

TRAFFORD COUNCIL

Report to: Constitution Working Group
Date: 5 September 2018
Report for: Discussion
Report of: Head of Governance

Report Title

Executive Response to the Scrutiny Committee's Task and Finish Group Review of the Council's Scrutiny Function

Summary

Following the publication of the Communities and Local Government Committee's First Report of Session 2017-19 on the Effectiveness of Local Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Trafford's Scrutiny Committee committed to conducting a local review of the Authority's Scrutiny arrangements. A Task and Finish group was formed to review the published report and its recommendations, with a view to applying this to improve Scrutiny within the Council.

This report sets out the recommendations made by the Task and Finish Group and the Executive's response to these recommendations.

Recommendation(s)

- 1) That the Group discuss the recommendations and the response provided by the Executive.

Contact person for access to background papers and further information:

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Scrutiny Recommendation	Executive Response
<p>Recommendation 1 – That the Member Development Steering Group create a Scrutiny Member Induction, Training and Engagement Programme, and that Scrutiny Members are encouraged to take advantage of this.</p>	<p>Accept the recommendation.</p>
<p>Recommendation 2 – That the role of Statutory Scrutiny Officer be highlighted in the Council's Constitution along with the other main designated Council Officers (the Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and the Statutory Chief Finance Officer).</p>	<p>Do not accept the recommendation. The role is included in the Constitution and it is clear who the Statutory Scrutiny Officer is. There are other statutory roles set out in the Constitution including the Director of Adults, Director of Children's and Director of Public Health. The three roles set out are the ones with statutory protections and it is not appropriate to include this role in this</p>
<p>Recommendation 3 – That the annual Scrutiny report includes a review of the Council's Scrutiny process, assessing how it has performed over the year and identifying any areas of weakness that require improvement and the work carried out by the Statutory Scrutiny Officer to rectify them.</p>	<p>Accept the recommendation. The Scrutiny Committees will be asked to consider this and this will be included in the Annual Scrutiny report.</p>
<p>Recommendation 4 – That a regular Scrutiny report replaces the verbal update on the full Council agenda, confirming the work of Scrutiny over the period, including any formal recommendations made by Scrutiny to the Executive (where applicable) and the Executive's formal response(s) to these recommendations.</p>	<p>Accept the recommendation</p>

<p>Recommendation 5 – That the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs work with Democratic Services to create a more clearly defined programme for Scrutiny’s expected activities over a municipal year.</p>	<p>Accept the recommendation.</p>
<p>Recommendation 6 – That the Executive acknowledges that Scrutiny has an automatic ‘need to know’ status, and supports its request that it be provided with the appropriate information in a timely fashion when this is requested.</p>	<p>Accept the recommendation</p>
<p>Recommendation 7 – That the Council support Scrutiny’s request that all items considered at Scrutiny Committee meetings be presented in the form of a written report and that the report contains performance data to show current performance and trends, unless stated otherwise.</p>	<p>Accept the recommendation. This will require a change in approach in some cases as presentations are used. Performance information will also need to be provided which is a significant change for some Officers.</p>
<p>Recommendation 8 – That Trafford’s representatives on the GMCA Scrutiny Committees provide periodic updates to Trafford’s Scrutiny Committee on any relevant information.</p>	<p>Accept the recommendation</p>
<p>Recommendation 9 – That the Scrutiny Chairs meet with the Leader at the beginning of the municipal year to discuss any emerging issues / topics that the Committees may want to consider.</p>	<p>Accept the recommendation</p>

Recommendation 10 – That an annual review of the resources required to support Scrutiny be conducted by the Statutory Scrutiny Officer, and included as part of the annual report to Council.	Accept the recommendation
Recommendation 11 – That a budget be made available to Scrutiny for the hiring of external experts when necessary.	This will need to be considered as part of the annual budget making process.
Recommendation 12 – That Trafford commits to webcasting its Scrutiny meetings to increase Scrutiny’s visibility to Trafford residents and boost public engagement.	Accept the recommendation
Recommendation 13 – That Trafford’s dedicated Scrutiny Twitter profile be better utilised, providing followers of the account with information regarding Scrutiny Committee meetings and reviews.	Accept the recommendation