

## **Selection of topics and issues for scrutiny by councillors, officers or members of the public**

Anyone wishing to suggest a topic for scrutiny must complete Section 1 of this form.

### 1. Sources

The following are sources of ideas for the work programme:

- Performance indicators, both national and internal.
- Views of Cabinet and Leadership Team especially in relation to policy subjects.
- The Council's surveys, such as the annual residents' survey.
- The Complaints Report which is compiled annually by the Customer Service Centre.
- Service complaints more widely; although individual cases will not be taken up if a large volume of complaints is received about a single issue then it may be appropriate to pursue the topic.
- Reports of external inspections of services.
- The views of the Council's partners.
- Issues picked up by ward councillors in their locality.
- The Council's Forward Plan

### 2. Outcomes

Success indicators could include:

- Having identified local needs;
- Having evaluated alternative ways of working/how a service could improve and making recommendations to the Executive or the Council's partners;
- Having developed an awareness of any contractual, economic, legal or structural constraints on Council's or its partners approach.

### 3. Criteria

To qualify for consideration the topic must meet the following criteria:

- Affect a group or community of people. Scrutiny will not normally look at individual service complaints.
- Relate to a service, event or issue in which Watford Borough Council has a significant stake.
- Not be an issue that Scrutiny has covered during the last year.
- Not be a planning or licensing issue, or any other matter dealt with by another council committee.
- To match one or more of the Council's current priorities.
- To be feasible and able to be completed within the timescale projected for the work.
- There must be availability within the relevant department/service to support the review.
- Be a topic that members wish to scrutinise.

On completion please return to Sandra Hancock, Committee and Scrutiny Officer

By email – [sandra.hancock@watford.gov.uk](mailto:sandra.hancock@watford.gov.uk)

By post – Legal and Property Services, Watford Borough Council, Town Hall, Watford, WD17 3EX

**Suggestions for topics to be scrutinised – evaluation table**

A Member, Officer or member of the public suggesting a topic for scrutiny must complete Section1 as fully as possible. Completed tables will be presented to Overview & Scrutiny for consideration.

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| <b>Section 1 – Scrutiny Suggestion</b>   |  | A Review of the Neighbourhood Forums including funding criteria |
| <b>Proposer: Councillor/Officer/Member of public</b> Carol Chen/Mayor Thornhill  |  |   |
| <p><b>Topic recommended for scrutiny:</b></p> <p><i>Please include as much detail as is available about the specific such as;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>areas which should be <u>included</u> in the review.</i></li> <li>• <i>areas which should be <u>excluded</u> from the review.</i></li> <li>• <i>Whether the focus should be on past performance, future policy or both.</i></li> </ul> | <p align="center"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>To review the operation of Neighbourhood Forums particularly the use of Neighbourhood Forum budgets.</p> <p>A review of the Neighbourhood Forum Community Engagement Budget criteria.</p> <p>Focus on historic spend and uses of the funding for the future.</p> <p>.</p> |   |
| <b>Why have you recommended this topic for scrutiny?</b>   | The Mayor would like the Funding Guidance to be reviewed.  |   |

**What are the specific outcomes you wish to see from the review?**

*Examples might include:*

- *To identify what is being done and what the potential barriers are;*
- *To review relevant performance indicators;*
- *To compare our policies with those of a similar authority;*
- *To assess the environmental/social impacts;*
- *To Benchmark current service provision;*
- *To find out community perceptions and experience;*
- *To identify the gap between provision and need*

*Give details*

A clear understanding by all members of what they can and what they cannot use the budgets for.

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| <p><b>How do you think evidence might be obtained?</b></p> <p><i>Examples might include</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Questionnaires/Surveys</i></li> <li>• <i>Site visits</i></li> <li>• <i>Interviewing witnesses</i></li> <li>• <i>Research</i></li> <li>• <i>Performance data</i></li> <li>• <i>Public hearings</i></li> <li>• <i>Comparisons with other local authorities</i></li> </ul> | <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>Past examples.</p> <p>Other councils (HCC) schemes and their criteria.</p> <p>Views from members including cabinet.</p> |
| <p><b>Does the proposed item meet the following criteria?</b></p>   |  |
| <p>It must affect a group or community of people</p>  | <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>The Neighbourhood Forums are designed to be a focus for each ward</p>   |
| <p>It must relate to a service, event or issue in which the council has a significant stake</p>   | <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>Each Ward has a budget of £2500 to spend annually</p>   |

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| <p>It must not have been a topic of scrutiny within the last 12 months</p> <p><i>There will be exceptions to this arising from notified changing circumstances. Scrutiny will also maintain an interest in the progress of recommendations and issues arising from past reports.</i></p> | <p>Not reviewed in the last 12 months.</p>   |
| <p>It must not be an issue, such as planning or licensing, which is dealt with by another council committee</p>  | <p>Again is an appropriate area for scrutiny</p>   |
| <p><b>Does the topic meet the council's priorities?</b></p>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Making Watford a better place to live in</li> <li>2. To provide the lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth</li> <li>3. Promoting an active, cohesive and well informed Town</li> <li>4. To operate the Council efficiently and effectively</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Please confirm which ones</i></p> <p>1,3 and 4</p> |

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| <p><b>Are you aware of any limitations of time, other constraints or risks which need to be taken into account?</b></p> <p><i>Factors to consider are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>forthcoming milestones, demands on the relevant service area and member availability:</i></li> <li>• <i>imminent policy changes either locally, regionally or nationally within the area under review.</i></li> </ul> | <p style="text-align: center;">Include details</p> <p>I would suggest it is started if agreed in the next municipal year.</p> |
| <p><b>Does the topic involve a Council partner or other outside body?</b></p>  | <p>No</p>   |

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| <p>Are there likely to be any Equality implications which will need to be considered?</p> <p><i>Protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Age</i></li> <li>• <i>Disability</i></li> <li>• <i>Gender reassignment</i></li> <li>• <i>Pregnancy or maternity</i></li> <li>• <i>Race</i></li> <li>• <i>Religion or belief</i></li> <li>• <i>Sex</i></li> <li>• <i>Sexual orientation</i></li> <li>• <i>Marriage or civil partnership</i><br/><i>(only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination)</i></li> </ul> | <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>No. But will depend on any suggested new criteria</p> |
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| <p><b>Sign off</b><br/><i>(It is expected that any Councillor proposing a topic agreed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee will participate in the Task Group)</i></p> |                                       |
| <p><b>Councillor/Officer C. Chen</b></p>  | <p><b>Date</b><br/><b>17.2.16</b></p> |