



Public Accounts Select Committee

End of administration work programme report

Date: 17 March 2022

Key decision: No.

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: none specific

Contributor: Assistant Chief Executive

Outline and recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- note the completed work programme for 2021-22 (appendix B)
- reflect on the work programmes for the previous years of the administration (appendix B)
- note the four strategic themes of the borough's recovery plan: 'Future Lewisham' and the Council's corporate priorities for 2018-22
- put forward suggestions for the draft 2022-23 work programme

Timeline of engagement and decision-making

There were 22 meetings of the select committee in the years 2018-22. At each meeting, the Committee discussed, prioritised and agreed the work programme for subsequent meetings.

1. Summary

- 1.1. Local government elections are due to take place in May 2022. This meeting of the Public Accounts Select Committee is the final scheduled meeting of the municipal year 2021-22 and as such it is also the last of the 2018-22 administration.
- 1.2. Members are asked to note the work that has been completed over the course of the administration – and put forward suggestions for members of the incoming committee in the new administration (2022-26).

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. The Committee is asked to note the completed work programme for 2021-22 – in addition to the completed work programmes in the preceding years – and put forward suggestions for the draft 2022-23 programme.

3. Policy context

- 3.1. The [Corporate Strategy for 2018-2022](#): set out these priorities:

- [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.

- 3.2. The Committee should also note and take into account the four strategic themes of the borough's Covid-19 recovery plan, 'Future Lewisham':

3.3. An economically sound future

We are working to get the borough back in business, with a future where everyone has the jobs and skills they need to get the best that London has to offer.

We are a borough with businesses that are adaptable and prepared for change, a thriving local economy that sees 'local' as the first and best choice, with digital inclusion at the heart of our plans. We do all we can to support residents into jobs that pay fairly and provide families with the opportunities and security they deserve.

3.4. A healthy and well future

Good health and wellbeing should be something we can all depend on, something that is equally accessible to everyone.

We know this is much wider than 'medicine' and the NHS. Our health and well-being is also dependent on our housing, the air we breathe, our support networks and more. We will make sure to pay as much attention and invest as much effort into improving these wider factors and taking action on inequality at every turn. Rectifying health inequalities and developing good mental health & wellbeing for everyone drives what we do.

3.5. **A greener future**

Our next steps will be our greenest yet, continuing our efforts to preserve our climate for future generations and ensuring everyone can enjoy the place we call home.

We will capture and build on the best of what we saw from the increase in walking and cycling locally, and all the other ways our environment benefitted from behaviour changes over the last year. We will nurture and protect the place we call home so that we can continue to appreciate its benefits for generations to come.

3.6. **A future we all have a part in**

We work together as one borough, within our communities and identities, to harness the power of volunteering and community spirit that has helped get us through the last year.

We will work alongside our strongest asset – our community – to strengthen and enhance our borough for everyone. We achieve more together and being connected and taking an active role in our borough benefits us all. Our year as Borough of Culture 2022 will be Lewisham's best year yet, celebrating our fantastic part of London and providing opportunities for everyone to connect and get involved in our local community.

4. Public Accounts Select Committee 2018-22

- 4.1. There were 22 formal Committee meetings in the years 2018-22. Meetings lasted for a total of nearly 50 hours (with the average meeting lasting just under two and a half hours).
- 4.2. Members considered 133 reports – totalling more than four thousand pages of reading, reporting and analysis.
- 4.3. Some of the longest reports dealt with the Committee's key area of business – the budget and the budget setting process.
- 4.4. The Committee made a number of referrals to Mayor and Cabinet – sharing its views for improvements to Council policy and the efficient implementation of budget reductions. See appendix C – for a full list of the Committee's referrals.
- 4.5. Over the course of the administration the Committee has had three different chairs – Councillor Jim Mallory (2018-20) and Councillor Patrick Codd (2020-21) and Councillor Mark Ingleby (2021-22)
- 4.6. The coronavirus pandemic resulted in some disruption the committee meeting cycle in early 2020 – but meetings quickly moved online – and subsequently into a 'hybrid' format, with some members attending remotely and some in person.

