



Healthier Communities Select Committee

Select Committee Work Programme Report

Date: 18 July 2024

Key decision: No.

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: Not applicable

Contributor: Nidhi Patil (Scrutiny Manager)

Outline and recommendations

To ask members to discuss the Committee's priorities for the 2024-25 municipal year and to agree an annual work programme.

The Committee is asked to:

- Consider the potential items set out in the draft work programme at appendix D.
- Discuss the Committee's priorities and agree a work programme for 2024-25.
- Consider opportunities for additional informal information gathering sessions, public engagement, and visits.

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

The Committee's meeting dates for 2024-25 are:

- 18 July 2024
- 17 September 2024
- 19 November 2024
- 9 January 2025
- 12 March 2025

1. Summary

- 1.1. This report asks members to discuss and agree priorities for the Select Committee's work programme for the year ahead and describes the process for its approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and ongoing monitoring by the Select Committee.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to:
 - Consider the potential items set out in the draft work programme at appendix D.
 - Discuss the Committee's priorities and agree a work programme for 2024-25 for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
 - Consider opportunities for additional informal information gathering sessions, engagement, and visits.

3. The role of the Select Committee

- 3.1. The Healthier Communities Select Committee is responsible for monitoring, reviewing, and making recommendations on a wide range of local health matters.
- 3.2. The Committee actively engages with health partners, including SLaM (South London and Maudsley NHS Trust), LGT (Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust) and SEL ICB (South East London Integrated Care Board). Additionally, a representative from Lewisham HealthWatch is included in the Committee to offer insights on resident perspectives and patient experiences regarding the issues under discussion.
- 3.3. The Committee's full terms of reference are set out in appendix A.

4. Improving scrutiny

- 4.1. In July 2023, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to establish a task and finish group to 'improve scrutiny' The Group gathered evidence and engaged with councillor colleagues over a number of months. Its final report is due in July 2024. Its recommendations are due to be considered by Mayor and Cabinet in September 2024 – and will be of interest to all members of scrutiny.
- 4.2. Draft recommendations from the Group endorse the approach set out in the Council's [Local Democracy Review](#) – specifically – that scrutiny committees should focus on key issues and prioritise their work programmes accordingly. The Group is also due to recommend that committee work programmes be more closely aligned with the Council's corporate strategy.
- 4.3. The Council's Corporate Strategy 2022-26 provides an overarching framework and focus for all Council business. Accordingly, items within the Committee's work programme should be linked to the priorities in the strategy (appendix B):
 - Cleaner and greener
 - A strong local economy
 - Quality housing
 - Children and young people
 - Safer communities
 - Open Lewisham
 - Health and wellbeing
- 4.4. Performance against the Council's priorities is tracked through the corporate [performance report](#). This outlines how well the Council's services are functioning and indicates the direction of travel for key indicators. The quarterly reports are a useful source of information for members of scrutiny committees to consider.

