

REVIEW OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2017/18

Overview and Scrutiny Panel **25 January 2018**

Report Author **Senior Democratic Services Officer**

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

Status **For Decision**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Key Decision **No**

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 2017/18 and suggests a time limited work stream on reviewing proposals in the draft Local Plan.

Recommendation(s):

Members are requested to consider the following recommendations:

1. With regards to political proportionality and membership size for each Panel sub group, Members are asked to either:
 - a) Reduce the size of sub groups from seven to six members, the UKIP group losing a seat. The proportionality of sub groups then being:
 - 3 UKIP;
 - 2 Conservatives;
 - 1 Labour.
 - Or
 - b) Increase the size of sub groups from seven to eight members, the Conservative group gaining a seat. The proportionality of sub groups then being:
 - 4 UKIP;
 - 3 Conservatives;
 - 1 Labour.
2. Members are also requested to comment on the updates and note the report.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS									
Financial and Value for Money	There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. However, if Cabinet agree any other recommendations other than those mentioned within the body of this report there could be financial implications for the council in that any further commitment for Thanet District Council to provide funding will require the identification of a suitable funding source.								
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.								
Equality Act 2010 & Public Sector Equality Duty	<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="2">Please indicate which aim is relevant to the report.</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act,</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.</td> <td style="text-align: center;">✓</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>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.</p>	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.	✓
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Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it.	✓								

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 Panel meeting on 21 November 2017. The Panel's current work programme is made up of the Community Safety Partnership Working Party and Corporate Performance Review Working Party. This report provides an update of the work programme since the previous meeting.

- 1.2 Chairmen and members of the two working parties could provide additional comments during the debate of this item at the Panel meeting.
- 1.3 Table 1 in Annex 1, highlights some of the key agenda items for future Overview & Scrutiny Panel meetings for 2017/18. The items are sourced from the Forward Plan, Table 2 shares brief progress comments for each sub group are in subsequent.
- 1.4 Annex 2 provides information on the current scrutiny reviews. Currently there are no scrutiny reviews being conducted by the Panel. Annex 3 reflects the current priority table for proposed scrutiny review topics.

2.0 Political Proportionality on Sub Groups

- 2.1 There is a need to amend the political balance of the Overview and Scrutiny working parties to reflect the changes that have occurred since September, namely Councillors Brimm and Howes leaving the UKIP group, the election of Cllr Venables, the passing away of Cllr K Gregory and the election of Cllr Pugh. As a result of these changes UKIP no longer have an overall majority on the Council and so are not entitled to a majority on any of its committees or sub committees.
- 2.2 At the first Overview and Scrutiny Panel meeting of this municipal year it was agreed that all proportionality should be applied to all sub committees of the panel. There are two options to achieve this proportionality:
 - c) To reduce the size of sub groups from seven to six members, the UKIP group losing a seat. The proportionality of sub groups then being:
 - 3 UKIP;
 - 2 Conservatives;
 - 1 Labour.
 - d) To increase the size of sub groups from seven to eight members, the Conservative group gaining a seat. The proportionality of sub groups then being:
 - 4 UKIP;
 - 3 Conservatives;
 - 1 Labour.
- 2.3 Whichever option at paragraph 2.2 is chosen by the Panel Groups would need to inform Democratic Services of the changes to their group nominations, by the time of the next meeting of the sub groups.

3.0 Community Safety Partnership Working Party

- 3.1 The working party has not met since the November Panel. The next meeting has been scheduled for 20 February 2018 to consider the following topics:
 - i. An update report by Kent Police regarding the impact of policing in parts of Ramsgate and Margate that were experiencing youth crime; and
 - ii. Parents school parking challenges in some areas of the district.
- 3.2 That would be followed by another two meetings, one on 13 March and another on 10 April to discuss 'Community Payback activities in Thanet' and 'tackling fly tipping in the district' respectively.

4.0 Corporate Performance Review Working Party

- 4.1 The sub group met on 13 November to consider Quarter 2 performance reports from East Kent Housing, East Kent Services and Thanet District Council.

East Kent Housing

- 4.2 East Kent Housing reported that arrears in payment claims had increased following the roll out of universal credit; most claimants find themselves in arrears as claimants were often paid at least six weeks following the claim and did not have savings to support them during the transition period. In recognition of the delay in payment, EK Housing had changed its system of chasing for arrears.
- 4.3 Members were advised that it was expected that all claimants would be on universal credit by 2020. However payment of pensions and some specialist cases would not be transferred. The Council and Margate Task Force had been working with local Department for Works & Pensions (DWP) officers to identify local challenges to the roll out of universal credit. Some of the issues identified had not been reported elsewhere in the country and would be fed back to the central DWP.

East Kent Services

- 4.4 EK Services advised that Performance regarding housing benefit and council tax benefit applications compared well against national bench marks. However it was worth noting that there was a resourcing pressure within customer services, as staff vacancies had remained unfilled.
- 4.5 The pressure was expected to be relived as the vacant posts would be filled, some satellite sites had been closed and the service was looking to offer apprenticeships. EK Services were preparing a business case for the provision of this support which could be recharged to the Department of Work and Pensions.

Thanet District Council

- 4.6 The Council reported that the performance for the period under review had been about the same as the previous quarter whilst some targets had moved between categories during the quarter. It was reported that the increase in recorded crime was partly due to a change in recording methods by Kent Police.
- 4.7 It was also reported that a Members Briefing would be held to report to members what action the Council would take to address homelessness within the District. It was also reported that since the annual survey last year, there had been a significant increase (up 28%) in public opinion that the Council offered value for money.
- 4.8 The next meeting is on 15 February.

5.0 Call-In of Cabinet Decisions

- 5.1 There were no valid call-ins made since the last meeting of the Panel.

6.0 Cabinet Presentations at OSP Meetings

- 6.1 There were no Cabinet Member presentations since the last one on 20 October 2017.

7.0 OSP Recommendations to Cabinet - Implementation Monitoring

- 7.1 There were no recommendations made by the Panel to Cabinet since the last meeting.

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Reporting to:	Nick Hughes, Committee Services Manager, Ext: 57208

Annex List

Annex 1	Sub group activities and key agenda items updates
Annex 2	Current scrutiny reviews
Annex 3	Priority Table for proposed scrutiny reviews

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation

Finance	Ramesh Prashar, Head of Financial Services & Deputy Monitoring Officer
Legal	Tim Howes, Director of Corporate Governance & Monitoring Officer