

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

By post – Democracy and Governance, 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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| Section 1 – Scrutiny Suggestion | |
| Proposer: Councillor/Officer/Member of public Cllr Rabi Martins | |
| <p>Topic recommended for scrutiny:</p> <p><i>Please include as much detail as is available about the specific such as;</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>areas which should be <u>included</u> in the review.</i> • <i>areas which should be <u>excluded</u> from the review.</i> • <i>Whether the focus should be on past performance, future policy or both.</i> | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>Management of Conservation Areas in the Town</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the effectiveness of the Watford Conservation Areas Management Plan. |
| <p>Why have you recommended this topic for scrutiny?</p> | <p>The issue has been brought to the attention of ward councillors by the Estcourt Road Residents Association because Estcourt Road is in a Conservation Area and according to them a number of houses in the area have replaced windows, allowed front garden walls to fall into disrepair, built extensions etc.</p> |

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

1. To understand how the Watford Conservation Areas Management Plan is being implemented and the implications this has on the ground, including:
 - Recent reviews of conservation areas and targeted planning enforcement;
 - Publicity for conservation areas i.e. how residents and other stakeholders are made aware of areas that are designated as conservation areas and the implications of that;
 - Ongoing review of conservation areas.

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| <p>How do you think evidence might be obtained?</p> <p><i>Examples might include</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questionnaires/Surveys • Site visits • Interviewing witnesses • Research • Performance data • Public hearings • Comparisons with other local authorities | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Give details</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conservation Area Character Appraisals; b. Conservation Areas Management Plan; c. Examples of enforcement action; d. Results of revision consultations; e. Additional comments relating to a Conservation Area article in About Watford; f. Input from Ward Councillors; g. Input from Residents Association's in Conservation areas. |
| <p>Does the proposed item meet the following criteria?</p> | |
| <p>It must affect a group or community of people</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>Yes – those people living and working in conservation areas.</p> |
| <p>It must relate to a service, event or issue in which the council has a significant stake</p> | <p>The character of a town is shaped by its buildings and people.</p> <p>The council has a major role in promoting and protecting the Borough's heritage, through its planning function, property management and leisure services.</p> <p>The council recognises its responsibility to maintain its character as evidenced by its designation of selected areas as Conservation areas and a locally listed buildings register.</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>No similar topic has been considered by scrutiny in the past 5 years or more.</p> |
| <p>It must not be an issue, such as planning or licensing, which is dealt with by another council committee</p> | <p>It is not an issue specifically dealt with by any other council committee.</p> |
| <p>Does the topic meet the council's priorities?</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Making Watford a better place to live in2. To provide the lead for Watford's sustainable economic growth3. Promoting an active, cohesive and well informed Town4. To operate the Council efficiently and effectively <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Please confirm which ones</i> Yes – 1 and 3 above</p> |

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| <p>Are you aware of any limitations of time, other constraints or risks which need to be taken into account?</p> <p><i>Factors to consider are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• forthcoming milestones, demands on the relevant service area and member availability:</i> <i>• imminent policy changes either locally, regionally or nationally within the area under review.</i> | <p style="text-align: right;">Include details</p> <p>YES</p> <p>The consultation on Conservation Area Appraisals won't take place until October.</p> <p>The Senior Planning (Conservation and Urban Design) is leaving the authority at the end of August. This is likely to be a post that is difficult to fill. Officer resources to service the O&S review are therefore likely to be limited and this work could impact on other projects such as Local Plan 2.</p> |
| <p>Does the topic involve a Council partner or other outside body?</p> | <p>Not directly</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"> • <i>Age</i> • <i>Disability</i> • <i>Gender reassignment</i> • <i>Pregnancy or maternity</i> • <i>Race</i> • <i>Religion or belief</i> • <i>Sex</i> • <i>Sexual orientation</i> • <i>Marriage or civil partnership (only in respect of the requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination)</i> | <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Give details</i></p> <p>N/A</p> |
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| <p>Sign off <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>Councillor/Officer</p> <p><i>RMartins</i></p> | <p>Date</p> <p>18th May 2015</p> |