

REVIEW OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2016/17

Overview and Scrutiny Panel **25 October 2016**

Report Author **Senior Democratic Services Officer**

Portfolio Holder **Councillor Crow-Brown, Cabinet Member for Corporate Governance**

Status **For Decision**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Key Decision **No**

Reasons for Key **N/A**

Previously Considered by **None**

Ward: **Thanet Wide**

Executive Summary:

The purpose of this report is to update Panel Members on the progress regarding the work of the Panel, most of which is undertaken through three working parties. This report reviews the work programme for 2016/17.

Recommendation(s):

Members are recommended to note the report.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money	There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
Legal	There are no legal issues arising directly from this report.
Corporate	The work programme should help to deliver effective scrutiny. An active Scrutiny programme is part of good governance and will, ultimately, underpin the Council's use of resources assessment.
Equalities Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty	Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to the aims of the Duty at the time the decision is taken. The aims of the Duty are: (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it, and (iii) foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.

	Protected characteristics: age, gender, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.	
	Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.	
	Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,	✓
	Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it	
	Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.	✓
There no equity and equalities issues arising directly from this report but the Council needs to retain a strong focus and understanding on issues of diversity amongst the local community and ensure service delivery matches these. It should also be noted that a review to be conducted by one of the working parties focuses on protecting vulnerable individuals of the local community from violence.		

CORPORATE PRIORITIES (tick those relevant)✓	
A clean and welcoming Environment	
Promoting inward investment and job creation	
Supporting neighbourhoods	✓

CORPORATE VALUES (tick those relevant)✓	
Delivering value for money	✓
Supporting the Workforce	
Promoting open communications	✓

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 This report allows Members to review the Overview and Scrutiny Panel work programme agreed at the Annual Panel meeting on 24 May 2016. The Panel reconstituted the Community Safety Partnership Working Party, Corporate Performance Review Working Party and Electoral Registration Process Review Working Party. This is an update of the work programme since the previous meeting held on 16 August 2016.
- 1.2 Brief progress comments for each sub group are in subsequent sections, including Table 2 of the report. Chairmen and other Members of the working parties could provide additional comments during the debate of this item at the Panel meeting.

2.0 Community Safety Partnership Working Party

- 2.1 Members met on 03 October and received an informative presentation on 'Sexual Offences Victims Support in Thanet' from the Kent Police representatives, as part of the Thanet Community Safety Partnership.
- 2.2 The meeting was informed that since the Home Office review in 2013, the Police had improved the processes for investigating, prosecuting and supporting sexual offences victims through the adoption of national standards. This led to the setting up of 39 Rape Assault Referral Clinics (SARC) across England and Wales, and Kent had one such clinic based at the Maidstone Hospital, where victims from Thanet would be referred to. There was also an East Kent Rape Line, an affiliate body of the national charity Rape Crisis, based in Canterbury.

- 2.3 Members were advised that the statistics regarding reported rape cases, investigations, prosecutions and convictions should be context informed by the fact that the process is long drawn by its very nature taking up to about twelve months to eighteen months from reported incident to conviction. Members were assured that the Police had dedicated, highly trained and specialised officers who deal with sexual offences investigations. Further information can be found in the minutes of the working party meeting on the Council website on the link below:

<http://democracy.thanet.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=504&MId=4544&Ver=4>

- 2.4 A follow-up presentation was being planned that would provide additional information to the working party before Members can draw some conclusion to the issue, which could lead to recommendations being brought to the Panel for consideration and perhaps onward submission to the Kent and Medway Police Crimes Panel.

3.0 Corporate Performance Review Working Party

- 3.1 Members received quarterly performance reports from Thanet District Council, East Kent Services (including EKHR) and East Kent Housing. From the reports received, Members were concerned about the residents' annual survey results which indicated some dissatisfaction with the street cleaning services. In response officers indicated that they were working to address the issue by bringing in more mechanical sweepers.
- 3.2 East Kent Services reported council tax and business rates collection levels that were less than at this stage in the previous year. However officers assured Members that there was no need for concern as this performance will improve soon. Officers were concerned about the number of verbal and in one instance physical attacks on staff at the Gateway by some customers. In addition to reporting such incidents to the Police, management was developing a guide for staff on how best to manage such situations in future.
- 3.3 The new Chief Executive acknowledged that there were a number of challenges that East Kent Housing was facing this financial year. These included the following:
1. Voids Performance;
 2. The need to address asset management under the Capital Programme;
 3. Performance is under target for heating repairs for housing stock in Thanet.
- 3.4 Members were assured that EK Housing management was working on initiatives to resolve the above issues. These included the recruitment of senior staff (at director level with a focus on property) and middle managers. They were also negotiating with the Health & Safety Executive (HSE) to see whether it is possible to hold an annual licence for Trove Court and Kennedy House, which would allow them to carry out the work without the fourteen day notification to the HSE each time asbestos material was discovered in the any of the properties.
- 3.5 A review of the asset management by a leading consultancy, HQN is currently underway and recommendations from that exercise would be reported to EK Housing management and the implementation of these recommendations would be monitored by the EK Housing Board.

