

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 25 July 2024

2024/25 Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Is the paper exempt from the press and public? No

Reason why exempt: Not applicable

Purpose of this report: Governance

Is this a Key Decision? No

Has it been included on the Forward Plan of Key Decisions? No

Director Approving Submission of the Report:
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Executive Summary

Scrutiny Committees have the power to review or scrutinise actions taken, or decisions made by the MCA or the Mayor, and make recommendations on issues affecting the residents of South Yorkshire.

One way the Committee achieves this ambition is by developing and delivering a clear, outcome-driven, and member-led work plan.

On Wednesday 19th June, a collaborative Committee work planning workshop was undertaken. This report gives an overview of the Committee's selected topics and ways of working for the scrutiny workplan in 2024/25.

What does this mean for businesses, people and places in South Yorkshire?

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee's role is to hold the MCA to account and ensure that all aspects of the decision-making process are transparent, inclusive and fair. The Committee is responsible for checking that the MCA's decisions, policies and strategies have been made in the best interests of the residents and workers of South Yorkshire.

The proposed work plan for 2024/25 focussed on what the Committee believes are the most significant upcoming change programmes and high-priority areas of work for the MCA and South Yorkshire's Communities. It also remains flexible enough to accommodate short-term issues as they arose during the year.

Recommendations

That the Committee:

1. Consider the draft 2024/25 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme and suggest amendments as appropriate.
2. Approve the 2024/25 Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme.
3. Engage with future scoping required alongside the MCA Executive Team to refine and plan for delivery of the Work Programme.

Consideration by any other Board, Committee, Assurance or Advisory Panel

None.

1. Background

- 1.1 Since its establishment the MCA has supported the Overview & Scrutiny Committee ('The Committee') to develop and deliver an effective work plan. In the Chair's Annual report of 2024, the Committee agreed to continue to develop and enhance its work planning practices.
- 1.2 Further, the Scrutiny Protocol, published in November 2023, sets out non-statutory guidance for how the Overview and Scrutiny and Audit Committees hold Authorities and Mayors with devolved powers to account.
- 1.3 On Wednesday 19th June, a collaborative work planning workshop was undertaken where members received:
 - An overview of the role of the Committee and scrutiny function at the MCA, including work planning scoping criteria set out in statute and statutory guidance, and best practice across the sector,
 - Key corporate documentation (Skills Strategy, Plan for Growth),
 - An introduction to the performance reporting workstream,
 - An opportunity to discuss priority issues and create a longlist for a 2024/25 work plan.

2. Key Issues

- 2.1 Bus Reform was the most significant topic of interest raised by members during the workshop. The Committee have received status updates on the bus reform workstream during 2023/24, and now seek to scrutinise the subsequent steps in the MCA decision-making process.
- 2.2 Members also identified interlinking strategies and workstreams within the transport portfolio as important to bus reform work, including fares strategies, community transport and the low-carbon economy.
- 2.3 Another topic of interest selected was the concept of the “Social Good” Return on MCA Investments, and how this is, or should be, measured in our performance monitoring and assurance processes.
- 2.4 The impacts of SYMCA’s active travel investments were also an area of interest for the Committee, specifically in terms of metrics and how impacts are measured.
- 2.5 A status update on Doncaster Sheffield Airport was carried over from the 2023/24 Committee action log.
- 2.6 Finally, the Committee were satisfied with updates received on the Beds for Babies workstream in 2023/24, and have requested that one final report on delivery of the programme be received towards the end of the municipal year, to be preceded by a written briefing.

3. **Options Considered and Recommended Proposal**

3.1 **Option 1**

Consider and approve the attached work programme (Appendix A) for further scoping and delivery in the 2024/25 municipal year.

3.2 **Option 2**

Reject the draft work programme.

3.3 **Risks and Mitigations**

There is a risk that without a well-managed process of work programming, the Committee workplan can become unmanageable within the MCA’s current time and resource, whilst also not effectively delivering outcomes.

An effective and carefully considered work plan will mitigate this risk.

3.4 **Recommended Option**

Option 1

4. **Consultation on Proposal**

- 4.1 A collaborative work planning workshop was delivered in June 2024, with both substantive members and reserve members invited to attend. Members were

provided with key corporate documentation and performance information and carried forward the most significant concerns of the previous committee year.

4.2 The Executive Leadership Board received notification of and an opportunity to feed back on the draft work plan on 10th July, and this feedback has been incorporated into the draft work programme.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

5.1 If approved, delivery of the work programme will begin immediately.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications and Advice

6.1 None.

7. Legal Implications and Advice

7.1 The role of Combined Authority Scrutiny Committees is set out in Sections 1 & 2, Schedule 5A, Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, as inserted by the Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016, and The Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees Access to information and Audit Committees) Order 2017

8. Human Resources Implications and Advice

8.1 The internal budget settlement for 2024/25 includes some additional resource for the Governance Team to support the delivery of a Committee work plan.

8.2 Scrutiny activity also requires direct and indirect staff resource across the corporate core of the organisation, as well as within service areas. A focussed workplan is recommended to assist resource planning across the organisation.

9. Equality and Diversity Implications and Advice

9.1 An effective and well-resourced workplan will address issues most important to the breadth of South Yorkshires communities. Existing priority topics of interest focus on issues which have the greatest impact on the most disadvantaged communities.

10. Climate Change Implications and Advice

10.1 None.

11. Information and Communication Technology Implications and Advice

11.1 None.

12. Communications and Marketing Implications and Advice

12.1 None.

List of Appendices Included:

A. Draft Committee Work Programme 2024/25