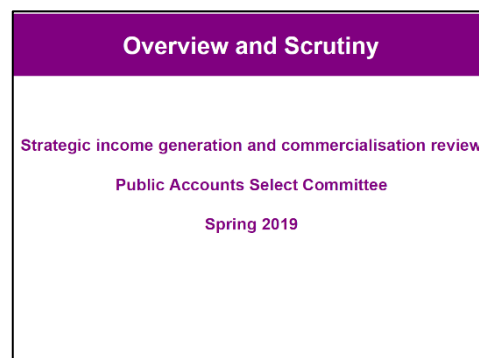
Meeting date	Start	End	Duration	Reports	Pages
09/07/18	19:35	21:35	02:00	7	175
25/09/18	19:30	22:05	02:35	6	91
07/11/18	19:00	22:00	03:00	5	343
20/12/18	19:00	22:20	03:20	8	223
05/02/19	19:15	21:50	02:35	6	178
20/03/19	19:00	22:00	03:00	7	89
09/05/19	19:00	20:20	01:20	6	99
13/06/19	19:00	21:55	02:55	6	165
10/07/19	19:00	21:15	02:15	6	87
24/09/19	19:00	21:55	02:55	7	226
06/11/19	19:00	21:15	02:15	7	104
16/12/19	19:00	21:15	02:15	6	110
04/02/20	19:00	21:15	02:15	5	251
24/09/20	19:05	21:15	02:10	6	147
03/12/20	19:00	21:35	02:35	5	372
02/02/21	19:05	21:20	02:15	6	529
17/03/21	19:00	20:30	01:30	6	93
07/07/21	18:35	20:15	01:40	7	117
23/09/21	19:05	21:20	02:15	8	157
01/12/21	19:00	20:30	01:30	6	93
27/01/22	19:00	21:35	02:35	7	501
Average			02:21	6	198
Total			49:10	133	4150

4.7. In the last year of the administration, the scrutiny process was modified as part of the response to the [Local Democracy Review](#). This resulted in the creation of ‘task and finish groups’ to carry out in-depth scrutiny – and a reduction in the frequency of formal committee meetings.

4.8. Nonetheless, the Committee has looked at a number of issues in depth over the course of 2018-22, including:

- Strategic income generation and commercialisation review (2018-19)

The Committee has a long-standing interest in income generation and commercialisation. In previous years, it has devoted considerable time and effort on exploring this topic. In 2018-19, it oversaw the development of a new income generation strategy (alongside regular updates from officers about their work in this area). The Committee also benefitted from the independent work and research carried out by its Vice-Chair, who acted as rapporteur. The strategic income generation and commercialisation review built on this research (as well as evidence from the Association for Public Service Excellence) to push the agenda forward and to ensure that funding for the strategic procurement and commercial services function was retained.



- Commercialisation and culture change review (2019-20)

Following from the Committee’s previous work on income generation and commercialisation – it agreed to carry out a focused piece of work exploring the role of culture change in the pursuit of increased commercial activity amongst Council employees. The Committee held two evidence-gathering visits for the review with officers from other London boroughs. This provided useful comparisons for the Committee’s scrutiny of Lewisham’s approach to culture change and people management.



Other issues considered in 2018-22

- Children’s social care

The Committee expressed serious concerns about the level of overspending in children’s social care because the budget for the service had been under severe pressure for an extended period. In recognition of this pressure, Mayor and Cabinet agreed to the application of an additional £6m to the Children and Young People’s directorate base budget (bringing the gross budget to £71.3m) in 2018-19. The Committee has been consistent in its requests for additional detailed information about the Directorate’s budget as well as evidence of management action to control overspending.

- Adult social care

The Committee has been resolute in its approach to spending in adult social care. It has regularly questioned the directors and managers who are responsible for this service. It was a recommendation from the Committee that led to the external review of adult social care spending – which, it is anticipated, will maintain services for vulnerable residents whilst containing cost pressures and modernising Council processes.

- Budget reductions

The Committee oversaw the scrutiny of the budget cuts proposals in each year of the administration. Officer proposals for reductions to services were considered by each of the select committees, according to their terms of reference. The Public Accounts Select

Committee then considered the overall impact of the budget cuts proposals - alongside referrals and representations from select committees and their chairs in advance of Mayor and Cabinet. The Committee has supplemented this work with its consideration of the capital programme, medium term financial strategy and the Council's approach to treasury management.

