

THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF KENSINGTON AND CHELSEA

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – 8 MAY 2024

REPORT OF THE SCRUTINY MANAGER

THE ANNUAL SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report includes a summary of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) Work Programme for the Council Year 24 May 2023 to 22 May 2024.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to:
- Review and reflect on the Work Programme and consider what has worked well and could be replicated in the new programme; and
 - Suggest topics to be included in the long-list for the new scrutiny work programme.

3 THE ANNUAL WORK PROGRAMME 2023-2024

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee terms of reference are included in the Council's Constitution; these guide the work programme and are summarised below:
- The preparation of the annual scrutiny work programme and the co-ordination of work, including the allocation of scrutiny reviews to the Select Committees to carry out.
 - To report annually to full Council and to review the effectiveness of scrutiny, looking for ways to continue to improve.
 - To ensure statutory scrutiny responsibilities are addressed (by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee itself, by allocation to the relevant Select Committee or by one-off events to consider particular issues).
 - To consider and assess Grenfell-related topics for scrutiny alongside others identified by local people, councillors and other stakeholders and, where these are clear priorities for scrutiny at any given time.
 - The scrutiny of matters of corporate interest and management including finance and budget scrutiny.
- 3.2 There were eight committee meetings diarised as part of the Council's calendar. The Committee's Work Programme was a mix of holding to account of Leadership Team and Lead Member decision-making, contribution to policy development and scrutiny of the delivery of key Council services and strategic priorities.

The Preparation of the Annual Scrutiny Work Programme

- 3.3 OSC oversaw the preparation of the Annual Work Programme for the scrutiny function in its entirety and it was agreed at the meeting of 5 July 2023. Reviewing the work programme for each Committee at OSC allowed members to identify synergies as well as gaps. During the year, OSC was provided with reassurance that statutory scrutiny requirements were being met either by the Committee itself or one of the select committees. The three areas of statutory scrutiny are crime and disorder; health scrutiny when NHS organisations propose major changes to services that will affect residents and are required to consult with scrutiny; and flood risk management.

4 **Statutory Scrutiny**

Crime and Disorder

- 4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the Council's Statutory Crime and Disorder Committee and holds an annual scrutiny on community safety. The Committee also fulfils this duty by holding decision makers to account as well as contributing to policy development.
- 4.2 Effective scrutiny monitors the implementation of its accepted recommendations as a way of assessing its own impact and influence. At the meeting in July 2023, the Committee scrutinised a report from the Chief Community Safety Officer which included progress towards the delivery of the recommendations made by the Committee following the Antisocial Behaviour Conference held on 28 March 2023.
- 4.3 Two representatives from the Borough Command Unit attended the meeting of 20 September to present information and answer questions. Committee members had a wide-ranging discussion and topics included the uplifting in resources for Neighbourhood Policing Teams, training for first responders, the detection rate and the ease of reporting crimes as well as the New Met for London Report. Members recommended the new on-line reporting system for non-urgent crime be co-designed with users to make it more accessible.
- 4.4 The Serious Violence Duty was introduced under the Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Act 2022 - the Council is a statutory duty holder. OSC was involved at an early stage in the development of the Serious Violence Strategy and reviewed a report at its meeting in September 2023. The Committee focused on the Strategic Needs Analysis and the links between the draft Strategy and the interface with existing plans and strategies including the Community Safety Plan.

Health Scrutiny

- 4.5 The Inner West London Mental Health Services Reconfiguration Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC), set up with Westminster City Council, first met on 11 December 2023. The JHOSC is scrutinising proposed changes to mental health services, including the temporary closure of beds at the Gordon Hospital, being proposed by Central North West London Hospital Foundation Trust (CNWL). These have been set out by CNWL in its Pre-

Consultation Business Case document. The JHOSC has six members and is chaired by Westminster. Kensington and Chelsea is represented by Councillors Lucy Knight (the Vice Chair), Dr Mona Ahmed and Anne Cyron. There was an update to full Council on 31 January 2023 as this is a matter of interest to all Borough residents. The JHOSC has met five times and has heard from CNWL, voluntary and community sector groups as well as residents. The Integrated Care Board is due to make its decision in July 2024 and the JHOSC will submit a report to the meeting for consideration alongside the proposals from CNWL.

Flood Risk Management

- 4.6 The Environment Select Committee reviewed and approved the Flood Risk Management Working Group Report at its meeting in April 2024 and referred it to the Leadership Team. The response to the recommendations was reviewed at the June meeting. At the December meeting the Committee carried out pre-decision scrutiny of the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy as part of its contribution to policy development.

