

TITLE OF REPORT: Development of Work Programme for 2024-25

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Summary

This report details the Overview and Scrutiny work programme setting process for 2024-25 and a list of suggested topics for inclusion in the work programme, relevant to the remit of the Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC).

1. A key component to the work of the Overview and Scrutiny function is work programme planning that seeks input from a wide variety of sources and identifies priority areas where scrutiny can seek to add the most value.
2. Ideas for topics for scrutiny to consider can be gathered from a wide range of sources including:
 - Elected Members
 - Senior Officers
 - Partner Organisations
 - Corporate Plans and Strategies
 - Complaints system and Ombudsman
 - Evidence from Councillors on issues affecting neighbourhoods
3. Elected Members and relevant officers were invited to submit suggestions for inclusion in the work programme between 20th February 2024 and 5th March 2024.
4. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, the Corporate Resources OSC perform the overview and scrutiny role in relation to the following functions:
 - the management of the Council's financial, human and physical resources
 - support for the democratic process
 - the involvement of the people and communities of Gateshead in the work of the Council
 - capacity building in communities, volunteering and resilience
 - social inclusion, equalities and diversity
 - the Council's arrangements for securing efficiency and value for money; and the development and operation of the Council's procurement strategy
5. A list of suggestions received relevant to the remit of Corporate Resources OSC is appended to the report.

Role of Overview and Scrutiny

1. As per the Council's Constitution, the following principles govern the Overview and Scrutiny Function:
 - It will be an integral part of the Council's framework, working within it not outside or against it
 - It will be a constructive process which is open and accountable
 - It will work alongside the other parts of the Council's structure in making a contribution to policy
 - It will enhance rather than duplicate activity
 - It will look outwards to broader issues affecting local people rather than just internal Council issues

2. This is underpinned by the four fundamental principles of good scrutiny set out by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny:
 - provide constructive "critical friend" challenge;
 - amplify the voice and concerns of the public
 - be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role
 - drive improvement in public services.

3. Members of the Committee are invited to highlight any additional topics they wish to put forward for consideration for inclusion in the work programme. Work will then be undertaken, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair, to allocate topics to the Committee's meeting schedule in a timely manner and scope the content of reports. A further work programme report will then be submitted for approval at the first meeting of the 2024/25 municipal year.

4. It is acknowledged that, whilst the majority of the work of overview and scrutiny will be planned in a structured way, there will be flexibility within work programmes for committees to respond to any issues that arise throughout the year.

Recommendations

1. The Committee is asked to:-
 - a) Comment on the emerging issues for this OSC's 2024-25 work programme and highlight any additional issues for consideration.