

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN	WARDS: All
REPORT TITLE: Joint Chairs of Scrutiny Committee – Joint work planning and mid-year reflection session	
REPORT OF: Director of Strategy and Design / Statutory Scrutiny Officer	
FOR SUBMISSION TO: Joint Chairs of Scrutiny Committee	DATE: 19 th October 2022
<p>SUMMARY OF REPORT:</p> <p>Scrutiny plays an important role in improving outcomes for residents – making sure services meet resident needs, exploring issues which impact the wellbeing of the borough and providing improvement recommendations to the Council.</p> <p>The scrutiny function has a democratic mandate to monitor decisions affecting local residents, contribute to the formation of policy and hold the executive to account.</p> <p>The Joint Chairs of Scrutiny Committee was established to enable closer working relationships across the scrutiny function. Its terms of reference state that the Committee will discuss the Leader's Annual Statement and other relevant cross cutting matters arising from the business of the Cabinet or as advised by the Chief Executive.</p> <p>This report sets out the work programmes of the individual committees during the municipal year so far, upcoming issues planned for scrutiny by each committee, and current plans for scrutiny panels. It also provides a brief overview of the emerging programme of work in response to cost of living crisis for joint chairs to consider how this can best be supported and scrutinised across their committees.</p> <p>Local Government Act 1972 – Access to information:</p> <p>No documents that are required to be listed were used in the preparation of this report.</p> <p>Contact Officer: James Coumbe Portfolio Lead – Insight and Improvement London Borough of Camden 5 Pancras Square London N1C 4AG Tel: 020 7974 5965 James.coumbe@camden.gov.uk</p>	
<p>RECOMMENDATIONS:</p> <p>The Joint Chairs of Scrutiny Committee is asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the forward plans set out at Table 1 of the report, share key points of learning, and agree any areas of future joint working 	

- Reflect on scrutiny activity in 2022/23 so far, and agree the focus for any areas for development or training

Signed: Executive Director Corporate Services

Date: 10th October 2022

1. Background

- 1.1. Scrutiny plays an important role in improving outcomes for residents – making sure services meet resident needs, exploring issues which impact the wellbeing of the borough and providing improvement recommendations to the Council.
- 1.2. The scrutiny function has a democratic mandate to monitor decisions affecting local residents, contribute to the formation of policy and hold the executive to account.
- 1.3. The Joint Chairs of Scrutiny Committee exists to enable closer working relationships across the scrutiny function. Its terms of reference state that the Committee will discuss the Leader's Annual Statement and other relevant cross cutting matters arising from the business of the Cabinet or as advised by the Chief Executive.
- 1.4. This year, the local election in May resulted in a large number of new members joining the Council, and consequently a large number of new scrutiny members coming to role for the first time. There are also newly appointed scrutiny chairs for three of the five committees in 2022/23 (Children, Schools and Families, Housing, and Resources and Corporate Performance).
- 1.5. All scrutiny committees have met at least once during 2022/23 so far and have discussed and agreed work plans for the remainder of the municipal year, though these may be adjusted during the course of the year to reflect changing priorities and circumstances.

2. Scrutiny Agenda for 2022/23 Municipal Year

- 2.1. The table below sets out the work plans for each scrutiny committee – both what has been looked at so far this municipal year and what is presently planned for future agenda. The Committee is recommended to discuss individual committee work plans and areas of focus for the remainder of the year:
 - Highlighting any key points of learning from scrutiny sessions so far
 - Considering any possible overlaps and agreeing on areas for joint working between individual committees, and
 - Reviewing and discussing the scope and timing of any planned scrutiny panels
- 2.2. At present, the following scrutiny panels are being considered:
 - Impact on Covid-19 on language development in early years (Children Schools and Families, from November)
 - Circular Economy (Culture and Environment, from November)

