

REVIEWING THE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PANEL WORK PROGRAMME FOR 2019/20

Overview & Scrutiny Panel	21 January 2020
Report Author	Senior Democratic Services Officer
Status	For Decision
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	No
Ward:	Thanet Wide

Executive Summary:

This report sets out a framework for activities of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel for 2019/20 and asks the Panel to review the work programme.

Recommendations:

1. Members are requested to comment and note the report.

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Financial and Value for Money	There are no financial implications arising directly from this report but elements of the suggested work programme may have financial and resource implications which would need to be managed within existing resources, or alternatively compensating savings found.
Legal	The role of scrutiny is set out in section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000. The council must also have regard to the statutory guidance on Overview and Scrutiny from the ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government when exercising its functions.
Corporate	<p>The work programme should help to deliver effective policy decision making by scrutinising executive decisions before, and at times after, implementation.</p> <p>The sub-committees assist the work of scrutiny as they would carry-out an in-depth study of any issue referred to the groups under their terms of reference. An active Scrutiny programme is part of good governance.</p>
Equality 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 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.	
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.		
It was important to be aware of the Council's responsibility under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and show evidence that due consideration has been given to the equalities impact that may be brought upon communities by the decisions made by Council.		

CORPORATE PRIORITIES (tick those relevant) ✓	
Growth	
Environment	
Communities	✓

1.0 Introduction and Background

1.1 This report allows the Panel to review and amend the work programme for the 2019/20 municipal year agreed at the meeting on 19 November 2019.

1.2 It is worth noting that the newly issued statutory guidance of the scrutiny function says, effective overview and scrutiny should:

- Provide constructive 'critical friend' challenge;
- Amplify the voices and concerns of the public;
- Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role; and
- Drive improvement in public services

1.3 With this in mind, Members may wish to ensure that the Panel work programme for the year provides opportunities for critical but constructive challenge to the Executive, articulate any concerns about matters that are the business of the council and strive for improved service delivery by the Council and other public agencies working in Thanet.

2.0 Current Scrutiny Activities, including Cabinet Member Presentations

2.1 The Travellers Review Group was tasked with reviewing the impact of unauthorised encampments by the Traveller Community in Thanet with a view to making recommendations for consideration by the Panel and forwarding to Cabinet.

- 2.2 The review group made their final presentation on 19 November and recommended that “That Overview & Scrutiny Panel recommend to Cabinet that further work is undertaken to assess the feasibility and cost implications of three temporary tolerated sites in the district at Potten Street, St Nicholas at Wade, Tivoli Brooks, Margate and Ramsgate Port, with a view to using them on a rotational basis.”
- 2.3 In response to the findings of the review, the Panel recommended to Cabinet that “further work be undertaken including extensive public consultation to assess the feasibility and cost implications of establishing temporary tolerated sites in the district.”
- 2.4 Having considered the Overview and Scrutiny Panel recommendations on 16 December, Cabinet agreed to the following:

“That further work was undertaken to assess the feasibility and cost implications of three temporary tolerated sites in the District, at Potten Street, St Nicholas at Wade, Tivoli Brooks and Ramsgate Port, with a view to using them on a rotational basis.”

Cabinet Presentations at OSP Meetings for 2019/20

- 2.5 Additional topics for Cabinet Member presentations at Scrutiny meetings are highlighted below. These include the following:
1. The future management of council housing stock. The presentation would concentrate on providing an update on the preferred option to bring council housing stock into council management (21 January 2020);
 2. Service review of Operational Services (20 February 2020 TBC).
- 2.6 The rest of the work programme for 2019/20 is detailed in Annex 1 to the Council report. This schedule is subject to amendments during the course of the year as Members may add more items for reviewing.
- 2.7 Members may also wish to reflect and comment on the content in Annex 2 which provides an opportunity to review and keep track of the spread of the scrutiny review work, particularly between pre and post decision scrutiny activities.

3.0 Panel Recommendations to Cabinet - Implementation Monitoring

Fees and Charges review

- 3.1 The seven member fees and charges cabinet advisory group met on 10 October, ahead of the Panel and Cabinet meetings to consider the fees and charges for 2020/21. Their work kick started the review of fees and charges for 2020/21.
- 3.2 The advisory group focused on car park fees and charges. The proposals for 2020/21 fees and charges were then presented to the Overview & Scrutiny Panel on 22 October. Members made the following recommendation, that:
- Cabinet considered not to increase the events application fee, thereby keeping it at £75.
- 3.3 Cabinet agreed to the Panel recommendation and this had been factored into the council budget reports that would be considered by Cabinet and OSP on 14 January

and 21 January 2020, respectively. Cabinet would meet again on 28 January to recommend the budget proposals for consideration by Full Council on 06 February.

Proposal for the disposal of the Dreamland freehold

- 3.4 Cabinet agreed to negotiate with Sands Heritage Ltd for a housing restriction period of more than 10 years to be part of the agreement of sale.
- 3.5 At the July meeting, the Panel considered a report on the “Adoption of a new Housing Assistance Policy” and recommended to Cabinet that Council writes to Kent County Council requesting that “KCC ring fenced the £405k (Top sliced/payment to KCC projected for 2019/20) for use by Thanet residents”.
- 3.6 Cabinet forwarded the request to KCC via a letter sent to KCC by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Safer Neighbourhoods on 12 August.

4.0 Options

- 4.1 Members are asked to comment and note the report.
- 4.2 Members can review the current work programme and make changes depending on the collective agreement by the Panel.

Contact Officer:	Charles Hungwe, Senior Democratic Services Officer, Ext: 57186
Reporting to:	Nick Hughes, Committee Services Manager, Ext 57208

Annex List

Annex 1	Overview & Scrutiny Panel Work Programme for 2019/20
Annex 2	Record of OSP Pre and Post Decision Reviews for 2019/20

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation

Finance	Chris Blundell, Head of Financial Services
Legal	Tim Howes, Director of Corporate Governance & Monitoring Officer