4.0 Electoral Registration Process Review Working Party

- 4.1 The working party will be meeting on 17 October to consider a report on 'current process for increasing voter awareness, registration and participation in the electoral process.'

4.2 Members would like to explore and thereafter propose to the Electoral Services Team ways to improve voter registration in the district.

5.0 Key Agenda Items for Future Overview & Scrutiny Panel Meetings

5.1 Table 1 highlights some of the key agenda items for future Overview & Scrutiny Panel meetings for 2016/17. The items are sourced from the Forward Plan, whilst others are standing items or would have been requested by Panel or non-Panel Members. Table 2 reports on progress to date on the activities of all the sub groups set up by the Panel in 2016/17.

5.2 Terms of reference of each of the current sub groups are set out at the end of the report for ease of reference by Members during Panel discussions.

6.0 The Sub Group Activities and Watching Briefs Report Updates Table 2

6.1 The table is sub-divided in order to illustrate the suggested nature of the work involved:

- a) **Standing Working Party** – a formal sub-committee which will report its findings back to the Panel for recommendation onto the executive.
- b) **Presentations** – these are presentations to the Panel that will allow the Panel to consider whether any further work should be undertaken and a specific item included in the Panel's work programme.
- c) **Watching briefs** – possible additions to the work programme dependent upon any changes in the status of these items.

Table 1 – Current OSP Work Programme for 2016/17		
Overview & Scrutiny Panel Meeting Date	Indicative Agenda Items	Issue Source
25 October 2016		
	Review OSP Work Programme for 2016/17	Standing Agenda Item
	Fulfilling Thanet's growth and development opportunities	Community Services item on Forward Plan
	New - Combined Safeguarding Policy	Community Services item on Forward Plan
	Forward Plan & Exempt Cabinet Report List	Standing Agenda Item
21 November 2016 Extraordinary OSP	Thanet Local Plan - Consultation	Community Services Item on the Forward Plan
	Budget Strategy 2017/18	Financial Services item on the Forward Plan
	Fees & Charges 2017/18	Financial Services item on the Forward Plan
	Council Tax Support Scheme	Financial Services item on the Forward Plan
13 December 2016	Cabinet Member Presentation	
	Review of Thanet District Council Scrutiny Arrangements	Corporate Governance
	Asset Management Plan	Corporate Governance Services item on the Forward Plan
	Review OSP Work Programme for 2016/17	Standing Agenda Item
	Forward Plan & Exempt Cabinet Report List	Standing Agenda Item
26 January 2017	Budget and Medium Financial Plan 2017-2021	Financial Services item on the Forward Plan
	Review OSP Work Programme for 2016/17	Standing Agenda Item
	Forward Plan & Exempt Cabinet Report List	Standing Agenda Item
14 February 2017	Cabinet Member Presentation	
	Review OSP Work Programme for 2016/17	Standing Agenda Item
	Forward Plan & Exempt Cabinet Report List	Standing Agenda Item
25 April 2017	Cabinet Member Presentation	
	Review OSP Work Programme for 2016/17	Standing Agenda Item
	Forward Plan & Exempt Cabinet Report List	Standing Agenda Item
23 May 2017	Review OSP Work Programme for 2016/17	Standing Agenda Item
	Forward Plan & Exempt Cabinet Report List	Standing Agenda Item

