
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT TO COUNCIL

To: **Council – 14 July 2016**

By: **Cllr D. Saunders, Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **Thanet Wide**

Summary: **The purpose of the report is to highlight some of the key activities that have planned for by the Overview & Scrutiny Panel during the course of this municipal year 2016/17 and progress to date regarding implementation of the Panel's work programme.**

For Information

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 Members agreed at the Full Council meeting on 2 October 2014 that 'at each of its ordinary meetings, Council will receive a written report introduced by the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel on the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel since the last Council meeting. Such a report will be subject to comment or debate in the usual way.'
- 1.2 The report will therefore provide the basis for debate by Members on on-going scrutiny activities and hopefully lead to sharing of views and ideas to enhance the scrutiny function at Thanet District Council.
- 1.3 The Panel set up its work programme for 2016/7 at the May meeting and agreed to conduct most of its work through the reconstituted sub committees.

2.0 Exploring Effective Scrutiny Approaches

- 2.1 I intend to progress the request that was adopted by the Panel at the May meeting that I 'engage the Leader of Council and Officers on behalf of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel to explore proposals for alternative scrutiny arrangements that includes pre-decision scrutiny with a view to a report being produced on those proposals for consideration by a future meeting of both the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Cabinet, once the discussions between myself and the Leader have concluded.
- 2.2 I do hope that the outcome of these discussions will lead to positive change to the scrutiny process which could include time limited reviews on issues of corporate interest to the Council. I have had an initial discussion through email exchanges with the Leader and he appears agreeable to having some discussions on the subject. I will need to follow this up in the coming weeks and with support from officers, come up with a position to share with the Panel on the way forward.

3.0 Training For Scrutiny Members

- 3.1 Eight current Panel and six non Panel members attended the scrutiny training on 08 June 2016. The training provided an opportunity for Members and Officers to interact and share some thoughts about scrutiny processes as some council officers also attend the same training sessions together with Members. I would hope that both Members and officers build on those discussions as we work towards creating an effective scrutiny function for the council.
- 3.2 Going by the feedback responses received from members and officers who attended the training sessions, the training was a successful and worthwhile exercise. However, whilst I appreciate that Members had their reasons for not attending I would in future encourage Members to attend these types of courses as they prove invaluable in enhancing knowledge of important topics such as scrutiny.
- 3.3 I hope that moving forward, the Panel and its sub committees will take on board some of the knowledge, skills and tips provided at the scrutiny training and shape their work programmes in a way that would achieve more effective scrutiny.

4.0 Community Safety Partnership Working Party

- 4.1 The working party will meet on 30 June 2016.

5.0 Corporate Performance Review Working Party

- 5.1 It is anticipated that the working party will continue to monitor the corporate performance of TDC.
- 5.2 Members will also continue to monitor the performance of the council through receiving quarterly internal corporate performance and budget monitoring reports. I expect the sub-committee to take the lead in scrutinising the budget proposals, once these are ready for the forthcoming year.
- 5.3 Members will review the performance of joint arrangements that include East Kent Services (and EKHR), East Kent Housing in relation to service level agreements that are in place where applicable. This will hopefully be detailed out in the work programme at the working party's first meeting of the year on 18 July.

6.0 Electoral Registration Process Review Working Party

- 6.1 The working party will meet on 07 July 2016.

7.0 Call-In of Cabinet Decisions

- 7.1 There were no call-ins made by the Panel since the last Council meeting in May.

8.0 Cabinet Presentations at OSP Meetings

- 8.1 Towards the end of 2015/16 I invited Councillor Stummer-Schmertzing, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise Development to a Panel meeting to make a presentation on the following topic:

‘The key objectives for the Regeneration and Enterprise Services Portfolio regarding Regeneration in Thanet District.’

- 8.2 Unfortunately this invitation was made at an inopportune time as Cabinet were working on a new economic development strategy for Thanet. Councillor Stummer-Schmertzing although happy to attend, was unable to do so due to the foregoing reason.
- 8.3 I will be inviting him to the August Panel meeting since the draft economic strategy has been highlighted in the Forward Plan as going to be considered by the Panel on 16 August. I do hope that the portfolio holder will be in attendance to present the proposed strategy to the Panel and engage Members in debate on the details regarding Cabinet’s vision for economic development for Thanet.

9.0 Overview and Scrutiny Panel Recommendations to Cabinet Implementation Monitoring

- 9.1 This new section to my report will provide updates from time to time on the implementation progress of any Panel recommendations to Cabinet.
- 9.2 Currently there are no Panel recommendations under consideration or being implemented by Cabinet.

10.0 Corporate Implications

10.1 Financial and VAT

- 10.1.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

10.2 Legal

- 10.2.1 There are no significant legal implications arising directly from this report. A presentation of the OSP Chairman’s report to Full Council enables the Chairman to fulfil their duty as is required by the Council’s Constitution.

10.3 Equity and Equalities

- 10.3.1 No implications arise directly 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.
- 10.3.2 It is important to be aware of the Council’s responsibility under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and show evidence that due consideration had been given to the equalities impact that may be brought upon communities by the decisions made by Council.

11.0 Recommendation

11.1 Members are invited to discuss and note the report.

12.0 Decision Making Process

12.1 The Council Constitution allows the Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel to present a report at each scheduled Council meeting for Members' information.

Contact Officer:	Charles Hungwe, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Ext 7186
Reporting to:	Nick Hughes, Committee Services Manager, Ext 7108

Annex List

None	N/A
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Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	Matthew Sanham, Corporate Finance Manager (Service Support)
Legal	Ciara Feeney, Head of Legal Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer