

LONGLIST OF INDEPTH TOPICS SUGGESTED BY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES 2018/19

COMMITTEE	Does issue have potential impact on one or more sections of the population?	Corporate concern/ issue for partners?	Will it add value/lead to effective outcomes?	Will review duplicate other work?	Is it timely/do we have the resources?	Scope for service improvement?	Priority order of reviews to be selected by Members for the period March 2018 to May 2019
Business Support							
Complaint Handling	Yes	No	Maybe	Yes	No	Maybe	No
Voluntary Sector – capacity*	Yes	Maybe	Maybe	No	Maybe	Maybe	No
Children and Young People							
Physical Activity*	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes (3)
Health and Adult Social Care							
Physical Activity*	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes (3)
Support and Resources for Carers*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Possibly	Careful scoping would be required	Yes	Yes (2)
The impact of Social Isolation for the Council	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes (1)
Regeneration, Community and Culture							
Physical Activity*	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes (3)
Town Centres for the 21 st Century*	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes – Local Plan in 2018	No – in 2018	Yes	Yes (4)

*Cross cutting review

PROPOSED TOPICS FOR TASK GROUP IN-DEPTH REVIEWS

<p>Name of O and S Committee</p> <p>Business Support</p>	<p>Suggested topic: Complaint Handling</p> <p>Reason for Review:</p> <p>Complaints provide an opportunity to put right things that have gone wrong, and are a good source of learning about systems, processes, and customer service. Through this learning, alongside other feedback and improvement work, there is the opportunity to improve our services to customers.</p> <p>This review could focus only on ‘corporate’ complaints, i.e. excluding social care complaints. Separate regimes with statutory guidance exist for Adult Social Care complaints and for Children’s Service complaints. The production of annual reports is a requirement of both of those regimes and those reports are considered by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Including social care complaints is entirely possible but it would be a much larger review.</p> <p>Potential for impact on one or more sections of the population?</p> <p>In 2016-17, the Council received 1556 Stage 1 complaints (all services including social care). Members have noted that this represents a very small number of complaints compared to the hundreds of interactions that happen daily with the public. Nevertheless each was an opportunity to put things right if something had gone wrong, or an opportunity to explain better the council’s decision or position where we felt unable to agree with the complainant that something had been carried out incorrectly.</p> <p>As said above where something has been acknowledged as reflecting an incorrect decision, poor performance or communication for example, there is the opportunity to learn from that experience and prevent it from happening again. It is this experience that provides for a wider impact over the population by preventing a repeat of that incident or event.</p> <p>Is this an issue of corporate concern and/or an issue for partners?</p> <p>In 2016-17, the Council received the lowest number of complaints for four years. That downward trend was reflected across all corporate areas, Adult Social Care and Children’s Social Care. It was also the best year for four years with cases received by the local Government Ombudsman, LGO, (87 in 2016-7 compared to 137 in 2014-15 for example. The number of complaints upheld by the LGO in 2016-17 was 13 (19 in 2015-16 and 2014-15; 6 in 2013-14).</p>
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Whilst guarding against complacency, complaint handling is an area showing sustained improvement and is not an issue being flagged through the council's performance regime as of concern. It is fair to say that the majority of that improvement has been in the speed of attention to complaints raised. It is known that lack of communication is one of the key factors that irritates complainants and is often cited as a key factor in seeking to escalate complaints further. It has therefore been right to show a more prompt acknowledgment to complaints and where possible to achieve a resolution to concerns raised. Over the corporate service areas, over 8 out of every 10 Stage 1 complaints received are being responded to within 10 working days. (Children's social care has shown a very marked improvement to a similar performance level in recent months. There is some work to do in the Adults area but that is a very live issue with the Adults management team who have put new arrangements in place to strengthen complaint handling as a part of their recent re-organisation.)

Will it add value/lead to effective outcomes?

A review would offer a spotlight on the importance of complaint handling, offer an opportunity to examine practices in other organisations, and is likely to have positive outcomes.

Will the review duplicate other work?

