

**Meeting:** Thriving Sub-Committee

**Date:** 23 July 2024

**Title:** Work Programme 2024/25

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**Service:** Governance

**Wards affected:** All

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## 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report sets out a proposed approach to work planning for the Thriving Sub-Committee for 2024/25, together with a menu of potential topics which the Sub-Committee may wish to utilise in considering and deciding on its outline work programme for 2024/25.

## 2. Recommendations

- 2.1 The Sub-Committee is recommended to:

- (a) Note the remit of the Scrutiny Sub-Committee, as agreed at the Annual Council meeting on 16 May 2024, set out at **Appendix A**; and the extract from the agreed Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-25, relating to the 'A Thriving North Tyneside' theme, set out at **Appendix B**
- (b) Note the information set out in this report regarding Scrutiny work planning (including good practice guidance from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny) and that Scrutiny tends to be most successful when it sets clear strategic objectives for its work
- (c) Note that a link Cabinet member and a lead Senior Leadership Team officer have been identified to actively support the work and information needs of the Thriving Sub-Committee in the coming year, summarised at **Appendix C**

- (d) Note that a menu of potential policy topics, which the Sub-Committee may wish to consider when planning its initial programme of work for 2024/25, is included in this report for the Sub-Committee's consideration at **Appendix D**
- (e) Using this information and the views of Sub-Committee members, decide an outline work programme for the year; and agree that work programming will be included as a standard agenda item at each future meeting of the Sub-Committee in order that the work programme can be flexed as necessary in response to emerging policy matters as the year progresses, and so that all Sub-Committee members can be involved in development of the work programme.

### 3. Introduction

#### *Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) - Good Practice in Scrutiny Work Planning*

- 3.1 The Authority's Scrutiny arrangements were reviewed by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) in 2023/24. The CfGS is a national body which specialises in promoting governance excellence within local authorities.
- 3.2 The CfGS recommend the following as good practice in Scrutiny work planning:
  - (a) **Involvement of all Committee members in work planning** – the CfGS highlight that work planning is key to ensuring that Scrutiny stays focussed on strategic issues where it can make an impact, whilst making the best use of time and resources. Accordingly, all members of each scrutiny sub-committee should have a chance to influence that sub-committee's work programme; and further, sub-committee members should lead development of their committee's work plan, in order to have influence and ownership over committee activity.
  - (b) **Sufficient flexibility** – the CfGS note that work planning is an on-going process and not just a one-off event. Whilst identification of a list of topics and priorities is sensible there will need to be flexibility in the work plan and time set aside to regularly revisit the relevance of topics in meetings as the local context changes.
  - (c) **Involvement of Cabinet Members, and Senior Officer Support** – in their 2023/24 review, the CfGS commended the desire of the Elected Mayor and

Chief Executive to fully support the scrutiny process. As part of that commitment, a link Cabinet Member, and a lead SLT officer, have been nominated to support each Scrutiny sub-committee.

- (d) **'Less is More'** – the CfGS stated that “there is evidence that when scrutiny focuses on fewer things of greater importance, more is achieved”. This would be worthwhile to consider when developing the scrutiny work plan. The CfGS also recommended considering the introduction of selection criteria to identify appropriate topics for the work plan, and bringing discussion of the work plan to the beginning of meetings, so emerging or changing priorities can benefit from considered discussion.

- 3.3 Scrutiny tends to be most successful when it sets clear objectives for its work, and when it focuses on strategic matters which are likely to make a real difference.

#### *Taking these Ideas Forward*

- 3.4 The Thriving Sub-Committee's remit, agreed by Council on 16 May 2024, is attached as **Appendix A**.
- 3.5 An extract from the Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-25, showing the priorities under 'A Thriving North Tyneside' theme of that Plan, is included at **Appendix B**.
- 3.6 It must be emphasised that it is for the Thriving Sub-Committee to determine its work programme. However to aid the Sub-Committee in this process, some initial activity to identify potential work plan topics has been undertaken, outlined below.
- 3.7 For each Scrutiny Committee the links with lead Cabinet portfolios and Directorates of the Authority have been identified. These links are summarised in the diagram of Scrutiny Support Arrangements attached as **Appendix C**. For the Thriving Sub-Committee, the Deputy Mayor will be the link Cabinet Member. The Director of Regeneration and Economic Development will be the link Senior Leadership Team to provide ongoing and regular officer support to the Committee.
- 3.8 These Cabinet members and SLT officers will meet regularly throughout the year with the Chair of Committee to provide information and suggestions on policy topics which the Committee may wish to consider when planning and

revising its programme of work for 2024/25. A potential menu of work topics, which the Sub-Committee may wish to utilise when considering and deciding its work programme for 2024/25, is summarised in **Appendix D**.

#### **4. Appendices**

**Appendix A:** Thriving Sub-Committee's Remit, agreed by Council on 16 May 2024

**Appendix B:** Our North Tyneside Plan 2021-25 – extract of the 'A Thriving North Tyneside' theme

**Appendix C:** Scrutiny Support Arrangements 2024/25

**Appendix D:** Initial Information Base / Menu of Potential Topics to support decisions on the 2024/25 work programme by the Thriving Sub-Committee