

# **BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**27 OCTOBER 2016**

## **WORK PROGRAMME**

Report from: Perry Holmes, Chief Legal Officer

Author: Michael Turner, Democratic Services Officer

### **Summary**

This report advises Members of the current work programme and allows them to adjust it in the light of latest priorities, issues and circumstances. It gives Members the opportunity to shape and direct the Committee's activities over the year.

#### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

1.1 Under Chapter 4 – Rules, paragraph 21.1 (xv) General terms of reference, each overview and scrutiny committee has the responsibility for setting its own work programme.

#### **2. Background**

2.1. Appendix 1 to this report sets out the existing work programme for this committee.

#### **3. Agenda Planning Meeting**

3.1 Members will be aware that Overview and Scrutiny Committees hold agenda planning meetings on a regular basis. These give officers guidance on information Members wish them to provide when scrutinising an issue. An agenda planning meeting was held on 22 September. The Chairman and Councillors Freshwater and Maple (Opposition Spokespersons) were in attendance and were updated on the Committee's current work programme and advised of the reports to be submitted to this meeting. The following issues were discussed:

### **Medway Commercial Group**

- 3.2 At the last meeting of this Committee, Members agreed that information about Medway Commercial Group (MCG) would be included in the report from the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services when he was held to account at the December 2016 meeting.
- 3.3 As Members will be aware, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services position no longer exists and responsibility for Medway Commercial Group now rests with the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services. As a result, Members have asked for a report at the December meeting on MCG's draft budget proposals – if they are available in time for this meeting.

### **Updates on Medway Norse**

- 3.4 At the last meeting of the Committee, Members agreed that an update on Medway Norse should be considered at the April and October meetings, with the latter meeting scrutinising Medway Norse's draft budget proposals. At the agenda planning meeting it was explained that, for timing reasons, it was not possible for the budget proposals to come to this meeting and instead would be reported to the December meeting.

### **Shared Legal Services with Gravesham Borough Council**

- 3.5 After considering the latest Forward Plan, Members asked for a paper on this issue to come to the Committee to allow for pre-decision scrutiny to take place.
- 3.6 At present, the current Forward Plan indicates that proposals to establish a shared legal service with Gravesham Borough Council will be reported to Cabinet on 17 January 2017. Therefore Members are asked to add this item to the work programme for consideration at the special meeting arranged for 5 January 2017.

### **Portfolio Holders Being Held to Account**

- 3.7 As already mentioned, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Services position no longer exists. Responsibility for travellers now sits with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth and Regulation and this has been added to the unallocated section of the work programme.

### **4.0 Member's Item**

- 4.1 Since the agenda planning meeting Cllr Wildey has given notice of a Member's Item regarding protecting amenity land and ancient woodland in his ward. This has been added to the agenda for this meeting.

## 5.0 Future Work Programme

### Forward Plan

- 5.1 The [Forward Plan](#) of forthcoming Cabinet decisions is published on the Council's website.
- 5.2 Set out below is a list of items featuring on the current Forward Plan that fall within the terms of reference of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee is asked to identify any items it wishes to consider before the Cabinet decision is taken (where dates permit) other than those already programmed in Appendix A.

† = New Item on Forward Plan since last meeting.

<b>Title of Decision</b>	<b>Anticipated Decision Date</b>
<b>Recruitment Freeze</b>  This report will bring forward vacant posts for Members' approval in accordance with the process approved by the Cabinet on 7 January 2003.	<b>22 November &amp; 20 December 2016 and 17 January 2017</b>
<b>Annual Review of the Risk Management Strategy and Six Monthly Review of the Council's Corporate Risk Register</b>  This report will bring forward the latest risk management review.	<b>22 November 2016</b>  <i>(On work programme for October meeting)</i>
<b>Capital Budget Monitoring 2016/2017 - Quarter 2</b>  To report on the latest monitoring position.	<b>22 November 2016</b>  <i>(On work programme for December meeting)</i>
<b>Council Plan Monitoring 2016/2017 - Quarter 2</b>  This report will set out performance monitoring for the second quarter of 2016/2017.	<b>22 November 2016</b>  <i>(On work programme for December meeting)</i>
<b>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2016/2017 - Quarter 2</b>  To report on the latest monitoring position.	<b>22 November 2016</b>  <i>(On work programme for December meeting)</i>

