
Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 19 March 2021

Subject: **Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/21**

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1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To note or amend the 2020/21 work programme and to consider any additional agenda items, formal referrals to scrutiny, reviews, call in, matters to raise at the next Combined Authority meeting and any other tasks, issues or matters the Committee resolves to undertake or consider further.

2. Information

- 2.1 The Scrutiny work programme details the planned work the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has resolved to undertake, investigate further and focus on in the current municipal year (June 2020 – June 2021) within the resources, remit and powers available to it.
- 2.2 The work programme is set at the beginning of the year and considered at each meeting where it can be amended and changed as the year progresses.

Referrals to scrutiny

- 2.3 Under Scrutiny Standing Order 10, any Combined Authority Member and any elected Member of a West Yorkshire (or City of York) council may formally refer a matter to scrutiny for consideration. The referral must be in writing to the Scrutiny Officer. The Committee must consider and discuss the referral and respond to the referrer explaining whether or not it will consider the matter further and why.
- 2.4 No referrals were made in writing to the scrutiny officer since the last meeting.

Reviews

- 2.5 The review of scrutiny arrangements and resulting recommendation was submitted to Combined Authority members for consultation and the Combined Authority has now come to a decision on future scrutiny arrangements and structure. This is outlined in Item 5 of this committee's agenda ('Future Scrutiny Arrangements'). A follow up review of new scrutiny arrangements is planned next year.
- 2.6 No other formal reviews are ongoing or have been proposed at this time.

Agenda items and forward plan 2020/21

- 2.7 It was agreed that this year the Overview & Scrutiny Committee focus mostly on mayoral devolution preparations and the implementation process – while maintaining an overview of COVID-19 recovery efforts, including on budget/corporate performance, economic services and programme delivery.
- 2.8 The agenda forward plan as it stands is outlined in **Appendix 1**.

Working groups

- 2.9 Under Scrutiny Standing Order 7, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may appoint working groups to consider matters more closely, fulfil 'tasks', make recommendations and otherwise support the scrutiny process.
- 2.10 Working groups are smaller groups of members that undertake scrutiny work outside of committee meetings and then report back to the main committee either through periodic updates at committee meetings and/or with a final end-of-task report when their work is complete.
- 2.11 This year, the committee appointed two task and finish groups focusing on two major elements of the programme of work to make the Combined Authority 'mayor ready' by May 2021; one on **governance & scrutiny reform** and one on **finances & corporate matters**.
- 2.12 The Governance & Scrutiny working group¹ has now completed its task for this municipal year and presented its report to the November committee meeting. The Finances & Corporate working group current membership is: *Councillors Stephen Baines, Paul Davies, Peter Harrand, Olivia Rowley, Rosie Watson, and Geoff Winnard*.
- 2.13 Since the last committee meeting, the Finances & Corporate Working Group followed up on the draft budget discussed in the previous committee meeting in January.
- 2.14 Lead Members will update the committee verbally on any matters not included in this report.

Spokespersons

¹ Councillors James Baker, Dot Foster, Andrew Hollyer, Yusra Hussain and David Jones.

- 2.15 This standing item is an opportunity for spokespersons to update the committee on any of their activities in between meetings.
- 2.16 Last year, the Committee agreed that a cross-party group of members should act as leads or spokespersons for each of the Combined Authority and LEP's key policy areas.
- 2.17 Scrutiny spokespersons aim to remain briefed and abreast of developments, liaise with senior officers on behalf of the committee and periodically advise scrutiny members on any matter arising within their policy area.
- 2.18 The current spokespersons and their areas of focus are:
- Cllr Stephen Baines: business growth
 - Cllr James Baker (Deputy Chair): environment
 - Cllr Peter Harrand (Chair): financial & strategic issues (incl devolution)
 - Cllr Dot Foster: transport
 - Cllr David Jones: employment and skills
 - Cllr Rosie Watson & Cllr Geoff Winnard: corporate issues

Key decisions and call-in

- 2.19 Five members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee – including at least one member from two different constituent councils (in West Yorkshire) – may call-in any decision of the Combined Authority, a decision-making committee² and any key decisions taken by an officer (except for urgent decisions). Key decisions are defined as any decision incurring a financial cost or saving of £1 million or more, or a decision likely to have 'a significant effect' on two or more wards.
- 2.20 Decision makers have two days to publish notice of a decision, at which point scrutiny members have five working days to call in the decision, delaying its implementation, and formally requiring the decision maker to reconsider. Scrutiny members are notified by email of decisions.
- 2.21 Members may call-in a decision by notifying the Scrutiny Officer in writing by 4.00 pm on the fifth working day following publication. The Committee then has 14 days to meet, scrutinise the decision and make any recommendations. Further information is set out in Scrutiny Standing Order 13.
- 2.22 The forward plan of key decisions is published on the [key decisions section of the Combined Authority's website](#). The forward plan of key decisions is attached at **Appendix 2**.
- 2.23 All decisions eligible for call-in taken by decision making committees (Combined Authority, Transport Committee and Investment Committee) are published on [the meetings section of the Combined Authority website under each committee](#).

² Transport Committee and Investment Committee (as of 21019)

Matters to raise at the Combined Authority meeting

- 2.24 The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a standing invitation to meetings of the Combined Authority as a (non-voting) observer in order to raise any scrutiny matters and convey any feedback from scrutiny members to the Combined Authority. The Scrutiny Deputy Chair may also deputise for the Chair as an observer.
- 2.25 The previous meetings took place on 4 February and 9 March 2021. The decision summary sheet of decisions taken at the last two Combined Authority meetings on 4 February and 9 March are available online at:
- <https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=966&Ver=4>
 - <https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=1070&Ver=4>
- 2.26 The next Combined Authority meeting is on 22 April 2021 during the pre-election 'purdah' period.
- 2.27 [Minutes and agendas from past meetings](#)³ of the Combined Authority can be accessed on the Combined Authority's website. Agendas and reports for future meetings are also published there.

Changes in membership

- 2.28 There have been no changes in membership since the last meeting.

Actions for the Scrutiny Officer

- 2.29 As outlined in Scrutiny Standing Order 16, the statutory scrutiny officer provides support to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and all its members in exercising their duties and fulfilling their objectives.

Future work programmes – 2021/22

- 2.30 As highlighted in Item 5 ('Future Scrutiny Arrangements') of this meeting's agenda, as of the annual meeting scheduled for 24 June 2021, the Combined Authority will appoint three thematic overview and scrutiny committees – Corporate, Economy and Transport.
- 2.31 At its next meeting on 21 May 2021, following development of the remits of the three new scrutiny committees, it is suggested that the Committee advise its successor committees on a draft work programme for 2021/22, in particular which outstanding topics and reviews be taken forward and revisited in future by which committee.

³ <https://westyorkshire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CommitteeId=133>

3. Financial Implications

3.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

5. Staffing Implications

5.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

6. External Consultees

6.1 No external consultations have been undertaken.

7. Recommendations

7.1 That the work programme and agenda for the next meeting be noted or amended.

7.2 That any additional verbal updates from the Chair, working group leads and spokespersons be noted.

7.3 That the forward plan of upcoming key decisions be noted.

8. Background Documents

[Scrutiny Standing Orders](#)

[Past agendas and minutes from meetings of the Combined Authority](#)

[Forward plans of key decisions from this month onwards](#)

9. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/21

Appendix 2 – Forward plan of key decisions from 1 March 2021