

Scrutiny Bulletin: 30 October 2023

Title of Update: Summary Notes from Scrutiny Programme Board meeting held on 13 September 2023.

Relevant Members and Officers: Councillor Allcock (Chair) Councillors Atkinson, Vizard, M Mitchell and Rees, and Director Corporate Services, Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services Officers (SLS and HB).

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1. What is the update about?

To advise of the outcome of the meeting of the Scrutiny Programme Board meeting held on 13 September to discuss the forthcoming Scrutiny business for the City Council.

In the absence of Councillor Allcock, the meeting was chaired by Councillor M. Mitchell.

2. Background

The Scrutiny Programme Board is made up of the two Chairs and Deputy Chair of the Scrutiny Committees. The Chair is not a Member of Scrutiny. The Board meet regularly to timetable business for future Scrutiny Committee meetings. These items of business can come from a variety of sources, including being referred from the Council or Executive and also Members can suggest a review of a suggested topic or area of work.

3. Current position

Proposed items for Forthcoming Scrutiny Meetings

Members noted the proposed items to be added to the Strategic Scrutiny Committee meetings of 21 September and 16 November 2023 and the Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee meetings of 5 October and 30 November 2023.

It was also the role of this Board to determine timetabling of items to the individual Scrutiny Committees.

Draft Work Plan

A recent Members' Briefing had been held on Devolution at which it had been suggested that, following the forthcoming Government announcement for Devon, the topic could be discussed at a Joint Scrutiny Committee meeting.

Members noted the draft work plan to be attached to the agenda for these meetings.

List of Scrutiny Requests

The Chair referred to:-

- his conversation with the Chief Executive on proforma being submitted first to the Strategic Management Board for comment rather than to this Board, SMB comments then to be put to this Board - this was agreed for future requests with SMB to evaluate the requests in terms of cost, available resources, other priorities etc;
- a meeting he and Councillor Moore had held with George Marshall on a previously submitted proforma on Healthy Homes to clarify the issues behind the request and how best to address them - this had been agreed as an item for the next Customer Focus Scrutiny Committee;
- whether a timetable of reviewing individual Council services could be drawn up for a rota of services to be considered at future Scrutiny Committees;
- review of the commercial portfolio;
- City Centre vision; and
- Digital Switch over/on line contacts as part of One Exeter.

Councillor Atkinson presented the following eight suggestions for scrutiny she had submitted via the agreed proforma and which would be referred on to SMB:-

- tackling violence against women and girls;
- social and affordable housing crises – already on the two forthcoming Customer Focus Committee agenda;
- review of the MRF and forthcoming Business Plan;
- review of the consultation policy;
- review of the grass cutting regime and re-wilding projects to support biodiversity;
- Local Government Devolution;
- how tenants of the Council's Passivhaus homes cope with internal operations; and
- review of fly-tipping and waste bin provision - already on the Customer Focus Committee agenda for 5 October 2023;

Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23

Members considered the draft Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23 for presentation to the October Council meeting. They referred to that part of the Scrutiny training on Annual Reports from Bethan Evans when she had suggested a greater focus on outcomes.

AGREED that:-

- (1) the Annual Report be approved
- (2) future reports emphasise outcomes achieved during the year by scrutiny.

Scrutiny Training

Members agreed that the Scrutiny Training session provided by Bethan Evans on 7 September 2023 had been outstanding and very useful.

5. Are there any other options?

The deliberations of the Board meetings as reported to the Scrutiny Bulletin enables the public to be aware of the matters potentially coming to Scrutiny

6. Conclusion

A further update would be made to the next Scrutiny Bulletin.