Moving on from the sustained improvement in the timely response to complaints, the Corporate Management Team has set a clear agenda about learning from complaints, and understanding the reasons and issues that are causing people to complain. There is new work going on to analyse each quarter the generic reasons that have led to complaints; this would include issues such as 'poor service quality'; 'service did not meet expectations'; 'inaccurate or inadequate information provided'. This will be providing lessons at both service level and across the whole organisation as to the reasons that cause complaints in the first place, and trigger escalations through the complaints process.

There is further work in progress within each service area to identify the common reasons and areas that cause complaints within specific areas (e.g. complaints about a Blue Badge application; or waste collection). That work is expected to be operational before the close of the financial year.

Whilst the review would no doubt contribute to this existing improvement agenda, it would draw on the same resource to support its investigations.

Is it timely / do we have the resources?

In terms of specific support to the review it would be fair to say that capacity would be an issue. The only dedicated complaint resource in the council is the Customer Relations Team which has 4.65 FTE (with approximately 1.65FTE mainly related to social care complaints). Other members of staff across the council have complaint handling (particularly coordination of responses) as a part of their role. The accountability for complaints on a day to day level rests with Service Managers. There is a great deal of complaint handling knowledge and expertise across the council that a review would be able to draw upon to understand how matters work across all council service areas.

Will the review provide scope for service improvement?

As indicated above there are streams of work in train now focused on improving the complaint handling experience for customers, and identifying the learning that comes from complaints. A review would supplement this effort, but supporting the investigations of Members would be a draw upon the CRT resource that is responsible for overseeing the complaints process and producing regular management information and analysis.

PROPOSED TOPICS FOR TASK GROUP IN-DEPTH REVIEWS

Business Support O&S Committee	<p>Suggested topic: Voluntary Sector in Medway</p> <p>Reason for Review:</p> <p>The Council recognises it cannot deliver the three key priorities set out in the Council Plan (Medway: A place to be proud of, Maximising regeneration and economic growth and Supporting Medway’s people to realise their potential) alone and needs to work in partnership with other agencies.</p> <p>To review the services provided by the voluntary sector in Medway; understand the capacity of the sector to deliver services which provide value for money and to also consider the possible impacts on the Council and communities in the event of service or organisational failure in the sector.</p> <p>The review would look at the voluntary sector across Medway and would not be limited to those voluntary sector organisations which deliver services on behalf of the Council.</p> <p>A related issue is that, as part of the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership in Medway, there is an expressed intention to commission more support from voluntary and charitable organisations. It is too early to assess the extent of this however.</p> <p>Potential for impact on one or more sections of the population?</p> <p>Yes – the potential impacts from this review could be cross cutting.</p> <p>Is this an issue of corporate concern and/or an issue for partners?</p> <p>For further discussion</p> <p>Will it add value/lead to effective outcomes?</p> <p>For further discussion</p>
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	<p>Will the review duplicate other work?</p> <p>No.</p> <p>Is it timely / do we have the resources?</p> <p>Given the potential scope of this review is very large, further consideration needs to be given to assess whether the resources to support this review are available.</p> <p>Will the review provide scope for service improvement?</p> <p>Unknown</p>
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PROPOSED TOPICS FOR TASK GROUP IN-DEPTH REVIEWS

<p>Name of O and S Committee</p> <p>HASC/RCE/CYP</p>	<p>Suggested topic: Physical Activity</p> <p>Reason for Review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If physical activity were a pill, it would be one of the most cost-effective drugs ever invented. It can reduce the risk of major illnesses, such as heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and cancer by up to 50% and lower the risk of early death by up to 30% • Inactivity levels of Medway residents is 29.4% vs a South East region average of 25.4% (source Public Health Outcomes Framework) • Medway also has a poorer performance on Public Health Framework Indicators related to physical activity such as 1.16 Utilisation of outdoor space for exercise/health reasons • The governments "Sporting Future - A New Strategy for an Active Nation" published in 2016, emphasised the opportunities for improved health and wellbeing of the population through increasing physical activity • Medway has a good starting point with the following strategies, but lacks a unifying strategic approach which addresses all of the calls to action within the governments strategies; Medway Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2012-2017, Medway Sporting Legacy 2017-2020 and Medway Cycling's Action Plan 2016/18 • There are great opportunities to maximise the physical assets Medway already has in place (i.e. greenspaces), networks (such as the Medway Healthy Weight Network) and partner agencies already in place and keen to support a cross cutting agenda such as physical activity <p>Potential for impact on one or more sections of the population?</p> <p>Increasing the level of physical activity for the most sedentary populations in Medway, would represent a significant improvement to their levels of physical and mental wellbeing. In addition to positive short and long term impacts on the health and social care system</p> <p>Is this an issue of corporate concern and/or an issue for partners?</p> <p>This is an issue for a wide range of public, private, public and academic sector partners and only their full involvement will lead to the population level change that is needed.</p>
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	<p>Will it add value/lead to effective outcomes?</p> <p>A full scrutiny review that leads to SMART recommendations and areas of focus will lead to effective, measurable and demonstrable outcomes</p> <p>Will the review duplicate other work?</p> <p>No</p> <p>Is it timely / do we have the resources?</p> <p>Officers across a range of council services, are actively working on this area and have physical activity topics as an area of work, so resources exist to support the review process</p> <p>Will the review provide scope for service improvement?</p> <p>Yes, lessons can be learnt from other areas who are making progress on this agenda, closer partnership and joined up working, innovation and adhering to the evidence based recommendation that have been produced by experts in this field.</p>
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PROPOSED TOPICS FOR TASK GROUP IN-DEPTH REVIEWS

