



Public Accounts Select Committee

Report title: select committee work programme report

Date: 17 March 2021

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: None specific

Contributors: Assistant Chief Executive

Outline and recommendations

To advise members of the completed work programme for 2020/21 and to outline how the committee's work programme for 2021/22 will be set.

The Committee is asked to:

- note the completed work programme attached at **appendix A**
- review the issues covered over the course of 2020/21
- review forthcoming key decisions set out in **appendix B**
- Note the timetable for setting the 2021/22 work programme

Timeline of decision-making

Draft programme agreed by Committee on 24 September 2020

Programme agreed by Business Panel on 29 September 2020

Public Accounts Work Programme 2020/21 – Agreed work programme reviewed at committee meetings on 3 December 2020; 2 February 2021.

1. Summary

- 1.1. Each select committee is required to agree a work programme for submission to the Business Panel at the beginning of the municipal year. As this is the last meeting of the Public Accounts Select Committee in 2020/21 members are being asked to put forward suggestions for the 2021/22 work programme. Please note, however, that the 2021/22 work programme will not be formally agreed until the first meeting of 2021/22.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to:
- note the completed work programme attached at appendix A
 - review the issues covered over the course of 2020/21
 - note the timetable for setting the 2021/22 work programme
 - start to prioritise and plan for 2021/22
 - review forthcoming key decisions set out in appendix B.

3. The work programme

Issues covered over the course of 2020/21

- 3.1. Due to the pandemic and the demand that this has placed on the council, each select committee has only met four, instead of five, times this year. In addition, during the latter part of the municipal year, select committees were asked to only consider business critical and/or urgent items. This has had an impact on the volume of work select committees have been able to complete this year. The completed work programme is attached at appendix A.
- 3.2. Key issues covered by the Public Accounts Select Committee this year have included matters related to the budget as well as to financial monitoring and to the financial stabilisation of the Council.

Timetable for setting the 2021/22 Work Programme

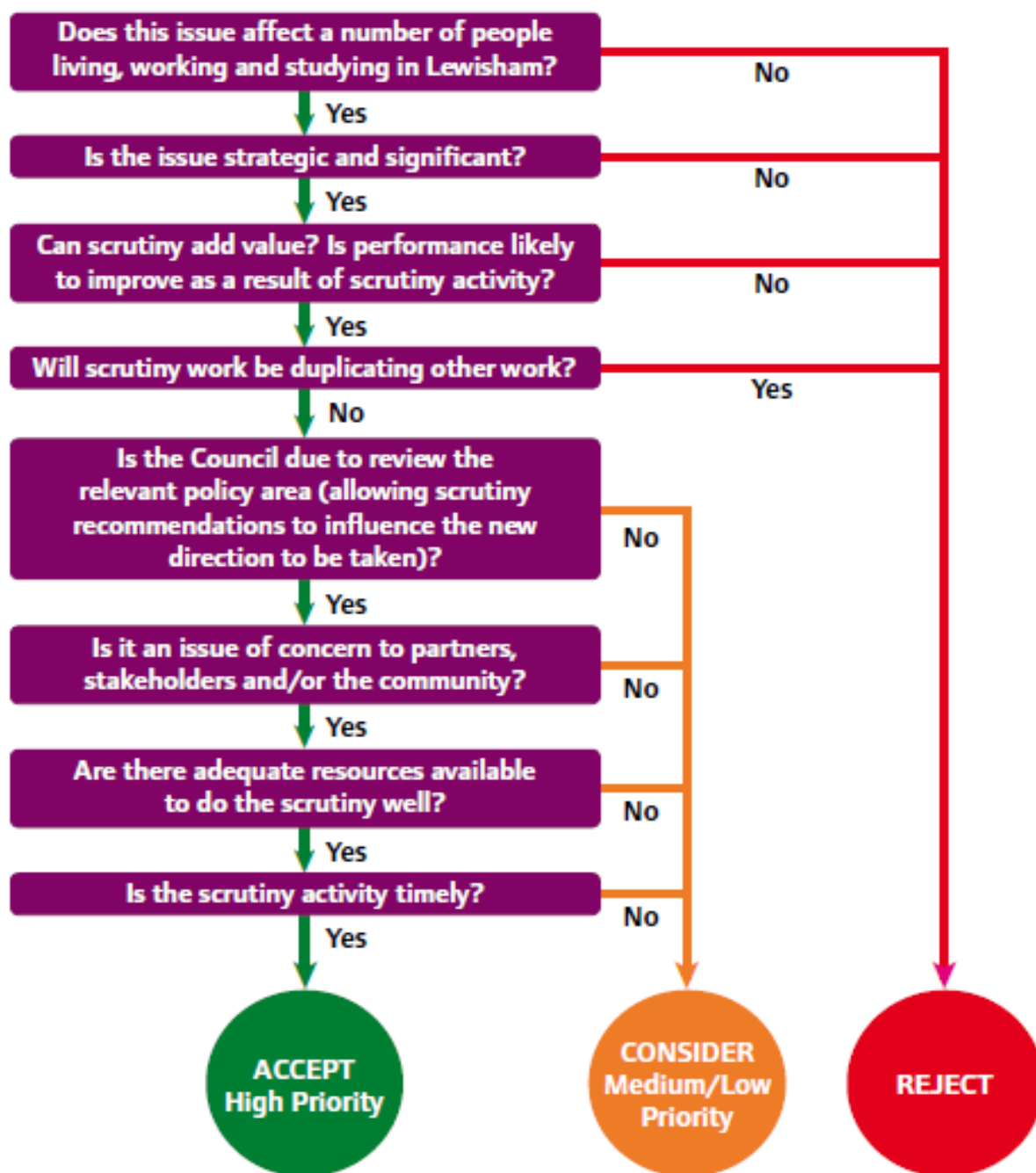
- 3.3. Five committee meetings will be scheduled for the 2021/22 municipal year. A draft work programme will be put forward at the first meeting of the municipal year, taking into account key local issues and the Committee's previous work.
- 3.4. At this meeting, Members are asked to review the Committee's work over 2020/21 and consider suggestions/priority themes for 2021/22. Forthcoming key decisions are set out in appendix B.
- 3.5. Work programme suggestions should be considered against the Committee's terms of reference (see section 4) and the prioritisation chart set out below, and be achievable in terms of the meeting time available.

