

# **BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**6 JULY 2017**

## **WORK PROGRAMME**

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### **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.

### **1.0 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.

### **2.0 Background**

2.1 Appendix 1 to this report sets out the existing work programme for this Committee. One of the Committee's' functions is to provide guidance and leadership on the development and co-ordination of the scrutiny function for all Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Appendix 2 sets out the work programmes for the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

### **3.0 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.

3.2 An agenda planning meeting was held on 5 June. The Chairmen and Councillor Maple (Opposition Spokesperson) 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:

## **Forward Plan of Forthcoming Cabinet Decisions**

### **a) Thomas Aveling library**

- 3.3 The outcome of the public consultation on the proposed closure of Thomas Aveling library, Rochester will be reported to Cabinet on 8 August 2017. At the agenda planning meeting Members agreed to add this to the agenda for this meeting so that the Committee have an opportunity to scrutinise this matter before Cabinet makes a decision. Members also asked for the report to include details of the proposals with regard to Community Hub opening hours and the future management arrangements for Grain Library.

### **b) Homelessness Strategy**

- 3.4 Following a period of public consultation, Cabinet will be asked to approve a Homelessness Strategy at its August meeting. After the planning meeting, Members agreed to add the Homelessness Strategy to this agenda for pre-decision scrutiny

## **Work Programme**

### **a) Capital and Revenue Budget Monitoring – Quarter 4**

- 3.5 The current work programme agreed by the Committee includes consideration of capital and revenue budget monitoring for Quarter 4 at this meeting. It was explained at the agenda planning meeting that, as a result of the acceleration of the timetable for the closure of accounts, there is no longer a quarter 4 budget monitoring report. Cabinet considered the year end outturn in respect of the 2016/17 capital and revenue budgets at their June meeting and the Audit Committee on 29 June will be asked to approve the draft Statement of Accounts for 2016/17, which include the final revenue and capital outturn position. Members agreed therefore to remove the quarter 4 budget monitoring item from the work programme.

### **b) 24 August meeting**

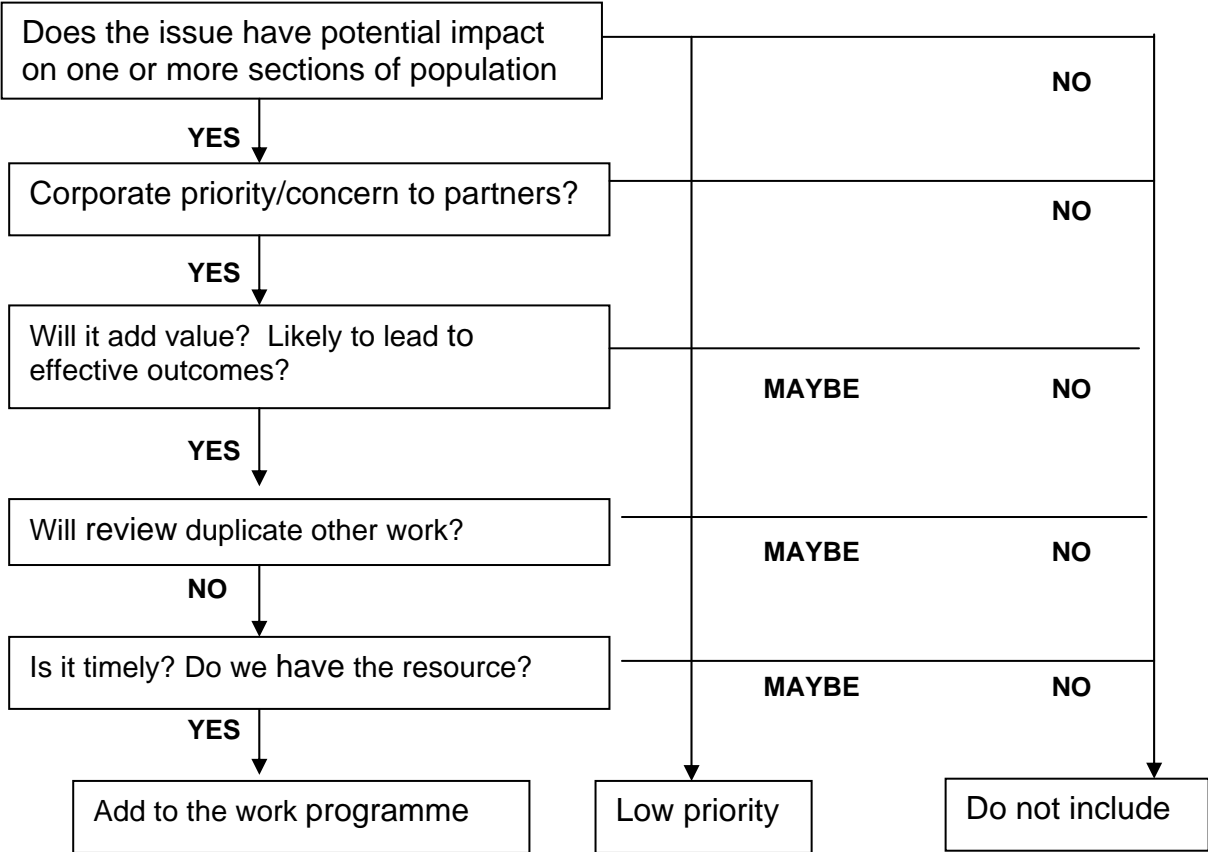
- 3.6 At present there are no items scheduled for the 24 August meeting. Members agreed to keep this date in the calendar but to cancel the meeting nearer the time if there is still no business.

