

Part A

Report to: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: Thursday, 21 March 2019

Report author: Committee and Scrutiny Officer

Title: Suggested task group topics for 2019/20

1.0 Summary

1.1 This report provides two suggestions for possible scrutiny task groups in 2019/20.

1.2 The scrutiny committee is asked to discuss the suggestions and whether councillors require them to be scoped further and set up to take place in the next municipal year. If councillors agree that both task groups are taken forward, they will need to prioritise them. The membership will have to be delegated to the Head of Democracy and Governance in order for the first task group to start as soon as practical in the new year.

2.0 Risks

2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
The scrutiny committee rejects the suggestions	There will be no agreed task group for the first scheduled meetings in 2019/20.	None	Tolerate	4
	It would significantly impact the amount of scrutiny work undertaken by the council at the beginning of the municipal year.			

3.0 **Recommendations**

- 3.1 that Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the scrutiny suggestions set out in the report and agrees whether they are taken forward in the new municipal year, placing them in order of priority.
- 3.2 If the suggestions are agreed, the membership to be delegated to the Head of Democracy and Governance in consultation with the chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Further information:

Sandra Hancock
sandra.hancock@watford.gov.uk
Tel: 01923 278377

Report approved by: Head of Democracy and Governance

4.0 **Detailed proposal**

- 4.1 At Council on 19 March 2019, councillors will be considering a report on the recent Constitution review. The review includes potential changes to the scrutiny structure for 2019/20, including scrutiny task groups. The report explains that initial suggestions could come from discussions with Leadership Team, the Mayor and Portfolio Holders for areas where scrutiny could assist policy development. The March meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be presented with suggestions and asked to consider potential topics.
- 4.2 Whilst preparing the timetable of meetings for 2019/20, Democratic Services has indicated draft dates for task groups. The first task group is provisionally scheduled to start on 18 June, which is before the first Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting of the new municipal year. It is therefore imperative that a task group is agreed at this meeting, ensuring that the task group has sufficient time to carry out its work.
- 4.3 The Mayor has put forward some suggestions for potential scrutiny topics for the new municipal year 2019/20. It should be noted that suggestions can be put forward by any councillor, the Elected Mayor, officers and members of the public.

4.4 **Mental Health provision in the borough**

The Mayor has proposed that one task group could look the current mental health provision in the borough and what more Watford Borough Council could be doing to support those living with mental health difficulties.

4.5 **Support for the town's BME community**

The second suggestion is for a task group to look at the current support for the town's BME community and to discover the issues the community are currently facing.

4.6 If the scrutiny committee is minded to agree to either or both of the suggestions officers will develop the scope(s) during April and May based on further discussions with the Mayor.

4.7 In addition the Committee and Scrutiny Officer will contact all non-executive councillors as soon as it is practical after the elections to invite expressions of interest in membership. The final membership and task group will need to be delegated to the Head of Democracy and Governance for approval in consultation with the chair of Overview and Scrutiny.

5.0 **Implications**

5.1 **Financial**

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no financial implications in this report.

5.2 **Legal Issues** (Monitoring Officer)

5.2.1 The Head of Democracy and Governance comments that there are no legal implications in this report.

5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 Having had regard to the council's obligations, it is considered that there are no direct Equalities, Human Rights or Data Protection impacts as a result of this report. Task groups will need to consider these as part of their final report.

5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 Task groups are supported by Democratic Services with support from other officers as required.

5.5 **Accommodation**

5.5.1 None

5.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 As a result of this report there are no direct implications for crime and disorder but this will need to be considered if relevant to a task group.

5.7 **Sustainability**

5.7.1 None

Appendices

None

Background papers

No papers were used in the preparation of this report.