<p>Health and Adult Social Care /Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committees</p>	<p>Suggested topic: Support and resources for Carers</p> <p>Reason for Review: This is a Member suggestion which has been put forward due to concerns regarding meeting Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for Carer Assessments.</p> <p>The Care Act 2014 created a single, modern law which makes it clear what kind of care people should expect and what they will receive. The Act introduced new responsibilities for Local Authorities in managing the social care needs of their local population. This included new rights for carers, including the right to an assessment of their needs.</p> <p>The Task Group review undertaken earlier this year “How Far Has Medway Gone in Becoming a Dementia Friendly Community?” heard concerns raised by carers of people living with dementia with regard to difficulties accessing carer support and a lack of flexible respite provision.</p> <p>Potential for impact on one or more sections of the population? Yes – People of all ages are carers’.</p> <p>Is this an issue of corporate concern and/or an issue for partners? Yes – This is an issue for the Council and partners. The Council has agreed to implement a number of initiatives over a period of time and within budgetary constraints to ensure an overall improvement in provision.</p> <p>Will it add value/lead to effective outcomes? The topic would support Medway’s priority of “supporting Medway’s people to realise their potential” which would support the outcome under this priority of “older and disabled people living independently in their homes.” It also supports the way of working, “Working in partnership where this benefits our residents.” In order to maximise the effectiveness of outcomes, care would need to be taken not to duplicate existing workstreams.</p> <p>Will the review duplicate other work? This depends upon the focus of review. The Medway Adult Social Care Strategy 2016-20 sets out a commitment to support carers to maintain their caring role and stay well. The Delivery Plan of the Strategy includes reviewing support for carers, especially those providing significant unpaid care or those caring for people with dementia and commissioning services that are appropriate for their needs.</p>
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Current work related to carers currently in progress includes:

- Carers' assessment, support plan and review forms are in the process of being revised to ensure they reflect a personalised, holistic approach to assessing the needs of carers. Further supporting a personalised approach to carers' support, the current provision of the Carers' Breaks services is being adapted to allow greater capacity to offer a direct payment in place of a commissioned service to allow flexible plans to be developed to support the complex individual needs of informal carers.
- The Community Interest Companies of 'WALT' and 'WHoo Cares' are currently running a pilot focussed on improving outcomes for carers through understanding the individual needs, giving carers further input into how they are supported by Adult Social Care and increasing the choice around personalised support that can be delivered in the local community.

The topic of carer support was previously investigated via themed meetings in 2010/11. In addition, some of the recommendations of the Mental Health Task Group in 2014 related to carers.

Is it timely / do we have the resources? The topic could be considered timely, but as stated above, careful consideration is needed to ensure that duplication of existing work strands is avoided and that all initiatives will be delivered within existing budgetary constraints. The review could draw upon existing resources but given constraints close cooperation would be needed with the voluntary sector.

Will the review provide scope for service improvement? Yes, review of existing work-streams and previous scrutiny work could identify any gaps.