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

Scrutiny work programme – prioritisation process



Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

- 3.6. The Committee should give consideration to issues of local importance and decisions due to be made by Mayor and Cabinet. Items within the work programme should be linked to the priorities set out in the Council's Corporate Strategy for 2018-2022:

Open Lewisham - Lewisham is a welcoming place of safety for all, where we celebrate the diversity that strengthens us.

Tackling the housing crisis - Everyone has a decent home that is secure and affordable.

Giving children and young people the best start in life - Every child has access to an outstanding and inspiring education, and is given the support they need to keep them safe, well and able to achieve their full potential.

Building an inclusive local economy - Everyone can access high-quality job opportunities, with decent pay and security in our thriving and inclusive local economy.

Delivering and defending: health, social care and support - Ensuring everyone receives the health, mental health, social care and support services they need.

Making Lewisham greener - Everyone enjoys our green spaces, and benefits from a healthy environment as we work to protect and improve our local environment.

Building safer communities - Every resident feels safe and secure living here as we work together towards a borough free from the fear of crime.

4. Public Accounts Select Committee terms of reference

- 4.1. The Council's constitution sets out the Committee's powers as defined by the terms of reference (set out below). The Committee should familiarise itself with the terms of reference and consider its remit when selecting items for scrutiny.

Select Committee terms of reference:

- 4.2. To exercise all the functions and roles of the overview and scrutiny committee in relation to the following matters:
- 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.

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

5. Financial implications

- 5.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme will have financial implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1. 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.

7. Equalities implications

- 7.1. 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.
- 7.2. 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.
- 7.3. There may be equalities implications arising from items on the work programme and all activities undertaken by the Committee will need to give due consideration to this.

8. Climate change and environmental implications

- 8.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. However, in February 2019 Lewisham Council declared a Climate Emergency and proposed a target to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030. Items on the Committee's work programme may well have (directly referenced or implicit) climate change implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

9. Crime and disorder implications

- 9.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme may have crime and disorder implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

10. Health and wellbeing implications

- 10.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Items on the Committee's work programme may have health and wellbeing implications and these will need to be considered as part of the reports on those items.

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>

Report author and contact

If you have any questions about this report please contact: Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager) timothy.andrew@lewisham.gov.uk

Appendix A – Completed work programme

Appendix B - Forthcoming key decisions

Is this report easy to understand?

Please give us feedback so we can improve.

Go to <https://lewisham.gov.uk/contact-us/send-us-feedback-on-our-reports>