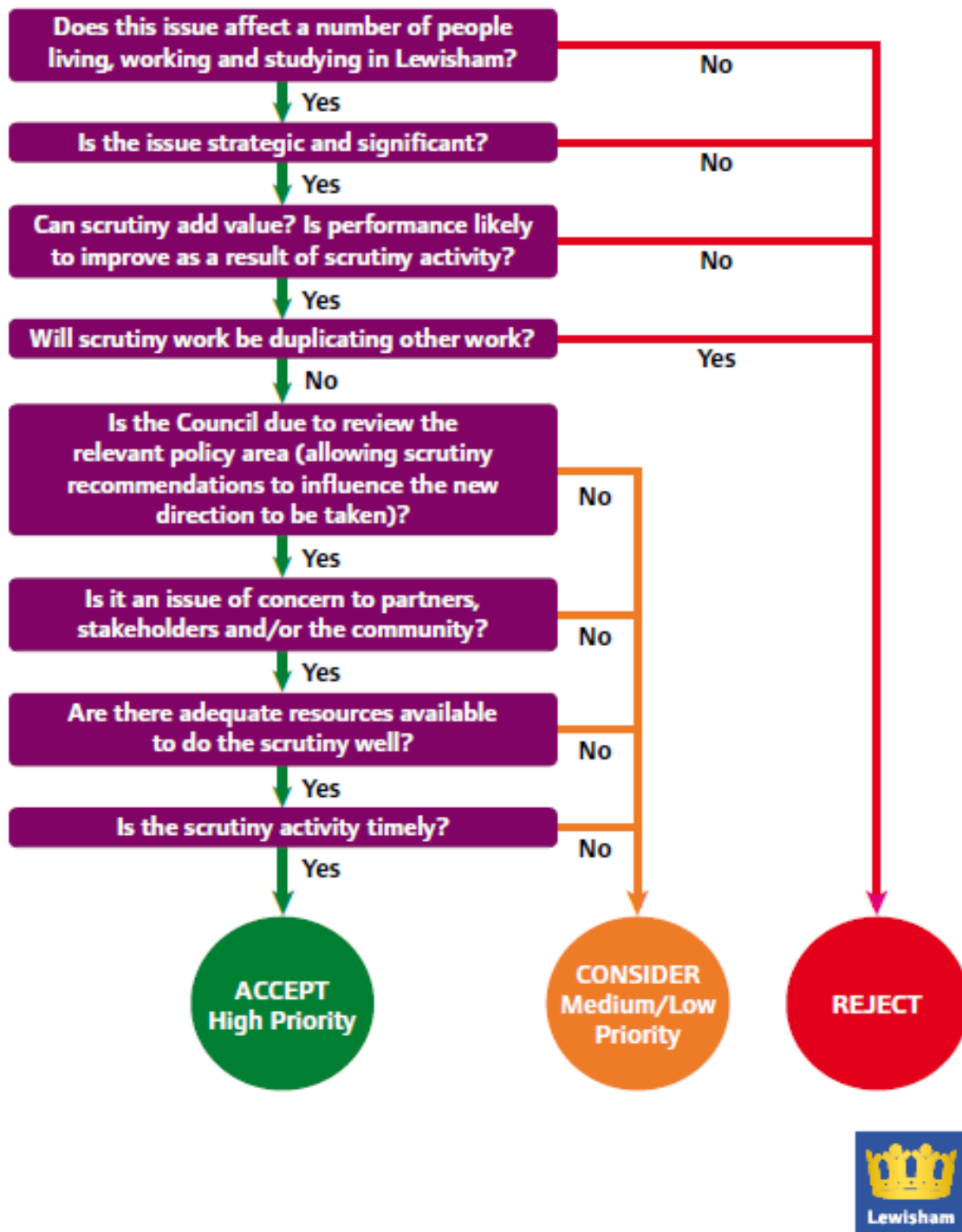
5. Agreeing the Committee's work programme

- 5.1. A draft work programme is attached at appendix D. It currently includes suggestions made by last year's Committee; suggestions from council officers; and issues arising as a result of previous scrutiny (further detail is set out in sections below).
- 5.2. It is for the Committee, however, to set its own work programme and agree any other priority issues it would like to include – the Committee does not have to investigate everything officers, the public or other members suggest.
- 5.3. When deciding on issues to include in the work programme, the Committee should consider the key services and programmes within the Committee's remit and the criteria for selecting and prioritising topics (see flowchart below).
- 5.4. The Committee should also take into account upcoming Mayor and Cabinet decisions (appendix E) and avoid duplicating the work of any agreed task and finish groups.