Table - 2022/23 scrutiny committee forward plans

Issues considered to date				
Children, Schools and Families	Culture and Environment	Health and Adult Social Care	Housing	Resources and Corporate Performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ofsted Inspection of Children's Services (results) • Corporate Performance Reporting • Youth Review (Cabinet Report) • Camden's provisional exam results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Euston Road Cycle Lanes • Tree Planting Strategy follow up • Biodiversity Strategy / Action Plan • End of Year Performance Summary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community connectedness and Friendships • Public Health Quarter 3 (Q3) Performance Report 2021-2022 • Corporate Performance Reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future of West Kentish Town Estate • Agar Grove Estate • Camley Street Development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treasury Management Annual Report and Mid-Year Strategy (Cabinet report) • Community Investment Programme Update (Cabinet report) • Procurement of Insurance Policies (Cabinet report)

Forward plan (Non-Cabinet Reports)				
Children, Schools and Families	Culture and Environment	Health and Adult Social Care	Housing	Resources and Corporate Performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School places planning report • CSCP Annual Report 2021-22 / Business Plan 2022-23 • Children's Services Annual Complaints Report 2021-22 • Young Inspector's Report on a Children's Service • Corporate Parenting Annual Report 2021-22 • Achievement and Standards Report 2022 • Annual Health Report on children, young people and families • Corporate Performance Reporting • 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deputation residents re Delancey Street • Corporate Performance Reporting • Co-ordination of utility company works • Trust and Transparency Action Plan: Building Trust with Black Communities • Access to sport for young people • Climate Annual Review 2022 • Borough Commander Annual Update • Camden Council's approach to powered two-wheel vehicles. • VCS rent and leases update • Library Service (TBC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update on the transition to an Integrated Care System • Primary Care: Enhanced access and the Fuller Report • Public health annual report 2020/21 • Public Health Quarterly Performance Reporting • The impact of the rise of cost of living on Adult Social Care • Health and Wellbeing Strategy priority: Good work and employment • Corporate Performance Reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Management Services (service improvement changes and neighbourhood development proposals) • Housing Services quarterly performance reports (Including KPIs) • Community Investment Programme annual report • Leaseholder services • Landlord Licensing Scheme update • Improving the safety of estates (assess crime and ASB data, progress on CCTV installation across the borough) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CIP Annual Report • Corporate Performance Reporting • Communicating with our diverse communities (TBC) • Update on customer contact and customer services (TBC) • Partnerships and partner engagement (TBC) • CIP Panel Report Response (TBC) • CIP Annual Report (TBC) •

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture Service (TBC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health and Wellbeing Strategy Priority: Community connectedness and friendships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camden Housing Strategy 	
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Forward Plan – (Cabinet Reports)

Children, Schools and Families	Culture and Environment	Health and Adult Social Care	Housing	Resources and Corporate Performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SEND strategy • Youth Mission • Secure Children’s Home for London and Pan-London Commissioning (TBC) • Revenue estimates and council tax report inc. Schools Funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camden Transport Strategy: Review of Progress Since 2019 and Proposed Three Year Programme 2022/23 to 2024/25 • Flood Risk Management Strategy • Camden Clean Air Action Plan 2022 - 2026 (All Wards) and Camden Clean Air Strategy 2019 – 2034 • VCS Grants Priorities – 2024 Onwards 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HRA Budget (Annual rent setting) • Housing Strategy • Housing Allocations (TBC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • London Borough of Camden Annual Complaints Report • Camden’s Climate Investment 2027, the Council’s Local Climate Bond • Camden’s Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023 – 2026 • Council Tax Support Scheme 2023 – 2024

Cabinet Member Annual Reports

Children, Schools and Families	Culture and Environment	Health and Adult Social Care	Housing	Resources and Corporate Performance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Best Start for Children and Families • Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Young People and Culture 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual report of the Cabinet Member for a Sustainable Camden • Annual report of the Cabinet Member for Voluntary Sector, Equalities and Cohesion • Annual report of the Cabinet Member for Safer Communities • Report of Councillor Nina de Ayala Parker, Cabinet Advisor 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Social Care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report of the Cabinet Member for Better Homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Report from the Cabinet Member for Finance and Cost of Living