5 The Earl's Court Councillor Call for Action

- 5.1 OSC continued to monitor progress with the implementation of recommendations agreed by the Leadership Team in response to The Earl's Court Councillor Call for Action. The ward councillors were also invited to attend the December 2023 meeting to contribute to the discussion and ask questions of the Lead Member and senior officers on behalf of their residents.
- 5.2 The Committee resolved to schedule a report for the 2024-25 Work Programme with the Lead Member being requested to focus on 'lessons learnt' in response to the Councillor Call for Action and how these had been applied in other areas of the Borough.

6 Scrutiny of Grenfell

- 6.1 Scrutiny of Grenfell is a key component of the Committee's Annual Work Programme. As part of its role in holding decision makers to account, OSC heard from the NHS as well as Lead Members and council officers.
- 6.2 At the July meeting, the Committee scrutinised a report from Central North West London Foundation Trust (CNWL) on its North Kensington Recovery Programme. The Ward Councillors were also invited to the meeting. The Committee made two recommendations and resolved to invite CNWL to a future meeting to discuss progress.
- 6.3 At the December meeting, the Committee scrutinised a report *Update on Planning for the Next Phase of Grenfell Support (2024-28), Including Feedback from External Scrutiny Team*. The Lead Member and senior officers provided information and answered questions from the Committee. Residents also attended this meeting and were invited by the Chair to ask questions. There was a second report at the March meeting providing an update on the consultation and future Grenfell support. In summary, the Chair concluded

there had been progress with an opportunity to learn from outside advisors on consultation matters. The Committee resolved to include an update report in its May agenda.

7 Strategic Priorities, Matters of Corporate Interest and Management

- 7.1 In July 2023, OSC reviewed and scrutinised the Council Plan Action Plan 2023-25 and the Corporate Performance Report. The Leader of the Council, Council Elizabeth Campbell and the Chief Executive attended the meeting. The Committee recommended there should be a greater alignment between the two documents. At the December 2023 meeting, the Lead Member and Chief Executive gave an update on corporate performance and delivery of the Council Action Plan. The Committee made recommendations about enhancing the information on the Council's website.
- 7.2 The Annual Complaints Report was included in the agenda of the November 2023 meeting. The Committee had a wide-ranging discussion and concluded by recommending the Leadership Team monitor complaints performance information on a monthly basis to support the aspiration 'to be the best Council'.
- 7.3 Other items within this section of the Work Programme included scrutiny of the Replacement Enterprise Resource Planning System and the implications of the new Procurement Act for the Council.

8 Budget Scrutiny, including the Working Group

- 8.1 Budget scrutiny was further enhanced during the year after an Options Paper was considered in May 2023. It was agreed the four select committees would have a greater role including reviewing finance and budget reports as well as the annual budget proposals. Recommendations from the select committee meetings were included in a consolidated report co-ordinated by the Budget Working Group which also made recommendations.
- 8.2 The Working Group, chaired by Councillor Will Pascall, reported to OSC in January 2024 and all eighteen of the recommendations were accepted and referred to the Leadership Team for a response. The Working Group report was also included in the agenda for full Council in February 2024 when the budget in its entirety was discussed and agreed. The Leadership Team acknowledged and accepted the recommendations and progress with implantation is included in the agenda for the OSC meeting of 8 May 2024.
- 8.3 Scrutiny of the budget by OSC also included review of the Quarterly Financial Out-turn Reports in advance of them being reviewed by Leadership Team. Recommendations were referred to the Leadership Team for acknowledgement and response.

9 Planning for the Year Ahead

- 9.1 Preparations for the development of the Annual Work Programme 2024-25 are underway for agreement at the July OSC meeting.

9.2 As part of developing the Work Programme members are invited at this meeting to consider priorities for the year ahead and nominate topics. Scrutiny of Grenfell will remain a core component of the Work Programme. Set out below are the topics which it has been agreed will feature during the year.

- The Council Plan and corporate performance
- Quarterly finance reports and the Budget Out-turn Report
- Budget scrutiny – by the select committees and the Working Group
- Earls Court Councillor Call for Action – ‘lessons learnt’
- Crime and disorder statutory scrutiny
- Progress with implementation of the Enterprise Resource Planning System
- Notting Dale Heat Network
- The Social Investment Strategy

10 **Scrutiny Digest**

10.1 The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny published a publication Audit, Scrutiny and Risk <https://www.cfgs.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Audit-Scrutiny-and-Risk.pdf>. This describes how audit and scrutiny committees can work together in a complementary way and how risk can and should inform scrutiny and in particular its work programme.

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Background papers: none other than previously published papers

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