Making the best use of the Committee's formal meeting time

- 5.5. Two substantive items should be scheduled per meeting, leaving space available for Mayor and Cabinet responses and other urgent business as the need arises throughout the year.
- 5.6. The Committee should aim to manage its business within two hours. Meetings that are longer than this risk a loss of focus and rigour. Extended meetings also contradict the consensus reached during the Local Democracy Review – which sought to reduce councillors' time commitment in formal meetings at the Town Hall.
- 5.7. The Council's constitution allows two and a half hours for normal meetings – after which Committee members must agree to suspend the Council's ordinary process for running meetings (its 'standing orders'). This should only occur as an exception – to allow the Committee to complete essential business.
- 5.8. The Committee should be mindful of the time available to effectively scrutinise the items on its work programme – as well as - the capacity of Committee members, guests of the Committee and Council Officers when determining the scope of each item on its work programme.
- 5.9. The Committee should specify the information it would like for each item to ensure that officer reports and other evidence meets its needs. This should be done under the work programme item at every meeting.
- 5.10. There is no provision at committee for the discussion of information items (reports to note). If required, they will be circulated to members by email with questions put to the report author for a written response.
- 5.11. It is the Chair's responsibility to keep abreast of other developments within the Committee's remit and escalate any issues that require action by the Committee to the work programme as appropriate.

Scrutiny work programme – prioritisation process



- 5.12. The Committee’s work programme planning session was held on the 21st of May 2024 as part of the Lewisham Scrutiny Summit. This session enabled the Committee Members to hear from relevant Cabinet Members and Senior Officers regarding their priorities relating to Health and Wellbeing for 2024-25. The following suggestions for the work programme have been put forward by Committee Members, Cabinet Members and Officers, or have arisen as a result of previous scrutiny. They have been added to the provisional work programme attached at Appendix D, but it is up to the Committee to decide whether or not these items should be included in the final work

programme.

5.13. Suggestions made by the committee at the last meeting of 2023-24

- Final report for the Empowering Lewisham Programme
- Update on the community model of mental health from SLaM
- Social prescribing and community care
- Update from SEL ICB on functioning of each PCN including details such as patient satisfaction, accessibility, etc.
- Access to primary care (affecting access to secondary care)

5.14. Suggestions from officers in view of forthcoming developments

- Response to BLACHIR
- Carers in Lewisham
- Preparation for CQC inspection

5.15. Issues arising as a result of previous scrutiny

- Adult Social Care strategy
- Update from University Hospital Lewisham
- Learning Disabilities Implementation Plan- Annual report

6. Different types of scrutiny

6.1. It is important to think early on about the most effective way to scrutinise each item on the work programme. Some issues may only require an initial briefing, circulated by email, for information, some may require site visits and public engagement, and others may require detailed questioning at a formal committee meeting and input from stakeholders.

6.2. The effective scrutiny guidelines at appendix C set out five key principles to take into account when carrying out scrutiny:

- Prioritise;
- Be independent;
- Work Collectively;
- Engage;
- Make SMART recommendations.

6.3. Members should also note the comments in the Local Democracy Review about how scrutiny could be even more effective, participative, and open. Recommendations included:

- focusing on fewer issues more closely linked to council priorities
- more engagement with the public outside of formal meetings
- individual scrutiny members leading on defined topic areas
- contributing to new policy proposals at an early stage.

6.4. Some of the most common scrutiny methods are described below, but members are encouraged to try new ways of gathering evidence and engaging the public.

6.5. Most work programme items involve scrutiny being carried out as part of a single meeting with members:

- agreeing in advance the information and analysis needed
- receiving an officer report presenting the relevant information
- gathering additional evidence from activity outside of meetings
- asking questions of the presenting officers or expert guests
- agreeing recommendations to Mayor and Cabinet and partners.

- 6.6. Occasionally committees may choose to have the same item at a number of meetings. This is particularly the case if performance in a certain area is poor and needs to be monitored over an extended period of time, or there is a lengthy programme of work being carried out with a number of different opportunities for scrutiny to influence its development.

Policy development and pre-decision scrutiny

- 6.7. When the council is due to renew a policy, or develop a new policy, a committee may be asked to develop options or to consider the options available. Select committees should be engaged at an early enough stage to be able to influence and contribute to the new policy. The committee may also consider the officer recommendations before a decision is taken by Mayor and Cabinet. This is pre-decision scrutiny. Other types of decision may also be considered by scrutiny before they are taken.

