Audit and Scrutiny Committee
29 September 2026

COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME – NOVEMBER 2026

Head of Service:	Andrew Bircher, Assistant Director of Corporate Services
Report Author:	Corporate Governance and Strategy Manager
Wards affected:	(All Wards)
Appendices (attached):	None

Summary

This report presents the Committee's Work Programme for 2026/27 for review and approval, including completed business, scheduled reports and proposed scrutiny items.

Recommendation (s)

The Committee is asked to:

(1) Approve the Work Programme set out in Section 2.

1 Reason for Recommendation

1.1 Paragraph 4.6 of the Constitution states that the Committee "can scrutinise decisions made by the Full Council or policy committees". Paragraphs 1.3(i) and 1.3(iii) of Annex 4.6 to the Council Operating Framework state that the Committee is responsible for arranging the Council's overview and scrutiny functions and approving an annual overview and scrutiny Work Programme. The Committee may therefore review, approve and amend its Work Programme.

2 Background

2.1 The committee Work Programme is presented below. The programme includes reports that relate to the committee's areas of responsibility, as stipulated in its terms of reference.

Audit and Scrutiny Committee
29 September 2026

2.2 Work Programme:

Meeting		Agenda
Past	16 July 2026	• Internal Audit Annual Conclusion and 2025-26 Plan • Annual Governance Statement 2025-2026 • Performance and Risk Report: 2025-2026 End of Year Report • Use of Urgent Decisions Annual Report ○ To include only scrutiny of the urgent decision process followed for UD158 (as per meeting February 2026) • Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Annual Letter 2025-2026 • External Audit Transparency Report (not considered due to guillotine) • Work Programme (not considered due to guillotine)
Past	29 September 2026	• Revenue Budget Monitoring – Quarter 1 (2026-2027) • Capital Budget Monitoring – Quarter 1 (2026-2027) • Performance and Risk Report - September 2026 • Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) and Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Updates – September 2026 • External Audit Transparency Report • Work Programme
Present	12 November 2026 (this meeting)	• External Audit Findings Report and Auditors' Annual Report • Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2 (2026-2027) • Capital Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2 (2026-2027) • Final Internal Audit: Progress Report • Final Counter-Fraud and Whistleblowing Annual Report (inc. gifts and hospitality) ~~• Placeholder: Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) and Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Updates – November 2026~~ ~~• Scrutiny item: Hook Road Area Project*~~ • Work Programme

Future	4 February 2027	• Final Revenue Budget Monitoring – Quarter 3 (2026-2027) • Final Capital Budget Monitoring – Quarter 3 (2026-2027) • Final Community Safety Partnership Annual Report • Final Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report • Placeholder: External Audit Update • Placeholder: Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) and Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Updates – February 2027 • Scrutiny item: Hook Road Arena Project* • Work Programme
Future	18 March 2027	• Final Internal Audit Annual Conclusion • Final Annual Governance Statement (March 2027) and Code of Corporate Governance Report • Final Treasury Management Update • Final Performance and Risk Report – March 2027 • Final Committee Annual Report 2026-2027 (to be presented to Full Council) • Final Annual Complaints Report • Final Annual Procurement Waiver Report 2026 • Final Placeholder: External Audit Update • Final Placeholder: Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) and Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) Updates – March 2027 • Final Placeholder: Priority Projects Update • Final Work Programme

2.3 **Work Programme requests:**

2.4 No requests have been received since the last Committee meeting.

2.5 Additional Work Programme items outside the Committee's business-as-usual programme will need to be scoped with the relevant officers to identify the resources, information and timetable required, particularly alongside Local Government Reorganisation commitments. Any resource constraints affecting a proposed item will be reported transparently to the Committee.

2.6 To support proportionate use of officer capacity during Local Government Reorganisation, members are invited to identify any scheduled reports that no longer require consideration before the final Committee meeting in March 2027. Any proposed removal or deferral will remain a matter for the Committee to determine.

2.7 Updates to the Work Programme:

2.8 The “Scrutiny item: Hook Road Arena Project” was added to the Work Programme following agreement at the September 2026 meeting. It was provisionally scheduled for November, subject to confirmation that the report could be prepared within the available timetable. Under the Council’s committee-report timetable, a complete draft for the November meeting was required by 2 October 2026, three days after the September meeting. The item has therefore been scheduled for February 2027 to allow sufficient time to determine its scope, identify the required resources and prepare the report.

2.9 Placeholder: Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGO) and Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) Updates – November 2026: there are no updates to bring to the Committee.

3 Call-in Requests

3.1 Two call-in requests have been received since the last Committee meeting.

3.2 The first request contained four separate call-ins related to four agenda items’ decisions made by the Licensing and Planning Policy Committee on Tuesday, 22nd September, 2026.

