

SCRUTINY REVIEW INTO THE COUNCIL'S ROAD SAFETY INITIATIVES AND ACTIVITIES

Committee name	Property, Highways and Transport Select Committee
Officer reporting	Steve Clarke, Democratic Services Officer
Papers with report	Draft Scoping Report for Review
Ward	N/A

HEADLINES

At its meeting on 11 July 2023, the Property, Highways & Transport Select Committee suggested a number of topics for its next major scrutiny review. These topics were explored with officers for feasibility with the frontrunning topic being a review looking into how the Council addresses road safety matters. Officers have produced a draft scoping report for the Committee's consideration.

It is envisaged that there will be three witness sessions, with a suggested schedule set out in the attached scoping report and on the Committee's Multi-Year Work Programme. Members are invited to amend the scope of the review as they see fit.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Property, Highways and Transport Select Committee comment on, amend, and agree the scoping report to initiate the review into Road Safety.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

At the Select Committee's previous meeting, there was appetite from Members to conduct a number of simultaneous smaller scale scrutiny reviews on the topic areas set out below.

The Council's statutory scrutiny officer has advised that this approach would present feasibility issues, not only for officer capacity, but also the committee's workload itself. However, the Committee are reminded that, if they are minded to, they can conduct back-to-back short-mid length reviews rather than conducting one major review per municipal year.

As mentioned above, the Committee had shortlisted a number of potential review topics at their previous meeting to be explored further. These areas are listed below with a brief explanation regarding their feasibility and recommended course of action.

Decarbonisation of the Council's Buildings

With a number of large buildings under the Council's asset portfolio, including, the Civic Centre, Highgrove Pool and Hillingdon Leisure Centre, the Select Committee were minded to explore the decarbonisation of these assets. Upon liaising with officers, a decarbonisation plan is already underway, but at a relatively early stage, so it is advised this would be more appropriate for a one-off monitoring item than an in-depth scrutiny review, at a suitable time when visible progress has been made.

Housing Maintenance and Refurbishment

The Committee were minded to investigate further the maintenance and refurbishment of the Council's housing stock, whilst looking at specific factors such as maintenance during tenancies and rainwater management. Discussions with officers deemed this topic more appropriate as a monitoring item due to the extensive ongoing work under the Housing Forward Investment Programme 2023/24, which was presented to [Cabinet on 14 September 2023](#). The Committee currently has a Building Safety monitoring report scheduled on its work programme for early 2024.

Road Safety (recommended review)

Members were minded to conduct a review assessing the Council's approach to road safety, with a specific interest in how road safety was managed within the vicinity of the Borough's schools. A review into this topic would be feasible taking a broad assessment of the Council's road safety initiatives and its engagement with Hillingdon's schools, for example. It is also an area of council responsibility that has not had any in-depth scrutiny or review by Members in a very long time.

A draft scoping report for a prospective road safety review is attached to this report and it is advised this may be the best option for a review at the current time, naturally subject to Members' views.

Bus Routes

The Committee were interested in exploring the way in which bus routes within Hillingdon could be reviewed with an eye to assisting areas of the Borough that may presently be underserved. The routing of buses within the Borough falls under the remit of Transport for London and would therefore not lend itself fully for a Council based scrutiny review; it is however suggested that the Committee seek to add a one-off item to the work programme inviting a representative from TfL to attend a future meeting to discuss this topic with Members.

Fleet Strategy

Members expressed an interest in reviewing the Council's fleet of vehicles and Fleet Strategy to ensure that the strategy and fleet were aligning with the Council's zero carbon commitments, that it was fit for purpose, and cost effective. Discussions with officers highlighted that a review of the Fleet Replacement Programme had recently taken place and work is ongoing which would move the fleet towards the Council's zero carbon commitments. There are plans for new initiatives and technologies in this area already underway. There is a one-off Fleet information item scheduled on the Committee's work programme for November 2023 which would be an appropriate juncture to monitor the implementation of the Fleet Strategy and replacement programme.

Implications on related Council policies

A role of the Select Committees is to make recommendations on service changes and improvements to the decision-making Cabinet, who are responsible for the Council's policy and direction.

How this report benefits Hillingdon residents

None at this stage, pending any findings approved by Cabinet.

Financial Implications

It is important that the Committee considers cost effective proposals that benefit resident

taxpayers in relation to this review, which would ultimately be determined by Cabinet as part of the Council's broader budget planning process.

Legal Implications

None at this stage.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL.