

Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2015-16

At the Overview and Scrutiny meeting held on the 20th May 2015 the committee discussed the work programme for the coming year. This paper proposes a work programme for the coming year to be agreed by the committee. The committee may need to respond to issues that arise during the course of the year so the programme will need to be flexible and topics may be moved around accordingly

Below is a list of suggested topics for scrutiny by the committee arising from discussion at OSC on 20th May:

- Right to buy for housing association tenants/forcing councils to sell homes
- Council rents for voluntary and business premises
- Approach to digital
- IT systems - with focus on support for essential services
- Underpayment of National Minimum Wage
- The impact of regeneration schemes - with focus on employment
- Review of delivery of homes on Willow Walk
- Forthcoming cuts to council funding
- Age friendly borough
- The impact of additional welfare cuts
- Review of implementation of 20 mile per hour speed limits
- Living wage across the borough, and low pay more generally
- The council's use of consultants
- Redundancies at the council
- Extension of the Bakerloo Line
- Continue to monitor free swim and gym
- Continue to monitor 11k new council homes

Through this discussion it was identified that subjects for scrutiny fall, in general terms, into three main categories. These are:

1. Longer-term scrutiny topics on which OSC would aim to produce written reports to present to Cabinet
2. Longer-term scrutiny topics on which it would be sensible to work in co-operation with sub-committees and/or Audit & Governance Committee. These would also be concluded by written reports.
3. Shorter-term, more self-contained issues on which OSC can carry out initial scrutiny, and then decide on whether or not to proceed further.

With these different categories in mind, it is proposed that OSC pursue the following topics for scrutiny in the coming year.

Longer term scrutiny concluded with full written report

1. Council rents for voluntary and business premises (continued from 2014-15)
2. Progress towards making Southwark an age friendly borough
3. The Council's approach to digital communications
4. Underpayment of national minimum wage (and low pay more generally)

Longer term topics on which OSC would work in co-operation with other committees

1. Right to buy for housing association tenants/forcing councils to sell homes (working with Housing Sub Committee)
2. Forthcoming cuts to council funding (working with Audit and Governance)

Shorter-term, more self-contained scrutiny

1. Review of delivery of homes on Willow Walk
2. Review of implementation of 20 mile per hour speed limits
3. Extension of the Bakerloo Line
4. IT systems (working with Audit and Governance)

Below is a draft calendar for agenda items for the coming year. This is based on the assumption that OSC would be in a position to conclude a longer term scrutiny an issue was on our agenda for 3 meetings. This also assumes that we would be able to have no more than 3 items on the agenda for each meeting, taking into account that OSC must also carry out Cabinet Member interviews and hear call-ins. 2 sessions have been allocated to rents for council premises because this is an ongoing scrutiny.

15th Jun 2015 meeting

Progress towards making Southwark an age friendly borough (1)
Council rents for voluntary and business premises (1)
Underpayment of national minimum wage (1)

7th Sep 2015 meeting

Progress towards making Southwark an age friendly borough (2)
The Council's approach to digital communications (1)
Review of implementation of 20 mile per hour speed limits

20th Oct 2015 meeting

Underpayment of National Minimum Wage (2)
Right to buy for housing association tenants/forcing councils to sell homes (1)
Council rents for voluntary and business premises (2)

30th Nov 2015 meeting

Review of delivery of homes on Willow Walk
Underpayment of National Minimum Wage (3)
The Council's approach to digital communications (2)
Progress towards making Southwark an age friendly borough (3)

13th Jan 2016 meeting

Right to buy for housing association tenants/forcing councils to sell homes (2)
The Council's approach to digital communications (3)
Forthcoming cuts to council funding (1)

1st Feb 2016 meeting

Budget Scrutiny

4th Apr 2016 meeting

Right to buy for housing association tenants/forcing councils to sell homes (3)
Forthcoming cuts to council funding (2)
Review of implementation of 20 mile per hour speed limits

25th May 2016 meeting

IT systems
Forthcoming cuts to council funding (3)
Extension of the Bakerloo Line

Also arising from the discussion which took place on the 20th May, OSC will seek to continue to innovate in the way it carries out scrutiny. This will include:

1. More visits relevant to our subject matter (Getting out of Tooley Street)
2. Going and speaking to select committees about scrutiny techniques
3. More team working with sub-committees
4. Hashtags for meetings to ties in with scrutiny topics and to invite questions via Twitter