Performance monitoring

- 6.8. Scrutiny can request a wide range of performance information to examine the effectiveness of Council services. This includes monitoring data on key performance indicators and outcomes and assessing the delivery of particular programme or projects against set targets or timescales.

Task and finish groups

- 6.9. For issues that require more extensive evidence gathering, members may put forward a proposal for a task and finish group. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will agree which task and finish groups should be established, their membership, terms of reference and duration. Task and finish groups are independent of select committees and make recommendations directly to Mayor and Cabinet.

Information items

- 6.10. Some lower-priority items may only require a briefing report to be circulated to Committee members by email, with questions put to the report author for written response. Discussing information items at Committee meetings is not an effective use of Committee time.

7. Approval and ongoing monitoring of the work programme

- 7.1. Each select committee is required to submit its work programme to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for approval. This is to ensure a coordinated overview and scrutiny work programme across select committees that avoids duplication of effort and supports effective scrutiny. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will meet on 23 July 2024.
- 7.2. The Committee's work programme can be reviewed at each meeting to allow urgent items to be added and lower priority issues to be removed. Any potential items should be considered against the priority criteria outlined earlier in this report. If a high-priority item is included, a lower-priority item should be removed. The Committee's work programme must be achievable in the time available.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1. In prioritising items on the draft work programme – Committee members should consider the continued strain on Council resources.
- 8.2. By the end of the 2023-24 financial year Council services were reporting substantial overspending (nearing £20m on the net general fund budget of £264m)¹ such that it was necessary to identify and implement both in year budget reduction proposals and bring forward new proposals for 2024-25. It is anticipated that £25m in new proposals

¹ [Final 2023-24 financial report to Mayor and Cabinet \(June 2024\)](#)

are now required for both 2024-25 and 2025-26 to balance the Council's budget. Significant and sustained pressures remain in key services – including in housing and social care.

- 8.3. 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.

9. Legal implications

- 9.1. In accordance with the Council's Constitution, all scrutiny select committees must devise and submit a work programme to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the start of each municipal year.

10. Equalities implications

- 10.1. 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 items on the work programme and all activities undertaken by the Select Committee will need to give due consideration to these.
- 10.2. 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.
- 10.3. 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
- 10.4. All report authors should comply with the duty and, where necessary, identify appropriate mitigations. Depending on the nature and scale of the relevant impact(s) it may be necessary to carry out a formal Equalities Analysis Assessment – which should also be reported in this section of Committee reports.
- 10.5. 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 community². The Council is committed to dismantling those barriers, wherever possible.
- 10.6. While the Council's equality duty is specifically to the nine protected characteristics, a

² 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>

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.

11. Climate change and environmental implications

- 11.1. 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. An action plan to achieve this target was subsequently agreed by Mayor and Cabinet (following pre-decision scrutiny by the Sustainable Development Select Committee)³. The plan incorporates all areas of the Council's work. This requires every service area to consider how to embed low-carbon and environmental policies and practices in their approach to service delivery.
- 11.2. Items on the work programme may well have climate change and environmental implications and reports considered by the Committee should acknowledge this.
- 11.3. The Committee may wish to appoint a climate champion as suggested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

12. Crime and disorder implications

- 12.1. 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.

13. Health and wellbeing implications

- 13.1. 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.

14. Report author and contact

- 14.1. If you have any questions about this report please contact:
Nidhi Patil, Scrutiny Manager, 020 8314 7620, Nidhi.Patil@lewisham.gov.uk

15. Appendices

- Appendix A – Select Committee terms of reference (see below)
- Appendix B – Council corporate priorities (see below)
- Appendix C – Effective scrutiny guidelines (see below)
- Appendix D – HCSC draft work programme 2024-25 (see attached)
- Appendix E – Forward plan of key decisions (see attached)

³ See <https://lewisham.gov.uk/TacklingTheClimateEmergency> for a summary of the Council's work

Appendix A- Healthier Communities Select Committee Terms of Reference

The following roles are common to all select committees:

(a) General functions

- To review and scrutinise decisions made and actions taken in relation to executive and non-executive functions.
- To make reports and recommendations to the Council or the executive, arising out of such review and scrutiny in relation to any executive or non-executive function.
- To make reports or recommendations to the Council and/or Executive in relation to matters affecting the area or its residents.
- The right to require the attendance of members and officers to answer questions includes a right to require a member to attend to answer questions on up-and-coming decisions.
- To consider matters referred to it in accordance with the Council's Petition Scheme.

