



Improving Scrutiny Task and Finish Group

Task and Finish Group final report

Date: 24 July 2024

Key decision: No.

Class: Part 1 (Not restricted)

Ward(s) affected: Not applicable.

Contributor: Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager)

Outline and recommendations

Following consideration of a range of evidence and analysis, members of the Improving Scrutiny Task and Finish Group are asked to consider the attached report and agree recommendations for submission to Mayor and Cabinet.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

The subject of this Task and Finish Group was proposed by Cllr Mark Jackson.

The subject and membership of the Group were agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2023.

The scope and key lines of enquiry for the review were agreed on 12 September 2023.

Between September 2023 and March 2024, the Group carried out a range of evidence gathering sessions (as detailed in the report).

1. Summary

1.1. The report attached at appendix A sets out the key findings of the Task and Finish Group.

2. Recommendations

2.1. The Task and Finish Group is asked to:

- Consider, comment on and agree the final report.
- Agree any recommendations to be made as part of the review.

3. Background

- 3.1. The subject Task and Finish Group was proposed by Councillor Mark Jackson and agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2023. The Group has received evidence from a range of sources and activities and has produced a report summarising its findings attached at appendix A.
- 3.2. Task and Finish Group members are being asked to review the final report and agree any recommendations they wish to make.

4. Financial implications

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Recommendations from the Task and Finish Group will have financial implications, and these will need to be considered in due course.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1. The Council's Constitution provides at paragraph 6.11, Article 6 that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may from time to time appoint sub-committees, to be known as task and finish groups which will exist for a period of no less than 3 months, nor more than 12 months from the date of their creation. It further adds that 'Any task and finish group shall consist of 5 members and be established for the purpose of examining a particular issue in depth. The terms of reference of any task and finish group shall be agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which shall also appoint members to it.'

6. Equalities implications

- 6.1. There are no direct equalities implications arising as a result of the implementation of the recommendations in this report – but - there may be equalities implications arising from the Group's recommendations. These should be considered in the response.
- 6.2. Equalities implications are an essential consideration in every report. By law, the Council must 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. This means that the Council has a legal duty to consider the implications of anything it does – on the basis of people's protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The nine protected characteristics are:
 - Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Being pregnant or on maternity leave
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation
- 6.4. The Council also recognises the social model of disability - acknowledging that, in the context of health conditions or individual impairments - it is the disabling effect of barriers in society that can prevent people's full and active participation in our

community¹. The Council is committed to dismantling those barriers, wherever possible.

- 6.5. While the Council's equality duty is specifically to the nine protected characteristics, a commitment has also been made to consider wider inequalities and marginalised groups such as people seeking sanctuary. Socio-economic status is also considered as part of the Fairer Lewisham Duty.

7. Climate change and environmental implications

- 7.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report.

8. Crime and disorder implications

- 8.1. There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Matters considered by the Task and Finish Group may have crime and disorder implications and these will need to be given due consideration when any recommendations are considered.

9. Health and wellbeing implications

- 9.1. There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report. Matters considered by the Task and Finish Group may have health and wellbeing implications and these will need to be given due consideration when any recommendations are considered.

10. Report author and contact

- 10.1. If you have any questions about this report please contact:

Timothy.Andrew@lewisham.gov.uk (020 8314 7916)

Appendix A: Final report of the Improving Scrutiny Task and Finish Group

¹ See the Lewisham Disability Commission Report for further information: <https://lewisham.gov.uk/-/media/0-mayor-and-council/community-support/if-not-now-then-when.pdf>