



Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel

Scrutiny Update

Date: 28 June 2022

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Assistant Chief Executive (Head of Overview and Scrutiny)

Outline and recommendations

The Scrutiny Update item at Business Panel allows the Panel to monitor progress against the Select Committee work programmes. It is also an opportunity for the Head of Overview and Scrutiny and the Statutory Scrutiny Officer to update the Panel on scrutiny activity and developments. The Select Committee Chairs can also report on any scrutiny activity related to their Committee that they wish to bring to the Panel's attention.

1. Summary

- 1.1. The intention of this item is to provide Members with an update on current scrutiny activity and developments.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Members are asked to discuss and note any information provided.

3. Scrutiny Update

Select Committees

- 3.1 The work programmes for each Select Committee will be presented to the Panel at its next meeting for consideration, once all six select committees have met. In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny procedure rules outlined in Part IV E of the Council's Constitution, the Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel is required to: *Consider the proposed work programmes of each of the Select Committees and devise a co-ordinated overview and scrutiny work programme which avoids duplication of effort and facilitates the effective conduct of business.*

- 3.2 Following the July meeting, Business Panel will receive the Select Committee Work Programmes at each meeting so progress can be checked and reviewed.
- 3.3 The first round of Select Committee meetings is currently taking place and at each meeting, the annual work programme is being discussed and agreed for submission to Business Panel:

- Housing – 6 June 2022
- Safer Stronger Communities – 16 June 2022
- Healthier Communities – 21 June 2022
- Sustainable Development – 27 June 2022
- Children and Young People – 29 June 2022
- Public Accounts – 30 June 2022

- 3.4 When agreeing their work programmes to put forward to Business Panel, and when carrying out their scrutiny work, Select Committees are asked to have regard to Lewisham's Effective Scrutiny Guidelines:

At Lewisham, we:

Prioritise

It is more effective to look at a couple of key issues per meeting in an in-depth way, than skim the surface of a large number of items. We try to focus on issues of concern to the community and matters that are linked to our corporate priorities. We only add items to the work programme if we are certain our consideration of the matter will make a real and tangible difference.

Stay independent

Scrutiny is led by Scrutiny Members. We are not whipped by our political party or unduly influenced by the Cabinet or senior officers.

Work collectively

We collectively agree in advance what we want to achieve in relation to each issue we consider, including what the key lines of enquiry should be. We work as a team to question witnesses and ensure that all the required evidence is gathered.

Engage

Involving residents helps scrutiny access a wider range of ideas and knowledge, listen to a broader range of voices and better understand the opinions of residents and service users. We engage so that our recommendations result in residents' wants and needs being more effectively met.

Make evidence-based recommendations

We know that scrutiny has the most impact when our recommendations are based on solid, triangulated evidence – where a variety of sources of evidence point to a change in practice that will positively alter outcomes.

- 3.5 Select Committee Chairs are invited to provide an update on any scrutiny activity related to their committee that they wish to bring to the Panel's attention.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 3.6 The full Overview and Scrutiny Committee will meet on 14 July 2022. It will receive the final set of minutes from each of last year's task and finish groups (TFGs), as the groups were disbanded following their final meetings, and the Mayoral response to one

of the TFG final reports. The Mayoral responses to the other two TFG final reports will be considered in September. The main item will be consideration of the Resident Experience Programme, including the member casework strand. The findings of the discovery stage will be reported and member input on the solutions stage, sought.

Task and Finish Groups

- 3.7 Scrutiny Members will be asked to put forward suggestions for time limited task and finish groups (TFGs) shortly. Up to three TFGs can be established at any one time by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) and it is suggested that the September OSC meeting considers proposals. TFGs are best suited to issues where policy needs to be developed and a thorough investigation is required to find a solution to a problem. TFGs collate detailed evidence over an extended period of time, using a variety of diverse working methods such as site visits and service user and stakeholder engagement. They should be:

Collaborative – officers and councillors working together to address a topical issue of concern

Flexible – utilising a mixture of formal and informal meetings, visits, research, user engagement etc.

