

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

PEOPLE SCRUTINY PANEL

Setting the Scrutiny Panel's Work Programme 2024-2025

16 SEPTEMBER 2024

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To invite Members to further consider the suggestions discussed at the People Scrutiny Panel on 15 July 2024, in respect of the panel's 2024-2025 Work Programme.

PREVIOUS PANEL MEETING

2. At the initial meeting of the People Scrutiny Panel held on 15 July 2024, Members were asked to consider a number of topics suggested by various stakeholders for the panel's 2024-2025 Work Programme.
3. During discussion at the meeting, Members shortlisted several potential items for topics (full reviews) and updates. These were as follows:

Topics

- Children Missing from Education
- Homelessness
- Obesity
- The Education of Children in the Care of the Local Authority

Updates

- Budget and Transformation Programme
- Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection Framework/ Programme
- Integrated Care Board (ICB) Health Matters (including: Special Allocation Scheme; Dental Recovery; Speech and Language Children and Young People's Services; and Children's Mental Health).
- Residential and Supported Accommodation for Children in Our Care and Care Leavers.

BACKGROUND

4. At the start of every Municipal Year, Scrutiny Panels discuss the topics that they would like to review during the coming year.

5. Work programmes are useful as they provide some structure to a Scrutiny Panel's activity and allow for the effective planning and preparation of work.
6. It should be noted that the topics and updates outlined above are suggestions. When considering the Work Programme, the panel is advised to select topics that are of interest to it, as well as topics that the panel feels by considering, could add value to the Local Authority's work.
7. In addition to undertaking the agreed Work Programme, Scrutiny Panels have also previously responded on an ad-hoc basis to emerging issues - such as considering relevant new legislation, guidance or Government consultation documents. This approach occasionally results in further topics being identified for investigation or review throughout the year.
8. The Scrutiny Panel is also advised that, under the terms of the Local Government Act 2000, local authorities have a responsibility of community leadership and a power to secure the effective promotion of community well-being. Therefore, in addition to the Scrutiny Panel's generally recognised powers (of holding the Executive to account, reviewing service provision, developing policy, considering budget plans and performance and financial monitoring), panels also have the power to consider **any** matters which are not the responsibility of the Council but which affect the local authority **or** the inhabitants of its area. For example, nationally, local authorities have undertaken scrutiny work on issues such as post office closures, rural bus services, policing matters and flood defence schemes.

Scrutiny work plan prioritisation aid

9. When considering topics for the Work Programme, Members may wish to use the aid attached at **Appendix 1** to prioritise issues where scrutiny can make an impact, add value or contribute to policy development.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

10. The Scrutiny Panel is asked to consider its Work Programme for the 2024/2025 municipal year. Further information can be requested from relevant officers if required, for example with regard to timely scheduling.
11. When considering its Work Programme, the Scrutiny Panel is asked to ensure that topics agreed for inclusion:
 - Affect a group of people living within the Middlesbrough area.
 - Relate to a service, event or issue in which the Council has a significant stake or over which the Council has an influence.
 - Are not issues which the Overview and Scrutiny Board or the Scrutiny Panels have considered during the last 12 months.
 - Do not relate to an individual service complaint.
 - Do not relate to matters dealt with by another Council Committee, unless the issue deals with procedure.

12. It is suggested that the Scrutiny Panel has a mixture of working styles in its programme. This can include detailed and in-depth reviews, shorter topics, or one-off investigations.

RECOMMENDATION

13. That the Scrutiny Panel initially identifies no more than two topics it would like to include in its Work Programme for 2024/2025, for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Board for approval.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A.

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APPENDIX 1