Table 2 – Current Sub-Group Progress and Watching Briefs Updates for 2016/17				
Sub Group/Issue	Composition/ Members	Lead Officer	Comment on Progress	Status
Date of Establishment 01.10.09 Community Safety Partnership Working Party	Cllr Curran (Chairman) Cllr Campbell Cllr Dixon Cllr Falcon Cllr Hayton Cllr Martin Cllr M. Saunders	Penny Button; Jessica Bailey	The group met on 03 October 2016 and received a presentation on support service for victims of rape in Thanet' from Kent Police and will get a follow-up multi agency presentation in due course before Members decide on how to conclude the investigation which could lead to suggestions being made to the Police Crimes Panel on how to improve the service.	On going
Date of Establishment: 28.05.08 Corporate Performance Review Working Party	Cllr Campbell (Chairman) Cllr Connor Cllr Curran Cllr Dennis Cllr Dexter Cllr Jaye-Jones Vacant (Independent Group)*	Tim Willis	The working party met on 23 August 2016 and received Qtr.1 performance reports from TDC, EK Services (including EKHR) and EK Housing.	On going
Date of Establishment: 29.05.12 Electoral Registration Process Review Working Party	Cllr K. Gregory (Chairman) Cllr Campbell Cllr Connor Cllr Dawson Cllr Falcon Cllr Grove Cllr Jaye-Jones	Claire Hawken	The sub-group is scheduled to receive reports regarding voter registration updates by ward on 17 October 2016.	On going
Presentations				
2015/16 Presentations by Portfolio Holders and Directors of Services	N/A	All Portfolio Holders and Directors		
Watching Brief Items				
05 December 2013: Full Council Referral of a Petition to OSP - QEQM Hospital A&E	OSP	Penny Button	OSP forwarded the response from the Chairman of the KCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee to Full Council on 15	OSP keeping a watching brief on the issue

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			<p>October 2015 and Members noted the report.</p> <p>The Panel also agreed to keep a watchful brief to monitor the progress by EKHUFT towards developing the new clinical strategy for the region whilst maintaining a special interest on its implications for Thanet District.</p> <p>The cross-party QEQM Hospital Cabinet Advisory Group met for their first meeting on 21 April 2016 and agreed their terms of reference. They agreed to keep a watching brief until there were some developments at EKHUFT.</p>	
Proposed review of the Winter Gardens as a major events venue	OSP	Head of Economic Development & Asset Management	<p>On 18 August 2015, Panel Members agreed to maintain a watching brief on the issue and to await the completion of the current tenancy agreements review being conducted by the Executive. Members may wish to note that an item on 'Asset Management Plan' is due to come to the Panel on 25 October and thereafter will be taken to Cabinet on 17 November 2016. A decision to adopt an Asset Management</p>	OSP keeping a watching brief on the issue

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Sub Group/Issue	Composition/ Members	Lead Officer	Comment on Progress	Status
			Plan will be taken at Cabinet.	

***NB:** The Independent Group has been unable to assign a member from their Group to the Corporate Performance Review Working Party.

Contact Officer:	Charles Hungwe, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Ext 7186
Reporting to:	Nick Hughes, Committee Services Manager, Ext: 7208

Annex List

None	N/A
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Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation

Finance	Matt Sanham, Financial Services Manager
Legal	Ciara Feeney, Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer

Community Safety Partnership Working Party Terms of Reference

1. Reducing Re-offending;
2. Safeguarding our most vulnerable people;
3. Community Confidence and Agency Collaboration.

Corporate Performance Review Working Party Terms of Reference

1. To monitor half-yearly, the performance of the shared services or outsourced arrangements against set targets and conduct annual review of agreements for these arrangements to ensure value for money and savings; and propose action points for improvement;
2. To monitor the performance of the Medium Term Financial Plan;
3. To maintain an overview of the major projects Council is involved in, using the project management tool kit;
4. To review the 2015-19 Corporate Plan to determine progress;
5. To review the strategies of Council to overcome the impact of lack of income and other revenue shortfalls in forward budget, debt management strategies and provision of services to residents;
6. To review the Council's progress against the Corporate Improvement Plan produced and monitored by the Strategic Development Group.

Electoral Registration Process Review Working Party Terms of Reference

1. To review the annual Canvass for 2015/16 in order to inform the electoral registration process for 2016/17;
2. Receive the findings of any internal post-election review of the arrangements and administration of the May 2016 Police & Crime Commissioner Elections and the EU Referendum;
3. To contribute ideas for consideration by the Council's Electoral Registration Officer (through the Overview & Scrutiny Panel) on options for increasing public awareness of, and participation in, voter registration.