	Director for Housing and Communities Director for Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Lead: TBC	TBC	Workshop session proposed. It is recommended that the Leicestershire and Rutland Association of Local Councils is invited.	Scrutiny Work Programme Workshop, 15 June 2023
(7) Offer to Young People	Director for Housing and Communities Director for Growth and Regeneration Scrutiny Lead: TBC	TBC	Workshop session proposed. Workshop could be a prelude to a Youth Strategy.	Scrutiny Work Programme Workshop, 15 June 2023

(8) Supporting an aging population	Director for Housing and Communities Scrutiny Lead: TBC	TBC	Workshop session proposed.	Scrutiny Work Programme Workshop, 15 June 2023
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ADVICE ON WORK PROGRAMME

What is a Work Programme?

The Scrutiny Work Programme outlines the areas of work which are expected to be scrutinised over the coming months/year by or on behalf of the Council's Scrutiny Committee and any Working Groups convened for review work. Topics added to the work programme should have expected outcomes to add value to the services delivered by the Council and its partners and/or improve the quality of lives of Melton's residents. It is recognised that there is a need for flexibility in the work programme so as to allow relevant issues to be dealt with as and when they arise.

Sources of Work Programme Ideas

Numerous sources of information can help to inform topic selection, including:

- Concerns that have been raised by the public relating to Council delivered services
- Issues of community concern – not necessarily services delivered by the Council
- Issues that have been flagged up by reviews, audits or inspections (past and present).
- Issues relating to Councils outcomes, objectives and priorities
- Consultations and interviews
- Underperformance
- "Stakeholders" concerns – raised by the Council's partners or the users of services
- Partnership objectives
- Cabinet Members, Chief Executive or Directors presentations about the pertinent issues that are emerging and any opportunities or threats on the horizon
- Central government priority changes
- Improvement Plans
- Forward Plan
- Budgetary analysis.

Scrutiny is also encouraged to think about external Scrutiny and the monitoring of other public bodies, and how its activities will engage partner organisations, the media and the public.

Selecting a Work Programme Topic

The Scrutiny Committee should use effective processes to select topics that will contribute towards the best possible work programme for Scrutiny. This means looking at the sources of information that may help and using them to choose the right topics.

This involves:

- Drawing out and discussing what matters most to Councillors and to the community at large
- Finding out about any research that has been completed or that is planned
- Prioritising topics
- Considering what added value is expected as a result of Scrutiny involvement
- Considering whether the topic is already being reviewed elsewhere

It is also important to note that Scrutiny has limited time and resources and therefore workplans need to be manageable. It is not possible to include every topic suggested by Members, Directors or the Public in the work programme. In addition, Officer capacity may be diverted from projects if a review is added to the workplan without considering the impact on Officer resource and this should be a consideration in adding to work programme. Successful Scrutiny is about looking at the right topic in the right way and Members will need to be selective whilst also being able to demonstrate clear arguments in favour of including or excluding topics.

Risks

A common pitfall for Scrutiny can be the inclusion of topics on the work programme that are unmanageable, of limited interest to the community, purely for informational purposes, have few outcomes and fail to 'add value' to the work of the Council or the wellbeing of the community. As such the selection and prioritisation of topics is critical to the effectiveness of Scrutiny as such processes can ensure clearer focus, particularly in poor or weak areas of performance or major issues of concern to the wider community.