## **Selection of topics for next round of Scrutiny Task Groups**

- 3.7 Since 2011 Medway Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees have operated a systematic and criteria based approach to the selection of topics for Scrutiny Task Groups.

3.8 This reflects national best practice and is summarised below:

**Questions to ask when prioritising topics for review**



3.9 As agreed by Full Council, up to three Scrutiny Task Groups can be supported in each twelve month period. The selection of topics for the current round of in-depth scrutiny reviews was agreed by the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 3 December 2015 as follows:

Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Housing in Medway – demand, supply and affordability – carried forward from previous round of reviews
Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee	How far has Medway gone in developing a Dementia Friendly Community
Children and Young People and Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committees	Employment Opportunities for 18 to 21 year olds (including apprenticeships)

3.10 The Task Group on Employment Opportunities for 18 to 21 year olds started in June and will report its findings and recommendations to Cabinet in December 2017. It is proposed to now commence the established process for the selection of further topics for the next round of Scrutiny Task Groups in 2018/19. The timetable for this would be as follows:

- (i) **May – early July:** Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee to be notified of the proposed timetable and process for the determination of the next round of in-depth reviews and Members invited to submit suggestions for topics taking into account the criteria adopted for the selection of reviews (as set out above);
- (ii) **July- August:** - Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and Opposition Spokespersons use their pre-agenda meetings with officers to propose topics to be put forward and then each Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider and agree topics to be put forward for prioritisation by the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee exercising its co-ordinating role;
- (iii) **Late October:** – All Overview and Scrutiny Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen and Opposition Spokespersons meet informally to prioritise three of the topics put forward by Overview and Scrutiny Committees;
- (iv) **30 November** - The Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers and agrees a programme of three in-depth reviews for the period January 2018 to February 2019 (recognising that one review may be delayed if it would not be possible for it to conclude and report its findings to the Cabinet before the local elections in 2019)

#### **4.0 Future Work Programme**

##### **Forward Plan**

4.1 The Forward Plan of forthcoming Cabinet decisions is published on the Council's website.

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=277&T=4>

4.2 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 as pre-decision scrutiny (where dates permit) other than those already programmed in Appendix 1.