3.3 The Operating Framework, Annex 4.6, Overview, Audit and Scrutiny (including Call-in Procedure and Councillor Calls for Action), sets out the procedure for making and determining a call-in request. Paragraph 14.2.4 defines the requirements for a valid request and expressly provides, at subparagraph (i), that a call-in request must be made in writing and sent, either by email or in hard copy, to the Scrutiny Officer (Corporate Governance and Strategy Manager). Paragraph 14.2.2 provides for a call-in period of five working days.

3.4 The request was not submitted to the Scrutiny Officer within that five-working-day period. In accordance with Annex 4.6, the Scrutiny Officer brought the request to the attention of the Chair and Vice-Chair of Audit and Scrutiny and provided them with the relevant information to enable them to consider whether the requirements for a valid call-in had been met. The determination as to validity was a matter for the Chair and Vice-Chair, with the outcome of that determination to be communicated by the Chair.

3.5 The determination reached was that the call-in request was not valid because the procedural requirements prescribed by Annex 4.6 had not been satisfied. The Chair subsequently communicated that determination to the requesting Councillor.

3.6 The requesting Councillor challenged the determination and sought a review by the Monitoring Officer. In the Monitoring Officer's absence, the Deputy Monitoring Officer (DMO) reviewed both the basis upon which the Chair and Vice-Chair had reached their determination and the process by which that determination had been made and communicated. It should be noted that Annex 4.6 does not provide a right of appeal against a determination made by the Chair and Vice-Chair as to the validity of a call-in request.

3.7 As part of that review, the DMO confirmed that the Scrutiny Officer had provided the relevant information to both the Chair and Vice-Chair of Audit and Scrutiny before the Chair communicated the determination to the requesting Councillor. In preparing the information provided to the Chair and Vice-Chair, the Scrutiny Officer had also had the benefit of the Monitoring Officer's initial view that the call-in requests were invalid for the reasons subsequently communicated.

3.8 The DMO's review identified that, although both the Chair and Vice-Chair had received the relevant information and had the opportunity to consider it, there had not been a discussion between the Chair and Vice-Chair before the Chair communicated the determination under paragraph 14.2.6.

3.9 In light of this, the DMO subsequently spoke separately with the Chair and Vice-Chair. The Vice-Chair confirmed that he had no concerns regarding the determination communicated by the Chair and that, had he held any concerns, he would have raised them. The Chair and Vice-Chair subsequently discussed the matter and each confirmed to the DMO that they remained in agreement with the determination communicated to the requesting Councillor.

3.10 The DMO explained to the requesting Councillor that, whilst the process should have been more clearly followed insofar as consultation between the Chair and Vice-Chair was concerned, the procedural irregularity was not considered material and did not require the determination as to the validity of the call-in requests to be set aside.

3.11 The second call-in request related to Agenda item 4 of the Extraordinary Council Meeting on 26th October 2026: 'Epsom and Ewell Local Plan (2022-2040) Proposed Main Modifications Consultation'. The determination of the Chairs was that this request was not valid, as decisions of the Full Council cannot be called-in under the Constitution, only the decisions of the policy committees.

4 Risk Assessment

Legal or other duties

4.1 Equality Impact Assessment

4.1.1 No direct implications arising from this report.

4.2 Crime & Disorder

4.2.1 No direct implications arising from this report.

4.3 Safeguarding

4.3.1 No direct implications arising from this report.

4.4 Dependencies

4.4.1 Delivery of the Work Programme depends on timely contributions from relevant Council services, internal audit, external audit and external partners, including the Community Safety Partnership.

4.5 Other

4.5.1 No other direct implications arising from this report.

5 Financial Implications

5.1 None for the purposes of this report.

5.2 **Section 151 Officer's comments**: There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any additional scrutiny items or changes to the Work Programme should be considered alongside available officer capacity and the financial and resource implications of Local Government Reorganisation.

6 Legal Implications

6.1 None for the purposes of this report.

6.2 **Legal Officer's comments**: As set out in the report.

7 Policies, Plans & Partnerships

7.1 **Council's Key Priorities:** The following Key Priorities are engaged: N/A

7.2 **Service Plans:** The preparation and maintenance of the Committee's Work Programme is not identified as a separate action in the current Service Delivery Plan.

7.3 **Climate and Environmental Impact of recommendations:** No direct implications arising from this report.

7.4 **Sustainability Policy and Community Safety Implications:** No direct implications arising from this report.

7.5 **Partnerships:** No direct implications arising from this report

8 Background papers

8.1 The documents referred to in compiling this report are as follows:

Previous reports:

- Work Programme, *Audit and Scrutiny Committee*, 29 September 2026. Available online at Epsom and Ewell Democracy [accessed 2 October 2026].

Other papers:

- None.