

Public Accounts Select Committee		
Title	Select Committee Work Programme	
Contributor	Scrutiny Manager	Item 8
Class	Part 1 (open)	10 March 2015

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1 To provide Members of the Select Committee with an overview of the work programme for 2014-15 and to advise the Committee about the process for agreeing the 2015-16 work programme.

## 2. Summary

- 2.1 At the beginning of the municipal year each select committee is required to draw up a work programme for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel. The Panel considers the suggested work programmes and coordinates activities between select committees in order to maximise the use of scrutiny resources and avoid duplication.
- 2.2 The meeting on 10 March 2015 is the last scheduled meeting of the Public Accounts Select Committee in the 2014-15 municipal year. This report provides a list of the issues considered in 2014-15 (the completed work programme) and asks the Committee to put forward suggestions for the 2015-16 work programme.

## 3. Recommendations

- 3.1 The Select Committee is asked to:
- note the completed work programme attached at **Appendix B**;
  - review the issues covered in 2014-15 municipal year;
  - take note of the notice of key decisions attached at **Appendix C**;
  - consider any matters arising that it may wish to suggest for future scrutiny.

## 4. Public Accounts Select Committee 2014-2015

- 4.1 The Public Accounts Select Committee had six meetings in the 2014-15 year:
- 9 July 2014
  - 22 Sep 2014
  - 5 Nov 2014
  - 10 Dec 2014
  - 5 Feb 2015
  - 10 Mar 2015
- 4.2 Along with all other select committees, the Public Accounts Select Committee has devoted considerable attention to the proposals put forward as part of the

development and delivery of the Lewisham Future Programme. It is anticipated that all overview and scrutiny committees will be tasked with reviewing further Lewisham Future Programme proposals in the 2015-16 municipal year.

4.3 The Committee's completed work programme is attached at **Appendix B**.

## 5. Planning for 2015-16

5.1 Eight meetings will be scheduled for 2015-16 municipal year. A work programme report will be put forward at the first Public Accounts Select Committee meeting of the 2015-16 year for members to review, revise and agree. The report will take account of the Committee's previous work and may incorporate:

- issues arising as a result of previous scrutiny
- issues that the Committee is required to consider by virtue of its terms of reference
- items requiring follow up from Committee reviews and recommendations
- issues suggested by members of the public
- petitions
- standard reviews of policy implementation or performance, which is based on a regular schedule
- suggestions from officers
- decisions due to be made by Mayor and Cabinet.

### Issues arising from the 2014/15 work programme

5.2 The Committee has already indicated that it would like to carry out an in-depth review into income generation in the next municipal year. It has also indicated that, alongside the standard reports considered every year, there are some other matters it feels should be considered for further scrutiny:

- ICT Strategy
- Asset Management
- Shared Services
- NRPF Review – implementation of any agreed recommendations.

In addition, Business Panel, at its meeting on 27 January 2015, suggested that the committee might want to consider the implementation of savings proposal O3 (creating an internal enforcement agency) later in the year.

### Public Accounts Select Committee terms of reference

5.3 The Committee's terms of reference are included at **Appendix A**.

5.4 The Council's constitution sets out the Committee's powers. The Select Committee's role is to examine issues relating to the Council's finances and to make recommendations for best financial practice across the authority, including improving procurement practice.

5.5 The Committee is also tasked with consulting and commenting on the actual and proposed contents of the Council's budget.

5.6 The Committee has a specific role in relation to the Audit Panel, whose effectiveness it is responsible for scrutinising.

## **6. Financial implications**

6.1 There are no financial implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. There will be financial implications arising from items on the agenda; these will need to be considered, as necessary.

## **7. Legal implications**

7.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution, all scrutiny select committees must devise and submit a work programme to the Business Panel at the start of each municipal year.

## **8. Equalities implications**

8.1 The Equality Act 2010 brought together all previous equality legislation in England, Scotland and Wales. The Act included a new public sector equality duty, replacing the separate duties relating to race, disability and gender equality. The duty came into force on 6 April 2011. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

8.2 The Council must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:

- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

8.3 There may be equalities implications arising from items on the work programme and all activities undertaken by the Select Committee will need to give due consideration to this.

## **Background documents**

Lewisham Council's Constitution

Centre for Public Scrutiny: the Good Scrutiny Guide

## **Appendix A**

### Public Accounts Select Committee specific terms of reference

- To make reports and recommendations to the Council or the Executive which promote the better custodianship of the Council's finances and to make recommendations for best financial practice across the authority.
- To investigate the possibilities for improving the Council's financial management practice and to make reports and recommendations to Executive or Council as appropriate.
- To encourage the highest standards of financial custodianship where necessary overseeing training activity for all members in this area.
- To consult on and to comment on and make recommendations to the Executive in respect of the actual and proposed contents of the Council's budget and without limiting the general remit of the committee, to hold the Executive to account for its performance in respect of all budgetary matters.
- To receive reports as appropriate from the Audit Panel in respect of their overview of contract procedure rules and financial regulations.
- To make recommendations and reports for consideration by the Executive or Council to improve procurement practice.
- To scrutinise the effectiveness of the Audit Panel.