

# Overview & Scrutiny Panel Chair's Report to Council

<b>Council</b>	12 October 2023
<b>Report Author</b>	Committee Service Manager
<b>Status</b>	For Information
<b>Classification:</b>	Unrestricted
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Ward:</b>	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 13 July 2023

## **2.0 THE WORK PROGRAMME**

### **Scrutiny Review Topics**

- 2.1 At the Panel meeting on 30 May 2023, Members put forward a number of topics and these were finalised at the July meeting. The matrix for scoring and prioritising review topics is attached as Annex 2 to the report. If the list is not progressed to completion during the current year, any remaining topics would then be carried over into the following municipal year.
- 2.2 The Panel agreed to investigate the following topics:
1. Impact of tourism
  2. Fly tipping and abandoned vehicles;
  3. Grant funding review.
- 2.3 They further set up the Tourism Review Working Party to conduct the review on the first topics and the membership is as follows:
- Councillor Austin;
  - Councillor Britcher;
  - Councillor Green;
  - Councillor Kup;
  - Councillor Packman
- 2.4 The Tourism Working Party met on 24 August and agreed their work programme which included two other meetings to discuss issues relating to their investigation with senior officers in street cleansing, finance, neighbourhoods and coastal services.
- 2.5 Additional detail of the work programme is contained in Annex 1 whilst Annex 2 is the scoring matrix table.

### **Cabinet Presentations at OSP Meetings**

- 2.6 Members requested a presentation on the Parking Strategy.
- 2.7 Future Cabinet Member Presentations: The Panel further agreed that for future Panel meetings, 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.

### **Key Decisions**

- 2.8 There was now an arrangement between Cabinet and the Overview & Scrutiny Panel that all key decisions need to be reviewed by the Panel before Cabinet approved such decision decisions. This would increase the role that non cabinet members play in shaping future key decisions and strategic decisions that are being made by the Council.
- 2.9 As a result of this arrangement the Panel reviewed the following proposals at an extraordinary meeting on 19 September before they were considered and approved by Cabinet on 21 September 2023:

- a. Broadstairs Flood and Coast Protection scheme;
- b. Viking Bay to Dumpton Gap Sea Wall Repairs Scheme;
- c. LED Street Lighting Contract;
- d. Coastal Zone Maintenance Contract;
- e. New contract for the supply of electricity to 264 sites within TDC's portfolio;
- f. Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Funding update Simplification Pathfinder Pilot.

2.10 The Panel further reviewed the following key decisions o mat its meeting on 26 September:

- a. Health & Safety Policy;
- b. Three year extension of the Dog Public Space Protection Order.

2.11 The above key decisions will be considered by Cabinet on 19 October.

### **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**

Annex 1: OSP Work Programme for 2023/24

Annex 2: Scrutiny Scoring Matrix Table for 2023/24

#### **Background Papers**

None

#### **Corporate Consultation**

**Finance:** Chris Blundell, Director of Corporate Resources & S151 Officer

**Legal:** Sameera Khan, Interim Head of Legal & Monitoring Officer