

Title of Report	Proposed Changes to Scrutiny Commission Remits
For Consideration By	Constitution Committee
Meeting Date	14 April 2026
Classification	Open
Ward(s) Affected	All
Director	Louise Humphreys, Director of Legal, Democratic & Electoral Services and Monitoring Officer
Report Author	Craig Player, Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Overview and scrutiny is a statutory function which was established by the Local Government Act 2000. It is required in all local authorities which operate the executive model of governance (Elected Mayor and Cabinet or Leader and Cabinet).
- 1.2. The Scrutiny Panel and Scrutiny Commissions carry out the Council's overview & scrutiny function and are set up to hold the Elected Mayor and Cabinet to account and scrutinise decisions and performance of the local authority and organisations providing services in the borough.
- 1.3. The names and remits for the Scrutiny Panel and four thematic Scrutiny Commissions were last updated in 2017 following an independent review of the function undertaken in 2016.
- 1.4. A detailed overview of the current Scrutiny Panel and Scrutiny Commission remits can be found at Appendix 1.
- 1.5. The purpose of this report is to bring forward proposals to change the names and remits of the Scrutiny Commissions aimed at reflecting the current operating context, more clearly aligning work programmes with the Council's organisational structure and strategic priorities, and addressing the issues which are of importance to local communities.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1. **That the Constitution Committee recommend to Full Council the proposed name and remit changes to the Council's Scrutiny Commissions as set out in Appendix 2 to this report.**

2.2. That the Monitoring Officer be requested to draft the necessary amendments to all relevant parts of the Council's Constitution to give effect to the proposed changes in readiness for consideration by Full Council.

3. Background

- 3.1. In 2024, the Council commissioned the Centre for Governance & Scrutiny (CfGS) to conduct an independent review of the overview & scrutiny function to assess whether it is adequately supported, operating effectively and has robust accountability processes. This was the first comprehensive review of the function since 2016.
- 3.2. The CfGS review identified a "large scrutiny capability, supported by a very able scrutiny support team and strong, competent chairs". It suggested, however, that the overview and scrutiny function "could be more focused, agile and effective" if it better aligned its work with the Council's Strategic Plan and various delivery plans.
- 3.3. Following the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge in 2024, the Council also committed to reviewing its performance management. This commitment was aimed at establishing stronger monitoring and governance arrangements across all levels of organisation, including member-led assurance and oversight structures like overview and scrutiny.
- 3.4. In addition, in its recent special investigation report the Housing Ombudsman identified issues with the way scrutiny and oversight across the organisation was structured and supported to identify and act on housing issues. This was seen as a barrier to effective oversight of the delivery of housing services and a risk to long-term improvement.
- 3.5. It should be noted that, since the previous service review was undertaken in 2016, the Council has had to navigate a number of new challenges to ensure the wellbeing and progress of local communities. This includes continued post-pandemic recovery, digital transformation, the housing crisis, climate change and sustainability, rising social inequality and financial constraints.
- 3.6. There have also been significant shifts in national policy objectives and the legislative landscape for local authorities. Regulatory reforms have been seen across the sector, collaboration across organisational boundaries is now the norm and there is a stronger focus on place-based delivery across key areas such as social care, health integration, social housing, planning and climate change.
- 3.7. In order to reflect the current operating context, more clearly align work programmes with the Council's organisation and strategic priorities, and continue to address the issues which are important to local communities, changes to the names and remits of the Scrutiny Commissions are proposed.

Proposed name changes

3.8. The following name changes are proposed:

- a) Living in Hackney Scrutiny Commission to be renamed Housing & Homelessness Scrutiny Commission
- b) Health in Hackney Scrutiny Commission to be renamed Adults, Health & Integration Scrutiny Commission
- c) Skills, Economy & Growth to be renamed Skills, Place & Economy Scrutiny Commission.

3.9. There are no proposed name changes to the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission or the Scrutiny Panel.

Proposed remit changes

3.10. The following remit changes are proposed:

a) Housing & Homelessness Scrutiny Commission to adopt a revised remit encompassing:

- Housing strategy and development
- Council housing (including asset management and services for tenants and homeowners)
- Housing delivery (including estate regeneration)
- Private sector housing and housing affordability
- Relationships with registered providers
- Rough sleeping and homelessness prevention (including temporary accommodation)
- Planning (residential).

b) Skills, Place & Economy Commission to adopt a revised remit encompassing:

- Community safety
- Economy and economic regeneration
- Adult learning and skills
- Transport
- Environment (including public realm & streetscene, waste & recycling, energy & sustainability)
- Parking and markets
- Parks and leisure
- Arts, culture and libraries
- Voluntary and community sector
- Corporate property
- Licensing
- Planning (businesses).

- 3.11. It is proposed that the statutory duty to scrutinise the local Community Safety Partnership by the Council or any responsible authority and co-operating bodies relating to crime and disorder in accordance with the Police and Justice Act 2006 will move from the Housing & Homelessness Scrutiny Commission to the Skills, Place & Economy Scrutiny Commission.
- 3.12. There are no proposed remit changes to the Children & Young People Scrutiny Commission, Adults, Health & Integration Scrutiny Commission or the Scrutiny Panel.
- 3.13. There are also no proposed changes to the membership size of the Scrutiny Panel or Scrutiny Commissions.
- 3.14. A more detailed overview of the proposed name and remit changes can be found at Appendix 2.

Resource Implications

- 3.15. Support for the new scrutiny commission structure will not require any additional officer resources.

Equality, inclusion, diversity and belonging (including statutory equality impact assessment)

- 3.16. Members have a duty under the Equality Act 2010 to have regard to the need to eliminate discrimination and to promote equality when exercising their functions. However, there are no particular equalities implications arising from the proposed changes.

Sustainability and climate change

- 3.17. There are no sustainability and climate change issues that flow immediately from this report or the recommendations.

Consultation/engagement

- 3.18. In developing the proposed name and remit changes the following key stakeholders were engaged and their feedback incorporated into the proposals:

- Mayor & Cabinet Leads
- Scrutiny Chairs
- Opposition Party Leads
- Group Directors

4. Financial implications

- 4.1. There are no direct financial implications arising as a result of the recommendations within this report.

- 4.2. The costs of the scrutiny function are managed within existing council budgets.

Financial Implications prepared on behalf of the Group Director Finance & Corporate Resources by: John Holden, Assistant Director of Finance - Sustainability, Public Realm and Special Projects, john.holden@hackney.gov.uk, 26/3/2026

5. HR/OD implications

- 5.1. There are no HR implications within this report

HR/OD implications prepared on behalf of the Director of HR/OD by: Tina Dempsey, AD HR & OD, Tina.dempsey@hackney.gov.uk, 1/4/26

6. Legal implications

- 6.1. Article 9.11 of the Council's constitution gives the Constitution Committee the authority to review the constitution to ensure that it is fit for purpose by considering changes proposed by Councillors, officers or other committees. The recommendations proposed at 2.1 of this report relate to the renaming of committees and remit changes. Provided that all references within the constitution and scheme of delegation are updated accordingly, there are no substantive legal implications that flow from this report.

Legal implications prepared on behalf of the Director of Legal, Democratic & Electoral Services by: Juliet Babb, Assistant Director Legal & Governance, juliet.babb@legal.gov.uk, Date 23 March 2026

Appendices

- Appendix 1 - Current Overview & Scrutiny Remits 2025/26
- Appendix 2 - Proposed Overview & Scrutiny Remits 2026/27 onwards