(b) Policy development

- To assist the executive in matters of policy development by in depth analysis of strategic policy issues facing the Council for report and/or recommendation to the Executive or Council or committee as appropriate.
- To conduct research, community and/or other consultation in the analysis of policy options available to the Council.
- To liaise with other public organisations operating in the borough – both national, regional and local, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working in policy development wherever possible.

(c) Scrutiny

- To scrutinise the decisions made by and the performance of the Executive and other committees and Council officers both in relation to individual decisions made and over time.
- To scrutinise previous performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives/performance targets and/or particular service areas.
- To question members of the Executive or appropriate committees and executive directors personally about decisions.
- To question members of the Executive or appropriate committees and executive directors in relation to previous performance whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over time or in relation to particular initiatives which have been implemented.
- To scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the borough and to invite them to make reports to and/or address the select committee and local people about their activities and performance.
- To question and gather evidence from any person outside the Council (with their consent where the law does not require them to attend).
- To make recommendations to the Executive or appropriate committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process.

(d) Community representation

- To promote and put into effect closer links between overview and scrutiny members and the local community.
- To encourage and stimulate an enhanced community representative role for overview and scrutiny members including enhanced methods of consultation with local people.
- To liaise with the Council's ward assemblies and/ or Positive Ageing Council so that the local community might participate in the democratic process and where it considers it appropriate to seek the views of the ward assemblies and/ or Positive Ageing Council on matters that affect or are likely to affect the local areas, including accepting items for the agenda of the

appropriate select committee from ward assemblies and the Positive Ageing Council.

- To keep the Council's local ward assemblies and Positive Ageing Council under review and to make recommendations to the Executive and/or Council as to how participation in the democratic process by local people can be enhanced.
- To receive petitions, deputations and representations from local people and other stakeholders about areas of concern within their overview and scrutiny remit, to refer them to the Executive, appropriate committee or officer for action, with a recommendation or report if the committee considers that necessary.
- To consider any referral within their remit referred to it by a member under the Councillor Call for Action, and if they consider it appropriate to scrutinise decisions and/or actions taken in relation to that matter, and/or make recommendations/report to the Executive (for executive matters) or the Council (non-executive matters).

(e) Finance

- To exercise overall responsibility for finances made available to it for use in the performance of its overview and scrutiny function.

(f) Work programme

- As far as possible to draw up a draft annual work programme in each municipal year for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Once approved, the relevant select committee will implement the programme during that municipal year. Nothing in this arrangement inhibits the right of every member of a select committee to place an item on the agenda of that select committee for discussion.
- The Council and the Executive will also be able to request that an overview and scrutiny select committee research and/or report on matters of concern and the select committee will consider whether the work can be carried out as requested. If it can be accommodated, the select committee will perform it. If the committee has reservations about performing the requested work, it will refer the matter to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for decision.

Healthier Communities has specific responsibilities for the following:

- a) To fulfil all of the Overview and Scrutiny functions in relation to the provision of service by and performance of health bodies providing services for local people. These functions shall include all powers in relation to health matters given to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee by any legislation but in particular the NHS Act 2006 as amended, the Health and Social Care Act 2012, the Care Act 2014 and regulations made under that legislation, and any other legislation in force from time to time.
- b) To review and scrutinise the decisions and actions of the Health and Wellbeing Board and to make reports and recommendations to the Council and/or Mayor and Cabinet.
- c) To review and scrutinise in accordance with regulations made under Section 244 NHS Act 2006 matters relating to the health service in the area and to make reports and recommendations on such matters in accordance with those regulations
- d) Require the attendance of representatives of relevant health bodies at meetings of the select committee to address it, answer questions and listen to the comments of local people on matters of local concern.
- e) With the exception of matters pertaining to the Council's duty in relation to special educational needs, to fulfil all of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny functions in relation to social services provided for those 19 years old or older including but not limited to services provided under the Local Authority Social Services Act 1970, Children Act 2004, National Assistance Act 1948, Mental Health Act 1983, NHS and Community Care Act 1990, NHS Act 2006, Health and Social Care Act 2012 and any other relevant legislation in place from time to time.
- f) To fulfil all of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny functions in relation to the lifelong learning of those 19 years or over (excluding schools and school related services).

- g) To receive referrals from the Healthwatch and consider whether to make any report/recommendation in relation to such referral (unless the referral relates solely to health services for those aged under 19 years of age, in which case the referral from the Healthwatch should be referred to the Children and Young People Select Committee.
- h) To review and scrutinise the Council's public health functions.
- i) Without limiting the remit of this Select Committee, its terms of reference shall include Overview and Scrutiny functions in relation to:
- people with learning difficulties
 - people with physical disabilities
 - mental health services
 - the provision of health services by those other than the Council
 - provision for elderly people
 - the use of Section 75 NHS Act 2006 flexibilities to provide services in partnership with health organisations
 - lifelong learning of those aged 19 years or more (excluding schools and school related services)
 - Community Education Lewisham
 - other matters relating to Health and Adult Care and Lifelong Learning for those aged 19 years or over.
- j) Without limiting the remit of the Select Committee, to hold the Executive to account for its performance in relation to the delivery of Council objectives in the provision of adult services and health and lifelong learning.

NB In the event of there being overlap between the terms of reference of this select committee and those of the Children and Young People Select Committee, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall determine which Select Committee which shall deal with the matter in question.

Appendix B- Corporate Priorities 2022-2026

Cleaner and greener

- We will do everything we can to ensure that over the next four years we make the borough cleaner and greener for our residents. Working to tackle the climate crisis through every area of council policy, we will ensure Lewisham is rated as a 'top tier' council for our work on climate action.
- We will continue the excellent work we have done over the last four years on tree planting. By 2026 we will have planted more street trees, tiny forests and community orchards across our borough.
- We will strive to maintain our status as having the best parks in London, continuing to invest in our much-loved parks and using our upcoming Play Strategy to create exciting environments for children within them.
- We will enable more active travel, and aim to reduce reliance on cars, introducing new walking paths to connect our borough, making it easier and more pleasant to get about Lewisham by foot or bike.
- We will keep our high streets cleaner by supporting residents to do what they can and increasing our prosecutions for fly-tipping and street littering.

A strong local economy

- We will continue to expand our apprenticeship programme into new areas of work, building on the 260 apprentices that we placed during the 2018–2022 administration.
- We will invest in our high streets and create more pedestrianised spaces, doing what we can do ensure our borough is the best place in London for entrepreneurs to start their businesses.
- We will continue to promote Lewisham's Shop Local Campaign, providing support for our independent businesses as well as protecting and improving our local street markets.
- We will actively work to attract jobs and businesses to Lewisham, building on the success of Lewisham Works and creating more spaces for pop-up stores and markets in shops that are temporarily empty.
- We will continue to work with businesses across the borough, encouraging them to become London Living Wage employers.

Quality housing

- We will deliver more social homes for Lewisham residents, working to provide as many people as possible with safe, comfortable accommodation that they can be proud of and happy living in.
- We will aim to improve the conditions in the borough's housing stock, working with all housing providers to encourage retro-fitting as part of our drive to be carbon-neutral by 2030, and to develop a Lewisham Rent Repairs Charter that improves the quality and timeliness of repairs.
- We will provide more support to renters through further landlord licensing and enforcement of poorly managed homes, holding landlords to account and giving a voice to renters across the borough.
- We will safeguard our heritage by preserving and restoring our historic buildings and landmarks, ensuring Lewisham's history is preserved and maintained for future generations.