<p><b>2017/2018 Capital and Revenue Budget Proposals †</b></p> <p>This report will provide details of the initial budget proposals for 2017/2018 prior to consideration by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.</p>	<p><b>22 November 2016</b></p> <p><i>(On work programme for December meeting)</i></p>
<p><b>Council Tax Reduction Scheme</b></p> <p>This report will seek Cabinet's consideration of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2017/18 prior to final consideration and approval at Full Council in January 2017.</p>	<p><b>20 December 2016</b></p>
<p><b>Medway Norse Six Monthly Report</b></p> <p>This report will present the latest monitoring information regarding the performance of Medway Norse.</p>	<p><b>20 December 2016</b></p>
<p><b>Provisional Local Government Settlement †</b></p> <p>This report will provide details of the provisional Local Government settlement as part of the budget setting process.</p>	<p><b>17 January 2017</b></p>
<p><b>Business Rate Relief - Outcome of Consultation</b></p> <p>This report will set out the outcome of consultation on the options for a revised set of guidelines for the award of discretionary relief from National Non-Domestic (Business) Rates for charities and other non-profit making organisations.</p>	<p><b>17 January 2017</b></p> <p><i>To be considered at the 5 January 2017 special meeting.</i></p>
<p><b>Shared Legal Services with Gravesham †</b></p> <p>This report will set out proposals for the establishment of shared legal services with Gravesham Borough Council.</p>	<p><b>17 January 2017</b></p> <p><i>(See paras 3.5 and 3.6 of this report)</i></p>

## 6. The Co-ordinating Role of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee

- 6.1 Under Medway's Constitution, Chapter 4 – Rules – paragraph 22.2 (xxiii) this Committee has the overall responsibility *'to provide guidance and leadership on the development and co-ordination of the scrutiny function for all overview and scrutiny committees, including guidance on priorities for scrutiny activities'*.

6.2 To assist the Committee in fulfilling this role, it has been agreed that a regular overview of business discussed by the other overview and scrutiny committees should be presented at these meetings. Whilst each overview and scrutiny committee is able to determine its own work programme, this Committee may wish to comment on common themes and the balance of business being covered by each Committee. The work of overview and scrutiny committees can include:

- items raised by Members
- work on matters referred for review by the Council
- pre-decision scrutiny of items on the Cabinet's Forward Plan selected by the Committee for discussion
- policy review and development
- pre-budget scrutiny
- consideration of petitions
- consideration of called-in Cabinet decisions.

6.3 Appendix 2 to this report sets out the current work programmes of the other three overview and scrutiny committees.

## 7. Outstanding Actions from Previous Committee Meetings

**Meeting:** 25 August 2016

**Agenda item:** Universal Credit and Welfare Reforms - Six Monthly Progress Report

**Action:** Clarification to be provided to on the significance of the reference to larger households in the report.

**Meeting:** 25 August 2016

**Agenda item:** Revenue Budget Monitoring 2016/17 - Quarter 1

**Action:** Member briefing on the latest position regarding Non Domestic Rating appeals to be provided.

## 8. Financial and legal implications

8.1 There are no financial or legal implications arising from this report.

## **9. Recommendations**

9.1 The Committee is asked to:

- (a) note and identify items for inclusion in the work programme (Appendix 1);
- (b) agree the changes to the current work programme as set out in paragraph 3;
- (c) note the work programmes of all overview and scrutiny committees (set out in Appendix 2 to this report).

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Business Support O&S work programme

Appendix 2 – Other O&S Committee work programmes

**Background papers:** None.

**Lead officer contact:** Michael Turner, Democratic Services Officer

Telephone: 01634 332817 Email: [michael.turner@medway.gov.uk](mailto:michael.turner@medway.gov.uk)