- Financial forecasts

The Committee received financial forecasts with details of the Council's financial position throughout the administration. The Council's Directors of Finance as well as directorate group finance managers also attended Committee meetings to answer questions about budget pressures and the management action being taken to reduce overspending.

- Cost pressures in the environment division

The Committee used the regular reporting of pressures through the financial forecasts to highlight the significant pressures in the Environment Division. The Executive Director and relevant Service Managers attended the meeting to answer questions about the performance of the division and the plans being put in place to control overspending.

- Financial stabilisation

The Committee led on the scrutiny of the Council's financial assessment of the response to the coronavirus pandemic. In a referral to Mayor and Cabinet on the subject – the Committee recognised the difficult situation facing the Council and it urged Mayor and Cabinet to be resolute in making the best use of the Council's limited resources.

5. Planning for the next administration

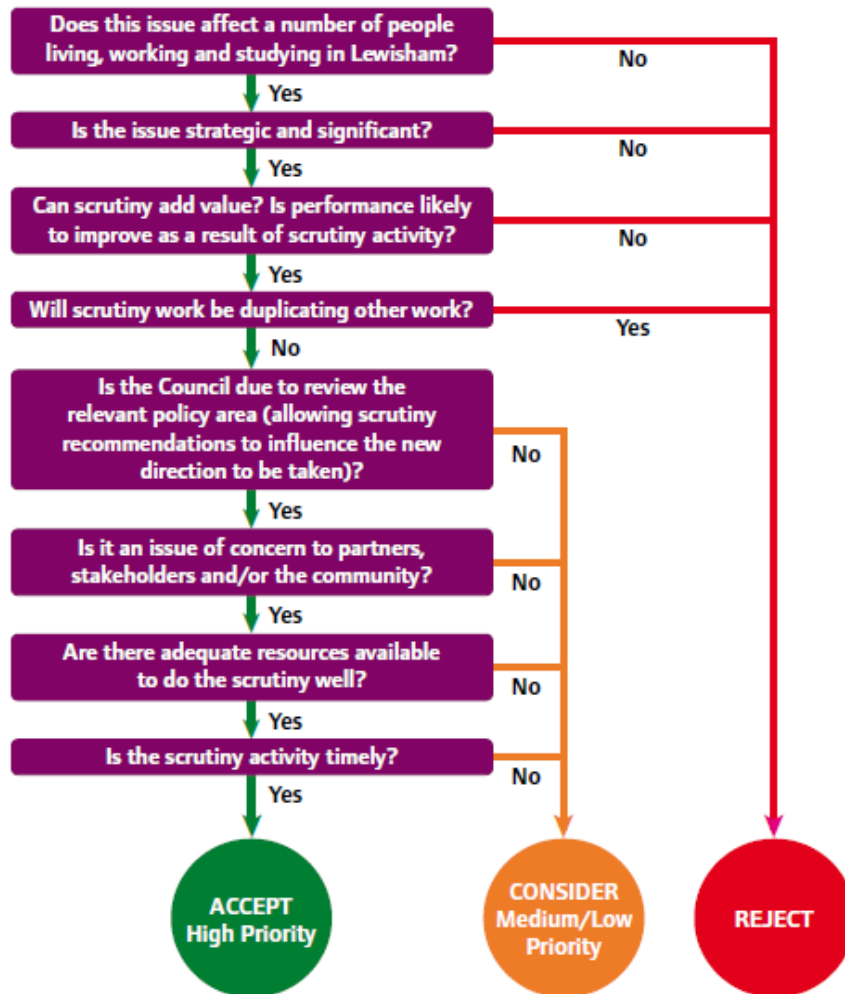
5.1. A work programme report will be put forward at the first Public Accounts Select Committee meeting of 2022-23. The report will take account of the Committee's previous work and will draw on a range of sources for ideas and suggestions, including:

- items suggested by the Committee in the course of the previous year
- items suggested by Council officers
- issues arising as a result of previous scrutiny (including any items outstanding from previous work programmes)
- those items that the select committee is required to consider by virtue of its terms of reference

5.2. The new Committee will also need to give consideration to decisions due to be made by Mayor and Cabinet.

5.3. Members are asked to put forward suggestions for the Committee to consider in 2022-23 – having regard to the scrutiny prioritisation process:

Scrutiny work programme – prioritisation process



6. Financial implications

- 6.1. There are no financial implications arising as a result of the implementation of the recommendations in this report.

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](#) (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.
- 8.2. 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

8.3. 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.

8.4. 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.

8.5. 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

9. Climate change and environmental implications

9.1. There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from the implementation of the recommendation 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 work programme may have climate change and environmental implications and all reports considered by the Committee should acknowledge this.

9.2. At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 30 November 2021, it was recommended that each select committee should appoint a climate change champion to ensure that (a) the annual work programme takes climate change matters into account; and (b) officers are given appropriate steers in relation to the reports for specific items, to ensure they include relevant climate change considerations. The Committee considered this recommendation at its meeting in January 2022 and appointed Cllr James Royston to this important role.

10. Crime and disorder implications

10.1. There are no crime and disorder implications arising from the implementation of the recommendations in this report.

11. Health and wellbeing implications

11.1. There are no health and wellbeing implications arising as a result of the implementation of the recommendations in this report.

12. Background papers

12.1. Full details of the committee's agendas, decisions and minutes on the Council's website [link to the committee pages on the Council's website](#). Meeting dates:

09/07/18	16/12/19
25/09/18	04/02/20
07/11/18	24/09/20
20/12/18	03/12/20
05/02/19	02/02/21
20/03/19	17/03/21
09/05/19	07/07/21
13/06/19	23/09/21
10/07/19	01/12/21
24/09/19	27/01/22
06/11/19	

13. Glossary

13.1. [Link to Oxford English Dictionary here.](#)

Term	Definition
Municipal year	A term used in local government to describe the period between annual general meetings of the Council (typically May to April the following year).

14. Report author and contact

14.1. If you have any questions about this report please contact Timothy Andrew (Scrutiny Manager) timothy.andrew@lewisham.gov.uk (020 8314 7916)

15. Appendices

- Appendix A –select committee terms of reference
- Appendix B – completed select committee work programmes 2018-22
- Appendix C – select committee referrals to Mayor and Cabinet 2018-22

Appendix A - 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

(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/Business Panel and local people about their activities and performance
- To question and gather evidence from any person outside the Council (with their consent)
- 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 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 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.
- To keep the Council's local ward assemblies 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 Business Panel. Once approved by the Business Panel, 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 (or the Business Panel) to place an item on the agenda of that select committee (or Business Panel respectively) for discussion.
- The Council and the Executive will also be able to request that the 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 Business Panel for decision.

Public Accounts has specific responsibilities for the following:

- (a)) 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.

Appendix B – completed work programmes 2018-22

Work programme 2018-19

Public Accounts Select Committee Work Programme 2018/19

Programme of work

Work item	Type of item	Priority	Strategic priority	Delivery deadline	09-Jul	25-Sep	07-Nov	20-Dec	05-Feb	20-Mar
Savings proposals	Performance monitoring	High	CP10	Ongoing			Proposals			
Election of the Chair and Vice-Chair	Constitutional requirement	High	CP10	Jul						
Select committee work programme 2017/18	Constitutional requirement	High	CP10	Ongoing						
Financial forecasts 2018/19	Performance monitoring	Medium	CP10	Mar				Capital programme		
Medium term financial strategy	Performance monitoring	High	CP10	Jul						
Final outturn 2017/18	Performance monitoring	High	CP10	Jul						
Income generation	In-depth review	High	CP10	Ongoing						
Cost pressures in children's social care	Performance monitoring	High	CP10	Sep						
Adult social care budget	Performance monitoring	High	CP11	Nov						
Mid-year treasury management review	Performance monitoring	Medium	CP10	Dec						
Finance control review	Performance monitoring	High	CP10	Dec						
Social value policy	Policy development	High	CP10	Dec						
Annual budget 2019/120	Standard item	High	CP10	Feb						
Asset management	Standard item	Medium	CP10	Dec						
Audit panel update	Constitutional Requirement	High	CP10	Mar						

Work programme 2019-20

Public Accounts Select Committee Work Programme 2019/20

Programme of work

Work Item	Type of item	Priority	Corporate priority	Delivery deadline	09-May-19	13-Jun-19	10-Jul-19	24-Sep-19	06-Nov-19	16-Dec-19	04-Feb-20	18-Mar-20
Catford regeneration partnership	Standard item	High	All	May								
Income generation and commercialisation	Standard item	Medium	All	June								
Final outturn 2018/19	Performance monitoring	Medium	All	July								
Children's social care	Performance monitoring	High	CP3	November								
Adult social care	Performance monitoring	High	All	December								
Financial forecasts 2019/20	Performance monitoring	High	All	March								
Medium term financial strategy	Performance monitoring	Medium	All	July								
Mid-year treasury management review	Performance monitoring	Medium	All	September								
Budget cuts	Performance monitoring	High	All	November				Cuts				
Cost pressures in the environment division	Performance monitoring	Medium	All	September								
Annual budget 2019/120	Standard item	High	All	February							Budget	
Asset management	Standard item	Low	All	March								
Audit Panel update	Constitutional Requirement	Low	All	March								
Income generation and commercialisation	In-depth review	High	All	December			Scope		Evidence	Evidence		Report

Work programme 2020-21

Item	Type of item	Corporate priority	24-Sep-20	03-Dec-20	02-Feb-21	17-Mar-21
Income generation and commercialisation review 2019-20	In-depth review	All	Final report			
Financial stabilisation - budget update and medium term plan	Performance monitoring	All				
Children's social care	Standard item	All, CP3				
Budget cuts	Performance monitoring	All				
Council budget 2021-22	Policy development	All				
Cost pressures in the Public Realm division	Standard item	All, CP6				
Capital programme	Standard item	All				
Financial forecasts 2020-21	Performance monitoring	All				
Adult social care review	Standard item	All				

Work programme 2021-22

Item	Type of item	Priority	07-Jul-21	23-Sep-21	01-Dec-21	27-Jan-22	17-Mar-22
Draft contract management framework	Policy development	All					
Medium term financial strategy	Standard item	All					
Financial results 2020-21	Performance monitoring	All					
Children's social care	Performance monitoring	All, CP3					
Adult social care review	Performance monitoring	All, CP5					
Treasury management	Performance monitoring	All		Mid-year review		Draft 22-23 strategy	
Budget cuts	Performance monitoring	All					
Capital programme review	Performance monitoring	All					
Council budget 2022-23	Policy development	All					
Audit Panel update	Performance monitoring	All					

Appendix C – referrals to Mayor and Cabinet 2018-22

Over the course of 2018-22 the Committee made 14 referrals to Mayor and Cabinet:

- Cost pressures in children’s social care (considered at Mayor and Cabinet 10 October 2018) see the [link](#) for the full referral.
- The draft income generation strategy (considered at Mayor and Cabinet 6 February 2019) see the [link](#) for the full referral.
- The draft social value policy (considered at Mayor and Cabinet 6 February 2019) see the [link](#) for the full referral.
- Financial control (considered at Mayor and Cabinet 6 February 2019) see the [link](#) for the full referral.
- Income generation and commercialisation (considered at Mayor and Cabinet 26 June 2019) see the [link](#) for the full referral.
- Finance and audit (considered at Mayor and Cabinet 30 October 2019) see the [link](#) for the full referral.
- Financial stabilisation (considered at Mayor and Cabinet on 7 October 2020) see the [link](#) for the full referral.
- Commercialisation and culture change review (considered at Mayor and Cabinet on 7 October 2020) see the [link](#) for the full referral.
- Budget cuts (considered at Mayor and Cabinet on 9 December 2020) see the [link](#) for the full referral.
- Budget cuts (considered at Mayor and Cabinet on 3 February 2021) see the [link](#) for the full referral.
- Council budget 2021-22 (considered at Mayor and Cabinet on 3 February 2021) see the [link](#) for the full referral.
- Financial forecasts (considered at Mayor and Cabinet on 19 May 2021) see the [link](#) for the full referral.
- Budget reductions (considered at Mayor and Cabinet on 2 February 2022) see the [link](#) for the full referral.
- Council budget 2022-23 (considered at Mayor and Cabinet on 9 February 2022) see the [link](#) for the full referral.