Children and Young People

- We will continue the fantastic work of the last four years, supporting our schools to

improve and increasing the opportunities for young people in Lewisham.

- We will relentlessly focus on pupil achievement, working with our schools and communities to build on our inclusive and high-achieving system of local comprehensive schools.
- We will ensure the most vulnerable children are protected from harm, driving improvement in children's social care and aiming to reduce the number of children coming into care through earlier targeted support for families in crisis.
- We will help to create new breakfast clubs at schools and continue to lobby the government to expand their free school meals programme.

Safer Communities

- We will work with the police to implement our Violence Against Women and Girls strategy. This will include developing a new reporting tool that allows residents to map areas where they don't feel safe, and feed that back to the Council and police.
- We will continue to support the Mayor of London's Have a Word campaign, which encourages men to reflect on their own behaviour and the way they see, treat and talk about women.
- We will reduce the number of young people who enter the criminal justice system, focusing on prevention and expanding our trauma-informed approach, championed by our Youth Offending Service.
- We will continue to focus and develop our successful public health approach to youth violence, aiming to tackle knife crime and reduce sexual exploitation across the borough.

Open Lewisham

- We will celebrate Lewisham's diversity, ensuring we are a representative and inclusive council and workforce.
- We will maintain our status as a Borough of Sanctuary and London's leading borough for refugee resettlement.
- We will develop plans to build on our legacy as London's Borough of Culture, celebrating the diverse and creative communities within Lewisham. This will include creating a new Culture and Live Music Strategy and bringing artists, community groups and businesses together to launch a Black Arts Festival.
- We will maintain and strengthen the Lewisham Way of working in collaboration with our voluntary and community sectors and seek new areas where we can partner together.
- We will actively listen to our residents, being responsive to their concerns and communicative in our approach. We will co-design services with those affected by them and ensure strong consultation processes that reach out to people whose voices are seldom heard.

Health and Wellbeing

- We will partner with local food banks, food growing groups, schools and communities, through our joint Lewisham Food Action Plan. Together, we will ensure that everyone can access food and other essentials.
- We will learn from our Birmingham and Lewisham African and Caribbean Health Inequalities Review, aiming to mitigate and ultimately end, structural racism and discrimination as a driver of health inequalities.
- We will progress towards a fairer social care system, improving conditions for care workers to ensure they feel valued, and that Lewisham is known as an exemplary employer.

- We will work with the local NHS to deliver the services Lewisham residents need and create the Lewisham Health Care and Wellbeing Charter.
- We will collaborate with other organisations to deliver the places, activities and programmes our residents need to feel empowered to live a physically active lifestyle.

Appendix C- Effective Scrutiny Guidelines

At Lewisham we:

1. Prioritise

It is more effective to look at a small number of key issues in an in-depth way, than skim the surface of everything falling within scrutiny's remit. We try to focus on issues of concern to the community and/or 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.

2. Are independent

Scrutiny is led by Scrutiny Members. Scrutiny Members are in charge of the work programme, and, for every item, we specify what evidence we require and what information we would like to see in any officer reports that are prepared. We are not whipped by our political party or unduly influenced by the Cabinet or senior officers.

3. Work collectively

If we collectively agree in advance what we want to achieve in relation to each item under consideration, including what the key lines of enquiry should be, we can work as a team to question witnesses and ensure that all the required evidence is gathered. Scrutiny is impartial and the scrutiny process should be free from political point scoring and not used to further party-political objectives.

4. 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. Engagement helps ensure that recommendations result in residents' wants and needs being more effectively met.

5. Make SMART evidence-based recommendations

We make recommendations that are based on solid, triangulated evidence – where a variety of sources of evidence point to a change in practice that will positively alter outcomes. We recognise that recommendations are more powerful if they are:

- Specific (simple, sensible, significant).
- Measurable (meaningful, motivating).
- Achievable (agreed, attainable).
- Relevant (reasonable, realistic and resourced, results-based).
- Time bound (time-based, time limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive).