



## Report of the Chair

Scrutiny Programme Committee – 12 November 2018

### Pre-decision Scrutiny – Role of the Committee

<b>Purpose</b>	<p>This report provides guidance on pre-decision scrutiny ahead of consideration of the Cabinet report on:</p> <p>a) Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2022.</p>
<b>Content</b>	<p>This covering report explains the role of the Committee in undertaking pre-decision scrutiny.</p> <p>The actual Cabinet report which is being considered by Cabinet on 15 November will be circulated when the Cabinet agenda is published.</p>
<b>Councillors are being asked to</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• note the pre-decision scrutiny process and role of the Committee</li><li>• consider the Cabinet report and proposals</li><li>• agree any views on the proposed decisions that are to be raised with Cabinet</li></ul>
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#### 1. Introduction

1.1 The Scrutiny Programme Committee will carry out pre-decision scrutiny or delegate to relevant Scrutiny Panels.

1.2 The issue of homelessness has already been a focus of the Scrutiny Work Programme. A Scrutiny Working Group met in May and June 2018 to look at activities to manage homelessness, the current position, performance of relevant services, and challenges.

1.3 Aware that a new Homelessness Strategy was being developed by the Council the Committee agreed that this should be subject of pre-decision scrutiny. Ahead of this the Committee met on 1 October to give views on the published consultation draft so that they can be considered, along with other consultation responses, and inform the preparation of the cabinet report and final Strategy. As a reminder of the issues raised then the consultation response submitted by the Committee to the Cabinet Member for Homes & Strategy is attached as **Appendix 1**. The Committee will be interested to know how its views were considered and what changes were made to the Strategy / Action Plan following consultation process.

1.4 The final Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan 2018-2022 is scheduled for decision by Cabinet on 15 November. It is also scheduled to then be reported to Council, for information, on 20 December. The cabinet report will be circulated when the Cabinet agenda is published.

## **2. Role of the Committee**

2.1 The purpose of pre-decision scrutiny:

- It entitles scrutiny to discuss proposed Cabinet reports, where a clear recommendation(s) exists, before decisions are taken by the Executive.
- Acting as a 'critical friend', it enables scrutiny to ask questions about a report to develop understanding and inform and influence decision-making, for example asking about:
  - the rationale for the report
  - robustness of the proposed decision and decision-making process
  - potential impact and implications (including policy/budget issues, social, economic and environmental impact) and risks
  - how different options have been considered
  - the extent of consultation undertaken
  - implementation and measures of success etc.
- It enables scrutiny to provide a perspective and report its views and any issues to Cabinet. The chair, on behalf of the Committee, can attend the Cabinet meeting to share the views of scrutiny on the report prior to Cabinet decision. This may include giving support, providing other suggestions on the way forward, or flagging up any concerns.
- The views of scrutiny are required to be formally considered by Cabinet before it makes the decision and feedback should be given including explanation for any rejection of views expressed.

2.2 On this occasion the relevant Cabinet Member(s) is unable to attend the meeting however, relevant officer(s) involved in the development of the report(s) will be present to assist the Committee and provide appropriate advice.

2.3 The Committee (through the chair) will write to the relevant Cabinet Member with its views following pre-decision scrutiny. The chair will have the opportunity to attend the cabinet meeting on 15 November to verbally feedback the Committee's views, conclusions and recommendations about the report.

### **3. Cabinet Response**

3.1 Cabinet must formally consider scrutiny views at its meeting. It may decide that any issues raised by scrutiny can be dealt with at the meeting and decision taken. It may decide that more time is needed to consider the views of scrutiny and defer decision to the next (or a special) meeting of Cabinet.

3.2 The relevant Cabinet Member is expected to write back to the Committee with feedback from Cabinet, and should include explanation of any rejection of scrutiny views.

### **4. Legal Implications**

4.1 In accordance with the Council's Constitution "pre-decision scrutiny gives scrutiny the opportunity to influence Cabinet decision making as a critical friend". "The views of the scrutiny committee are formally presented (either in a written report or verbally by the scrutiny Chair) to the Cabinet meeting for the Cabinet to consider and inform its decision making".

### **5. Financial Implications**

5.1 There are no specific financial implications raised by this report. Financial implications of the actual cabinet report(s) are contained within those reports.

**Background Papers:** None

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 – Consultation Response from Scrutiny Programme Committee dated 9 October 2018

Appendix 2 – Cabinet Report – Homelessness Strategy & Action Plan 2018-2022 (to follow)