<b>Title of Decision</b>	<b>Anticipated Decision Date</b>
<p><b>Treasury Management Outturn Annual Report <b>NEW</b></b></p> <p>This report will provide an overview of treasury management activity during 2016/2017.</p>	<p><b>11 July 2017</b></p>
<p><b>Recruitment Freeze</b></p> <p>This report will bring forward vacant posts for Members' approval in accordance with the process approved by the Cabinet on 7 January 2003.</p>	<p><b>11 July, 8 August, 24 October, 5 and 26 September</b></p>
<p><b>Additions to the Capital Programme <b>NEW</b></b></p> <p>This report will provide details of a number of schemes to be added to the Council's Capital Programme. The Cabinet will be asked to recommend approval of the proposed additions to Full Council on 20 July 2017.</p>	<p><b>11 July 2017</b></p>
<p><b>Council Tax Reduction Scheme <b>NEW</b></b></p> <p>This report will provide details of a proposal to consult on proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2018/2019.</p> <p>The proposed changes relate to the full roll out of Universal Credit and amendments made by the Government to the pensioner Council Tax Reduction Scheme and Housing Benefit regulations means that changes are needed to the working age scheme to keep it line with the pensioner scheme and other welfare reforms.</p>	<p><b>11 July 2017</b></p>
<p><b>Establishment of a Housing Company <b>NEW</b></b></p> <p>This report will set out details of for the creation of a Housing Company to maximise the opportunities to invest in or develop property within and outside Medway and in the first instance to enable the development of a number of Council owned sites.</p>	<p><b>11 July 2017</b></p>
<p><b>Outcome of Public Consultation on the Proposed Closure of Thomas Aveling Library</b></p> <p>This report will provide details of the outcome of the public consultation on the proposed closure of Thomas Aveling library, Rochester.</p>	<p><b>11 July 2017 (see para. 3.3)</b></p>

<p><b>Code of Corporate Governance <span style="background-color: yellow;">NEW</span></b></p> <p>This report will provide details of the draft Code of Corporate Governance for Cabinet's consideration. The Code forms part of the Council's Constitution.</p>	<p><b>11 July 2017</b></p>
<p><b>Annual Report on Debt Write Offs</b></p> <p>This report will provide details of the level of debt raised, collected and written off, as well as debt outstanding.</p>	<p><b>8 August 2017</b></p>
<p><b>Capital and Revenue Budget Monitoring 2017/2018 - Quarter 1</b></p> <p>To report on the latest monitoring position</p>	<p><b>8 August 2017</b></p> <p><i>(on work programme for October mtg)</i></p>
<p><b>Homelessness Strategy</b></p> <p>This report will seek approval to the Homelessness Strategy.</p>	<p><b>8 August 2017</b></p> <p><i>(see para. 3.4)</i></p>
<p><b>Property Strategy <span style="background-color: yellow;">NEW</span></b></p> <p>This report will set out details of the Property Strategy 2017/2021 for Cabinet's consideration and approval. It describes the Council's approach to asset management and how this links to other Council policies.</p>	<p><b>8 August 2017</b></p>
<p><b>Council Plan End Q1 2017/18 Performance Monitoring Report</b></p> <p>This report will provide details of end of year performance</p>	<p><b>26 September 2017</b></p> <p><i>(on work programme for October mtg)</i></p>
<p><b>Medium Term Financial Strategy 2017/2021</b></p> <p>This report will review the major financial issues facing the Council during this and the next four years. It also provides a framework for the more detailed preparation of the 2018/2019 Revenue Budget.</p>	<p><b>26 September 2017</b></p>
<p><b>Treasury Management Strategy Mid-Year Review Report 2017/2018</b></p> <p>This report will set out the mid-year review of the Treasury Management Strategy, in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice.</p>	<p><b>26 September 2017</b></p>

<b>Medway Commercial Group Performance Monitoring Report</b>	<b>24 October 2017</b>
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This report will set out details of performance for the latest monitoring period for Medway Commercial Group Ltd, which provides the Medway Control Centre Services, and associated personal safety services such as Telecare and lone-working, as well as traded services approved by Cabinet in 2017.

## **5.0 The Co-ordinating Role of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

5.1 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*.

5.2 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.

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

## **6.0 Financial and legal implications**

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

## **7.0 Recommendations**

7.1 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);
- (d) note the process for selection of topics for the next round of Scrutiny Task Groups in 2018/19 and invite all Members of the Committee to submit ideas based on the criteria set out in paragraphs 3.7-3.10 above to the Democratic Services Officer ahead of the next agenda planning meeting for this Committee. and;
- (e) agree that the meeting of the Committee scheduled for 24 August be cancelled in the event that there is no business.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Business Support O&S work programme

Appendix 2 - Other O&S Committee work programmes

**Background papers:** None.

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