	<p>on Promoting Green Space and Biodiversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Annual report of the Cabinet Member for New Homes, Jobs and Community Investment			
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3. Cost of Living Crisis Response

- 3.1. Camden Council has made tackling inequality a core part of our priorities and commitments. The cost of living crisis is a further entrenchment of poverty and an exacerbation of existing structural issues that the council has sought to respond to in recent years. What has changed is the speed at which the crisis has developed, the breadth of its impacts across people's lives, and the scale of its impact on communities. For this reason, the Council's response to the crisis combines short-term harm reduction and long-term systems change and mitigation.
- 3.2. Camden is doing all it can to respond in the coming months to reduce the harm of the crisis on the most vulnerable – recognising the existing trauma that many are experiencing as a result of the pandemic - and doing all we can to support households to access the support available to them.
- 3.3. Camden's response to the cost of living crisis is being overseen by a Cabinet Member Response Group chaired by the Cabinet Member for Finance and Cost of Living. The Response Group was set up in July 2022 to maintain oversight of the Council's systemic response to the challenge of poverty and hardship in our communities resulting from the increasing cost of living. The Response Group is tasked with providing strategic direction on key projects that support the delivery of Camden's response. The Response Group first met in September 2022 and will make recommendations to Cabinet for formal decision-making, including producing a final report by July 2023.
- 3.4. The Cabinet Member Response Group is supported by a Cost of Living Officer Group, which takes responsibility for the management and delivery of the Council's response to the cost of living crisis. The Cost of Living Officer Group is developing, coordinating, and delivering interventions across ten workstreams:
- Financial Support
 - Warming Homes
 - Food Insecurity
 - Community Response
 - Data and Insight
 - Communications and Participation
 - Schools and Early Years
 - High Risk Groups
 - Support for Employees
 - Lessons Learned and Scenario Planning
- 3.5. Significant initiatives include the Cost of Living Crisis Fund, which was approved by Cabinet in July 2022 and for which £2m has been allocated to fund direct awards to Camden households in financial crisis. The workstreams above also incorporate projects to maximise uptake of free school meals, develop a network of warm places in the winter at which holistic support can be accessed, and

delivery of debt and welfare advice by dedicated Camden staff and the Camden Advice Network.

- 3.6. The cost of living crisis will have significant impacts on communities in terms of health and wellbeing, young people's opportunities, housing and homelessness, and Camden households' economic security in our borough for years to come. For this reason, Joint Chair of Scrutiny Committee is recommended to consider:
- The role of Scrutiny Committees need to play in the Council's response to the cost of living crisis
 - How Scrutiny Committees may work together on this subject, given the wider range of services that will be involved and impacts it will have on residents, and
 - How the impacts of the cost of living crisis may be reflected in each committee's work programme

4. Reflections on scrutiny in 2022/23

- 4.1. The Council remains committed to continuing to improve and develop the scrutiny function as a key part of ensuring effective governance and delivery as an organisation, and to realising the opportunities for scrutiny to "play a more central role in both the Council's place-leadership and participation priorities", as identified in the 2020 Local Government Association Corporate Peer Challenge report.
- 4.2. Following the local elections in May 2022 there was a large new intake of councillors, which is reflected in the membership of scrutiny committees. A range of induction and training opportunities were provided, including briefings for individual scrutiny committees with the relevant Executive Director, looking at the previous work of the committee and its remit, and external training from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny.
- 4.3. Acknowledging that the remit of each committee is broad and each covers a number of complex topics and business areas, Joint Chairs are invited to give their reflections on what further support committee members might benefit from over the remainder of the municipal year, and any further reflections – for example:
- What would you like to do differently in the next part of the year, and in the coming year, to continue to add to the value of scrutiny?
 - What are the challenges – and opportunities – bringing together a committee with a new membership and what do you need to in your role as chair to address/take advantage of these?

5. Finance Comments of the Executive Director Corporate Services

The Executive Director Corporate Services has been consulted and no comments are required.

6. Legal Comments of the Borough Solicitor

The Borough Solicitor has been consulted and no comments are required.

7. Environmental Implications

This proposal has no environmental implications.