

Overview & Scrutiny Panel Chair's Report to Full Council

Council	13 July 2023
Report Author	Committee Service Manager
Status	For Noting
Classification:	Unrestricted
Key Decision	No
Ward:	Thanet Wide

Executive Summary:

This report summarises activities of the Overview & Scrutiny Panel for 2023/24 and asks the Members to comment, make suggestions and note the OSP work programme.

Recommendation(s):

Members are being asked to comment on 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.

Risk Management

There are risks arising directly from this report.

Corporate

The work programme should help to deliver effective policy decision making by scrutinising executive decisions before, and at times after, implementation.

The working parties assist with 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.

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 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, sex, disability, race, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, religion or belief and pregnancy & maternity. Only aim (i) of the Duty applies to Marriage & civil partnership.

This report relates to the following aim of the equality duty: -

1. To eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
2. To advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and people who do not share it
3. To 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

This report relates to Communities.

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 At each ordinary Council meeting, the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel presents a progress update report on the activities of the Panel since the last Council meeting. This is in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 15.1 of Part 4 of the Council Constitution. The report is subject to comment or debate by members.
- 1.2 This is an update to Full Council on the work of the Panel since the last Council meeting and allows for discussion of the Panel's planned activities, which hopefully strengthens the Council's scrutiny function.
- 1.3 This report follows on from the update report that was presented at Council on 30 March 2023 and is the first in the new municipal year for 2023/24.

- 1.4 This report provides detail of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel's work programme for the period 2023/24 that was drawn up from the suggestions put forward by Members at the Panel meeting on 30 May 2023. This work programme helps provide a framework for reporting progress regarding the activities of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and also provides officers with a reference point for planning appropriate levels of support for the Panel.

2.0 SETTING OUT A NEW WORK PROGRAMME

Scrutiny Review Topics

- 2.1 The previous Panel agreed on an approach for identifying scrutiny topics. This approach uses a matrix to score and prioritise topics to be scrutinised by the Panel as part of the work programme for the current year. If the list is not progressed through in the current year, any remaining topics would then be carried over into the following municipal year.
- 2.2 These review topics would normally be progressed through review projects carried out by a working party set by the Panel. However in other instances Members may choose to commission a one-off officer report which would address the issues raised by Members.
- 2.3 At the Panel meeting on 30 May 2023, Members put forward a number of topics as detailed in the minutes. Members were asked to provide additional information on all the topics that they suggested. An agenda item request form was sent out to all members of the Panel seeking justification for those proposed topics.
- 2.4 Democratic Services used the matrix to score the topics and the results would be presented to the Panel meeting on 20 July. Below is the list of topics that were proposed by Members. Members of the Panel have been requested to complete a form for each suggestion, covering the detail of their request and what action they were seeking the panel to take.
1. Cost of living crisis (including debt);
 2. Health and Wellbeing;
 3. Housing affordability – how was that impacting on local communities and what TDC could do;
 4. Broken bins review;
 5. Parking charges review;
 6. Review of the Winter Gardens;
 7. Review of the Toilet Strategy;
 8. Manston site review. Invite Mr Tony Freudmann to make a presentation;
 9. Planning Enforcement Review;
 10. Review multi agency working in Housing;
 11. Review regularly the Independent Monitoring Officer's (IMO) implementation plan;
 12. Housing development: How does the government work out housing numbers for the Local Plan? How are the type, location and quality of housing determined? How do developers negotiate social housing quotas in development projects, sometimes from a high of say 30% to 15%?

13. What is the health impact of some of the council's projects?
14. Fly tipping and abandoned vehicles;
15. Review the impact of tourism on TDC (visitor parking, tourist tax, AirBNBs and visitor economy);
16. On street parking income review;
17. Grant funding: What is TDC missing out on due to lack of staff resources to maximise on grant funding sources? What can the council do to maximise grant funding income?
18. How is the Section 106 fund used?
19. Review the lifts and disabled accessibility to Thanet beaches;
20. Cabinet Member Presentations: The new Leader of Council to be invited to make a presentation on his vision for the next four years;
21. Cabinet Member Presentations: Each Cabinet Members will be invited to present on the key reviews currently taking place in their respective portfolio areas once those reviews have been completed;
22. Levelling Up Fund regular projects implementation updates;
23. Review of historical decisions made by TDC on key projects.

2.5 Of the list above Democratic Services have received seven requests for Scrutiny Reviews and four requests for reports to the Panel. The work programme report will be considered by the Panel on 20 July and will contain a list of scored scrutiny review topics (scored against Panel agreed criteria), confirming which topics would be carried forward as scrutiny review projects. Once adopted by the Panel, this list would then be reported to the Full Council on 12 October.

Cabinet Presentations at OSP Meetings

2.6 Members requested the following cabinet member presentations:

- Leader and Cabinet Member for Strategy and Transformation to present on the Vision for Council for the next four years - 20 July 2023;
- Future Cabinet Member Presentations: Each Cabinet Member would be invited to present on the key reviews currently taking place in their respective portfolio areas once those reviews have been completed.

2.7 The Panel also requested a presentation by the Manston Airport site representative Mr Freudmann. Democratic Services were in the process of sending out the invitation to Mr Freudmann.

3.0 Options

3.1 Members are being asked to comment on and note the report.

3.2 Members may opt to make suggestions for the Panel to consider.

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Annex List

None

Background Papers

None

Corporate Consultation

Finance: Matthew Sanham (Head of Finance and Procurement)

Legal: Sameera Khan (Interim Head of Legal & Monitoring Officer)