

SCRUTINY ITEM

| REPORT OF | MEETING | DATE | ITEM NO |
|---|-------------------------------------|------------------|---------|
| INTERIM SCRUTINY MANAGER | INTERNAL AFFAIRS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE | 5 SEPTEMBER 2023 | 7 |
| INTERNAL AFFAIRS SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORKPLAN 2023/24 | | | |

PUBLIC ITEM

This item is for consideration in the public part of the meeting.

PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

To consider and agree the in-depth scrutiny reviews for Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the 2023/24 municipal year.

SOURCE OF REFERRAL

Scrutiny training event - 7 June 2023
Workshop of Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee members - 22 August 2023.

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS

To agree the in-depth scrutiny reviews for Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the 2023/24 municipal year.

REPORT

1. The Constitution sets out the terms of reference of both scrutiny committees (Internal Affairs and Community Focus). Both committees should keep the respective work programmes under review and establish topic-specific in-depth reviews, to be time limited.
2. An in-depth review is a major piece of work involving background research, taking evidence from several sources including face to face witnesses and consulting with relevant stakeholders on the topic under review. Each review is usually undertaken by a task and finish working group of members over several months culminating in a final report being agreed by the parent scrutiny committee which would normally include their conclusions and a set of recommendations. Given the time and resources involved to undertake and conclude a review each committee would normally only establish 2 or 3 in-depth reviews in each municipal year.
3. The Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee at its last meeting in June agreed an in-depth review of the use of Residential Premises as Children's Care Homes. Work is underway on this review and a series of meetings of the task and finish group are currently being arranged.
4. A training event was held in June for newly elected members of both scrutiny committees. This was facilitated by an external consultant with extensive knowledge and experience in the operation of local government scrutiny. The session included the opportunity for members to suggest topic areas for in-depth

reviews. A long list of suggestions was then prioritised. These suggestions were circulated to members of both committees.

5. Since then, the Interim Scrutiny Manager has met with the chairs and vice chairs of both scrutiny committees to discuss which topics best fit the terms of reference of each respective scrutiny committee and how the member suggestions for in-depth reviews can be further prioritised for agreement.
6. It is best practice in local government scrutiny to have a method of assessing which reviews to proceed with when there are competing demands for resources. Such assessment should ensure that agreed reviews are focused on matters that are significant, important, of public interest and relevant to the community.
7. To help with this a scrutiny topic selection assessment matrix has been developed by the Interim Scrutiny Manager in consultation with the chairs of both scrutiny committees. This is attached at appendix 1 and considers factors such as:
 - Alignment to corporate priorities
 - Is the issue strategic and significant to the borough?
 - Is the issue of public interest?
 - Risk to Council or service delivery.
 - Financial Value.
 - Is the issue of concern for partners?
 - Will the Council be able to achieve an effective outcome?

Each of the above factors is scored 1 for low priority/importance, 2 for medium priority/importance and 3 for high priority/importance. The total score for all 7 factors above is then totalled to give an overall score which can be ranked alongside other topics that have been assessed.

8. A workshop of members of the Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee was held on 22 August. The main purpose to consider the priority list for reviews (under the terms of reference of the Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee) which were proposed at the training event in June. These were:
 - Enforcement of council policies
 - Events policy
 - Tree Preservation Orders
 - Planning policy
 - Delivery of services
 - Rural tourism and leisure
 - Affordable housing
 - Regeneration

The following additional suggestion for a review topic was made by Councillor Gardner following the training event in June:

- FBC's approach to the Environment

9. Members at the workshop further discussed each of the above topics to better understand and define the focus of each potential review. They also noted that was work underway on some of these topics so as to ensure there was no duplication of work. As a result, the following review topics were taken forward for assessment with the scoring shown alongside:

| Topic | Total score |
|--------------------|-------------|
| Affordable housing | 16 |
| Regeneration | 21 |

10. The workshop of members concluded that the following in-depth reviews are established and commenced in the remainder of 2023/24 in the following order:
 - Regeneration
 - Affordable Housing

11. The Committee is asked to consider the conclusions of the above workshop and agree the above two in-depth reviews for the Internal Affairs Scrutiny Committee.
12. Once the Committee agrees which in-depth reviews to proceed with a scrutiny review scoping report will be produced for consideration at the next meeting setting out the objectives and methodology for the reviews.

| BACKGROUND PAPERS REVELANT TO THIS ITEM | | |
|---|----------|---|
| Name of document | Date | Where available for inspection |
| Fylde Borough Council Constitution | May 2023 | https://fylde.cmis.uk.com/fylde/ConstitutionGovernanceMatters.aspx |

| LEAD AUTHOR | CONTACT DETAILS | DATE |
|-------------|--|----------------|
| Paul Walker | paul.walker@fylde.gov.uk | 22 August 2023 |

Attached documents:

Appendix 1 Scrutiny topic selection assessment matrix