

## SCRUTINY WORKPLAN 2019/20

### **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 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.

<b>Suggested Topics</b>	<b>Officer and Member Lead</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Housing Voids Management	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities  Deputy Chief Executive (Director for People and Communities)	Task and Finish Group Commenced August 2019	<p>To consider the Voids Process using a systems thinking methodology, which will review the process end to end</p> <p>To consider current performance</p> <p>To understand costs associated with void properties</p> <p>To understand the Councils duties to provide accommodation to those who present as homeless.</p> <p>To understand the cost of providing temporary homeless accommodation</p> <p>To consider whether the provision of temporary accommodation provides best value</p> <p>To understand the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act</p>

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<p>Temporary Accommodation and best value</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities</p> <p>Deputy Chief Executive (Director for People and Communities)</p>	<p>Task and Finish Group Commenced August 2019</p>	<p>To understand the Councils duties to provide accommodation to those who present as homeless.</p> <p>To understand the cost of providing temporary homeless accommodation</p> <p>To consider whether the provision of temporary accommodation provides best value</p> <p>Impact of Homelessness Reduction Act</p>
<p>Rent arrears and the link to universal credit and Me and My Learning.</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities</p> <p>Director for People and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>To understand how the Council collects income and the arrears management process.</p> <p>To understand internal signposting services.</p> <p>To understand how Universal Credit is explained to customers.</p> <p>To understand what methods of communication we use to engage with our customers.</p> <p>To understand what impact Universal Credit has on customers and colleagues</p> <p>To understand what support is available to our most vulnerable customers.</p>
<p>Empty Homes</p>	<p>Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity</p> <p>Director for Growth and Regeneration</p>	<p>TBC</p>	<p>To understand the extent and impact of empty homes in Melton and raise awareness.</p> <p>To identify the Council's priority objectives for tackling empty properties in Melton and whether these have been met.</p>

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			<p>To identify the main drivers for increasing social housing and to reduce housing register numbers and those in temporary accommodation.</p> <p>To identify what resources and funding is available to tackle empty homes in Melton.</p> <p>To identify best practice used elsewhere in tackling empty homes which can be used in Melton</p>
Community Engagement including review of Community Forums	<p>Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Access and Engagement</p> <p>Deputy Chief Executive (Director for People and Communities)</p> <p>Director for Law and Governance</p>		<p>Access to local democracy</p> <p>To understand how Melton engages with its community</p> <p>Engaging with hard to reach residents- equalities considerations</p> <p>Voting and elections</p> <p>Tools for engagement, e.g.- consultation</p>
Housing Allocations- Application of Process and Procedure	<p>Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities</p> <p>Deputy Chief Executive (Director for People and Communities)</p>	TBC	<p>To understand the role and purpose of social housing in Melton</p> <p>To understand the current position on housing allocations</p> <p>To ensure the criteria for the allocation of housing is clear and easy to understand, including a consideration</p>

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			of different ways of offering choice  To consider types of tenure
Climate Change			
<p><b>FORWARD PLAN ITEMS</b> Items may be referred to Scrutiny by Cabinet for pre scrutiny or as a consultative body. Not all items will be considered by Scrutiny but it will be beneficial for some items to have Scrutiny involvement.</p>			
Corporate Debt and Income Maximisation Policy	Portfolio Holder for Growth & Regeneration  Deputy Chief Executive (Director for People and Communities)	23 <sup>rd</sup> July 2019	On 4 <sup>th</sup> September 2019, Cabinet will consider the Corporate Debt and Income Maximisation Policy. Consultation will be undertaken prior to consideration. Scrutiny to provide comments as a consultative body to feed into decision making considerations by Cabinet.
Community Grants Review	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Access and Engagement  Deputy Chief Executive and Director for People and Communities	17 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	Scrutiny to receive a presentation on the proposals to revise the policy on allocation of Community Grants in order to provide comments on feedback and to feed into decision making considerations by Cabinet.
<p><b>ONE OFF ITEMS</b> These are dealt with at scheduled meetings of the Committee. The following are suggestions for when particular items may be scheduled.</p>			
Implementation of Workforce Strategy	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Resources	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2019	Following approval by Council in March 2018, Scrutiny to receive an update on the implementation of the Policy and the impact it has had on the organisation.

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	Director for Corporate Resources		
Report of the Voids Management and Temporary Accommodation Task and Finish Group		January 2020 (Date TBC)	To receive the recommendations from the Task and Finish Group for approval and referral to Cabinet.
Budget Scrutiny		21 <sup>st</sup> January 2020	To play a full and active part in the development of the 2019-20 budget.
Debt Management Policy	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Finance and Resources  Director for People and Communities	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2020	Scrutiny to receive an update after 6 months as to how the Policy has been implemented and whether this is having an impact on debt management.
Crime and Disorder Scrutiny		3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2020	<p>To consider actions undertaken by the responsible authorities on the community safety partnership.</p> <p>To make reports or recommendations to the local authority with regard to those functions.</p> <p>To consider Councillor Calls for Action</p> <p>To consider actions undertaken by the responsible authorities on the partnership</p> <p>The role of the panel should be as a 'critical friend' of the partnership providing constructive challenge at a strategic rather than operational level.</p>

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Implementation of Intensive Housing Management Support	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities  Director for People and Communities (Deputy Chief Executive)	TBC	Scrutiny to receive an update following a restructure in 2018.
Housing Repairs	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities  Director for Growth and Regeneration	TBC	A systems review has been commissioned and will be undertaken in the coming months. Scrutiny to receive an update on work being undertaken to improve performance.
<b>PORTFOLIO HOLDER UPDATES</b>			
Portfolio Holder Questions-Growth and Prosperity	Portfolio Holder for Growth and Prosperity  Director for Growth and Regeneration	23 <sup>rd</sup> July 2019	Portfolio Holders to update Scrutiny on their portfolios on an annual basis
Portfolio Holder Questions-Governance, Access and Customer Engagement	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Access and Engagement  Director for Law and Governance	17 <sup>th</sup> September 2019	Portfolio Holders to update Scrutiny on their portfolios on an annual basis
Portfolio Holder Questions-Planning and Environmental Services	Portfolio Holder for Environment and Regulatory Services	12 <sup>th</sup> November 2019	Portfolio Holders to update Scrutiny on their portfolios on an annual basis

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	Director for Growth and Regeneration		
Portfolio Holder Questions-Housing and Communities	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Resources  Director for Corporate Resources	3 <sup>rd</sup> March 2019	Portfolio Holders to update Scrutiny on their portfolios on an annual basis

### **ADVICE ON WORKPLAN**

#### What is a Work Plan?

The Scrutiny Work Plan 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 plan 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 plan so as to allow relevant issues to be dealt with as and when they arise.

#### Sources of Work Plan 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

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- 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 Plan Topic

The Scrutiny Committee should use effective processes to select topics that will contribute towards the best possible workplan 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 workplan. In addition Officer capacity may be



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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 workplans.

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 plan 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.