Focussed on residents – defining the issues and suggesting solutions on the basis of understanding residents' experience

Focussed on solutions – taking evidence from a wide range of sources and good practice to develop affordable, practical solutions that are evidence based and implementable and that will have a positive impact on the lives of residents.

4 Financial implications

- 4.1 Scrutiny work is managed within existing budgets. Formal recommendations to the Mayor arising out of any specific work items within select committee work programmes or considered by TFGs are evaluated in the usual way through the process of formal reports. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5 Legal implications

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6 Equalities implications

- 6.1 The [Equality Act 2010](#) (The Act) legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single act, making the law easier to understand and strengthen protection in certain situations. 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.

- 6.2 The Act also imposes a public sector equality duty. This means that in public bodies, of which this Council is designated, they must consider all individuals in carrying out their day-to-day work when shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It also requires public bodies to:

- Have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

- 6.3 The Council recognises diversity is one of its strengths and is committed to creating a more inclusive community. Therefore, having due regard to the Act, is confirmation of the Council’s commitment to eliminating all forms of discrimination against any group within the community and to actively promote an equality of opportunity and positive community partnership.
- 6.4 The delivery of the Council’s equalities objectives is to be achieved through the delivery of all of the Council’s strategies, plans and procedures. As such, all select committees and other scrutiny bodies, when planning their work and scrutinising items, bear in mind the delivery of the Council’s equality objectives.
- 6.5 Scrutiny tries to make sure that its work reflects the diversity of Lewisham’s communities and that the views of residents are fairly represented in scrutiny processes. Any recommendations arising from scrutiny work support the Council’s corporate strategy and reflect the needs of local residents.

7 Climate change and environmental implications

- 7.1 There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from this report. Each Select Committee has been asked by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to appoint a climate change champion to work with the Select Committee Chair in order to provide a steer to report authors on how committee reports might encompass climate change considerations.

8 Crime and disorder implications

- 8.1 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

9 Health and wellbeing implications

- 9.1 There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

10 Glossary

Term	Definition
Overview & Scrutiny	Overview and scrutiny is the way in which Mayor and Cabinet (the ‘Executive’), officers and external organisations are held to account for the decisions that they make. It is led by councillors who are not members of the Executive. They also influence policy development and investigate issues of local concern, making recommendations for improvement.
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	A committee made up of all non-executive councillors which carries out scrutiny focussing on strategic and cross cutting issues.
Overview & Scrutiny Business Panel (OSBP) and Education OSBP	Lewisham has two Business Panels (sub-committees of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee). OS Business Panel is made up of the chair and vice-chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the chair of each of the Select Committees, and two other non-Executive councillors. The main functions of Business Panel are reviewing key

	<p>decisions once they have been taken (potentially “calling in” key decisions that have been made but not yet implemented); coordinating and approving the overall scrutiny work programme; and allocating scrutiny work in the event that it crosses the remit of more than one scrutiny body.</p> <p>Three parent governors and two diocesan representatives sit on the Education Business Panel, alongside the councillors that make up the regular Business Panel. The Education Business Panel reviews (and can call-in) key decisions that are education matters.</p>
Select Committee	Lewisham has six Select Committees (sub-committees of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee), each made up of non-Executive councillors and responsible for scrutinising a specific service area. Select Committees gather evidence to help them review policies and performance and make recommendations to improve outcomes for residents.
Select Committee Work Programmes	The annual programme of work setting out the matters which each select committee will scrutinise over the year.
Task and Finish Group (TFG)	A time limited scrutiny body which gathers evidence in relation to a topical issue of concern in order to make recommendations to improve outcomes for residents.

11 Report author and contact

11.1 Charlotte Dale, Head of Overview and Scrutiny, 0208 31 48286,
charlotte.dale@lewisham.gov.uk