



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

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Report title	Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme and Governance
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Recommendation(s) for decision:

Overview & Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- (1) Appoint Scrutiny Champions to shadow the work of the WMCA's Portfolio Leads and to lead on the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee within each appropriate area.
- (2) Agree the responses from members of the committee as to those areas of priority for the work programme for 2019/20.

Purpose

1. To agree the appointment of Scrutiny Champions for 2019/20 and to consider responses made by members of the committee in respect of those areas considered suitable for undertaking scrutiny reviews.

Background

2. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee identified its objective for 2019/20 as:

“Commissioning and undertaking an effective, clear and accountable programme of scrutiny reviews that improve the outcomes for residents of the West Midlands, ensuring that the committee and its members engage fully with the region’s constituent and non-constituent authorities and its local enterprise partnerships.”

3. At the last meeting of the committee on 15 July, members discussed in detail the proposed ways of working for the forthcoming year. These discussions included appointing Scrutiny Champions, each one of which would ‘shadow’ a Lead Member portfolio area and act as the Overview & Scrutiny Committee’s lead on subject matters within that topic area. This arrangement would allow individual members to work more closely on topic areas that were of particular interest or relevance to them, and allow the committee, across all of its members collectively, to build up an in-depth understanding of the wide remit of the WMCA.
4. A briefing note will be circulated at the meeting indicating those Lead Portfolio areas where members of the committee have indicated a preference to shadow.

WMCA Lead Member Portfolio Areas

5. The 2019/20 Lead Member Portfolio areas are:
 - Culture & Digital - Councillor Patrick Harley
 - Economy & Innovation - Councillor Ian Brookfield
 - Environment & Energy, HS2 - Councillor Ian Courts
 - Finance - Councillor Bob Sleigh
 - Housing & Land - Councillor Mike Bird
 - Inclusive Communities - Councillor Brigid Jones
 - Public Service Reform & Social Economy - Councillor Yvonne Davies
 - Productivity & Skills - Councillor George Duggins
 - Transport - Councillor Ian Ward
 - Wellbeing - Councillor Izzi Seccombe

Scrutiny Champion Role

6. The role and purpose of each scrutiny champion will be to:
 - Build an effective relationship with relevant portfolio lead members, Strategic Leadership Team and Transport for West Midlands and their teams.
 - Be aware of policy developments and direction of travel within the relevant Portfolio areas
 - Oversee the work being undertaken in relation to the WMCA’s key business priorities.
 - Keep informed of committee and board reports that fall within their remit, and liaise with the Chair and Vice-Chairs if they consider that a matter should be called-in for scrutiny.
 - Keep abreast of relevant external developments.

- Bring matters to the attention of the Chair and Vice-Chairs of the committee which they feel may benefit from further consideration or scrutiny.
- Lead on and actively engage in the development of key lines of enquiry for their respective areas.

Work Programme 2019/20

7. To help develop an effective work programme for the year, members have also been asked to identify up to three scrutiny review areas they would wish the committee to look at. These areas would be linked to the committee's main themes for the year of:
 - Accountability
To ensure that the WMCA's governance structures are fit for purpose, effective and transparent, and wider public engagement is being undertaken.
 - Connectivity
To ensure that the WMCA's services provide improved connectivity that benefits all areas across the region – not just transport issues but new and emerging types of connectivity.
 - Investment
To establish whether the ambitions and policies of the WMCA are realistic to the levels of funding it has, whether funding streams are being effectively targeted, and whether communities can feel the benefit.
8. Responses from members were still being collated at the time of this report's publication, but will be provided to the committee when it meets. It is intended that this process will help the committee to focus better on those areas recognised by members as being most worthy of scrutiny, which was recognised within the Centre for Public Scrutiny's evaluation of the work of the committee carried out earlier in the year.
9. Given the wide geographic spread of the West Midlands Combined Authority, the Chair and Vice-Chairs have agreed to have oversight of their particular areas in respect of the three LEP geography.

Key Questions for Scrutiny

10. There will be specific lines of enquiry which arise in connection with different areas of the work programme, however some key themes which may be common to most topics will be:
 - Is the contribution to overall WMCA strategic priorities clear?
 - Is it clear how this will impact on the targets for Inclusive growth?
 - Is the project funded sufficiently to achieve its objectives?
 - What difference will the project make to people within the West Midlands and when will they feel the benefit?
 - Are impacts and outputs measurable and are they being monitored?
 - Are other WMCA policies such as social value in procurement being implemented?
 - Has an Equalities Impact Assessment been carried out for new policy areas?
 - Is the role and expectation of partners understood?

Officer Support

11. As stated within the Scrutiny Protocol agreed by the committee on 15 July, all senior officers within the WMCA have a duty to provide advice and support members of Overview & Scrutiny Committee in the same way as they would for any decision maker within the WMCA's governance structure.

Financial Implications

12. There are no direct financial implications arising out of the recommendations contained within this report.

Legal Implications

13. There are no direct financial implications arising out of the recommendations contained within this report.

Equalities Implications

14. There are no direct equality implications arising out of the recommendations contained within this report.

Inclusive Growth Implications

15. There are no direct inclusive growth implications arising out of the recommendations contained within this report.

Geographical Area of Report's Implications

16. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee comprises 12 members appointed by constituent authorities and seven members appointed by non-constituent authorities.

Other Implications

17. There are no further specific implications arising out of the recommendations contained within the report.