PROPOSED TOPICS FOR TASK GROUP IN-DEPTH REVIEWS

Health and Adult Social Care	<p>Suggested topic: The impact of social isolation for the Council</p> <p>Reason for Review: Social Isolation and loneliness impact upon individuals' quality of life and wellbeing, adversely affecting health and increasing their use of health and social care services. The current trend in vulnerable adults becoming socially isolated is not acceptable particularly as we are promoting whole system working with programmes such as the STP. Furthermore the Medway Health and Wellbeing Board prioritised social isolation and developed a 'Strategy to reduce Social Isolation 2014-2018'.</p> <p>It was estimated that across the Medway 2014 population aged 65 and over that 12% were socially isolated which would result in an estimate of 4,698 people over 65 years old being lonely and this risk has increased since then. However this is not an exclusive problem to the older population.</p> <p>The strategy outlines clear methods that the Council was using at the time to reduce social isolation across the authority including Medway Matters, Medway Community Hubs Programme, Better Medway Health Champions, and Making Every Contact Count. However with the launch of the Adult Social Care strategy there is cause to integrate new ways of working with the need to reduce social isolation.</p> <p>Potential for impact on one or more sections of the population? Yes – cross cutting. Social isolation is not exclusive to those over 65 years old. There is a need to reduce social isolation in more rural areas of the authority as well as with those who have high levels of need or deprivation.</p> <p>Is this an issue of corporate concern and/or an issue for partners? Yes – There is currently a strategy for action and it is has been marked as a priority by the Health and Wellbeing Board.</p> <p>Will it add value/lead to effective outcomes? Yes – this is a cross cutting theme and supports the Council's priorities "Medway: A place to be proud of" and "Supporting Medway's people to realise their potential". It also supports our way of working "Working in partnership where this benefits our residents".</p> <p>Will the review duplicate other work? No - it is understood that there is no further work going on to examine the root causes and actions for combating social isolation.</p>
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	<p>Is it timely / do we have the resources? Yes – the approach will help target resource to secure outcomes for the aimed cohort.</p> <p>Will the review provide scope for service improvement? Yes – will help secure a strong whole Council approach. It will provide the opportunity to link in with a ‘hard to reach’ cohort of residents within Medway. It may provide wider opportunities to stop isolation outside of the ‘adults’ cohort and cause a ripple effect for better outcomes for young people and their families.</p>
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PROPOSED TOPICS FOR TASK GROUP IN-DEPTH REVIEWS

<p>RCE and BS O&S Committee</p>	<p>Suggested topic: Town Centres for the 21st Century</p> <p>Reason for Review:</p> <p>A review of Town Centres was suggested by a Member of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 27 October 2017. It was suggested that this could be a Joint RCE and Business Support Task Group as business rate income could feature in the scope for the Task Group</p> <p>It was suggested that the key lines of enquiry for the review could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where we are with the 5 town centres in Medway and also the secondary centres - widen focus from Strood, Rochester Riverside and Chatham to look across Medway • Relationship between places like Hempstead Valley and town centres • The long term sustainability of town centres. • Impact of online stores on town centres <p>Potential for impact on one or more sections of the population?</p> <p>Yes – the potential impacts from this review could be cross cutting.</p> <p>Is this an issue of corporate concern and/or an issue for partners?</p> <p>Yes - maximising regeneration and economic growth is one of the three priorities for the Council. It is likely to be of interest to a wide range of residents and communities of interest.</p> <p>Will it add value/lead to effective outcomes?</p> <p>Potentially</p>
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	<p>Will the review duplicate other work?</p> <p>Yes in 2018 – work to develop planning policy on Town Centres and retail in Medway for the purposes of the Local Plan is underway now .</p> <p>Is it timely / do we have the resources?</p> <p>Public consultation on the Town Centre and retail aspects of the Local Plan will be happening in the Spring of 2018. Member input on this is via the cross-party Development Plans Cabinet Advisory Group. There is no capacity to support a concurrently running Task Group. If a Task Group on Town Centres were to be established in 2019 it would have scope to influence the ongoing work on the regeneration of Town Centres more generally. Any Task Group recommendations at that stage would need to be consistent with the planning policies enshrined in the Local Plan.</p> <p>Will the review provide scope for service improvement?</p> <p>Yes – the review could feed in to regeneration plans for Medway’s Town Centres</p>
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