

## **REGENERATION, CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**11 JUNE 2020**

### **WORK PROGRAMME**

Report from: Julie Keith Head of Democratic Services  
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#### Summary

This item 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, Part 5 of the Constitution – Overview and Scrutiny 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 A 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 21 May 2020.
  - 3.2 At the pre-agenda meeting it was noted that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the meeting of the Committee scheduled for 26 March 2020 had been cancelled and all business intended for that meeting had been postponed. In consultation with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Opposition spokesperson, only business considered to be essential had been included on this agenda and the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Spokesperson were updated at the pre-agenda meeting on the committee's current work programme and advised on the reports to be submitted to this meeting.

#### 4. Scrutiny of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP)

- 4.1 Members will recall that last Summer the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to consider how scrutiny of SELEP might be incorporated into Medway's overview and scrutiny arrangements.
- 4.2 LEPs are private sector-led partnerships between businesses and local public sector bodies each supporting the delivery of government policies to support local economic growth. SELEP is one of 38 LEPs in England. The Government has committed £12 billion in local growth funding to local areas in England between 2015-16 and 2020-21, and of this, £9.1 billion has been allocated through Growth Deals negotiated between central government and individual LEPs. The Government considers LEPs are key to developing Local Industrial Strategies which will be used as a gateway for accessing future funding after the UK exits the European Union, through the proposed UK Shared Prosperity Fund.
- 4.3 The Mary Ney Review of LEP Governance and Transparency examined whether the system that the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) had in place to assure itself of LEPs' performance and governance was sufficient. It reported in October 2017 with 17 recommendations following which the Government re-issued a National Local Growth Assurance Framework, which set out new minimum standards for LEP governance and transparency.
- 4.4 In July 2018 MHCLG committed to supporting LEPs to set out how they will ensure effective scrutiny and oversight of their investment decisions. It is up to each individual LEP as to which of three scrutiny models they adopt: an open offer to attend individual local authority scrutiny committees; setting something up with the local authorities covering their areas; or a joint committee with business representatives.
- 4.5 In May 2019 MHCLG updated its guidance on scrutiny arrangements for local authorities which includes a reference to LEPs.
- 4.6 As set out above, in response to this emerging work stream for scrutiny the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed that consideration should be given to how scrutiny of SELEP might be incorporated into Medway's overview and scrutiny arrangements. Guidance on scrutiny of LEPs is expected from the Centre for Public Scrutiny but not yet available.
- 4.7 On 4 February 2020 the Leader and Cabinet approved the revised governance and membership arrangements for SELEP in response to the reforms required by the Government to the leadership, governance, accountability and financial reporting of LEPs:

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgconvert2pdf.aspx?id=51288>

- 4.8 The SELEP Assurance framework contains a commitment to attendance at local authority Overview and Scrutiny Committees on request. It has been recognised by SELEP that this and a facility for the SELEP Accountability Board decisions to be called in by the six upper tier authorities by the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committees should be more widely publicised. (The SELEP Accountability Board is a constituted as a Joint Committee of the six Upper Tier Authorities of the area covered by SELEP; Southend-on Sea Borough Council, East Sussex County Council, Essex County Council, Kent County Council, Thurrock Council and Medway Council).
- 4.9 Scrutiny of SELEP will fall within the remit of this Committee. Following discussion with the Portfolio Holder for Inward Investment, Strategic Regeneration and Partnerships and the Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and Opposition Spokespersons for this Committee and the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee the following approach is recommended for approval:
- a) That as a first step a member briefing on SELEP should be arranged (covering its role, responsibilities, achievements/challenges and the new governance arrangements) where members would have time to ask questions and get a good understanding of the role of the LEP in the context of economic growth in Medway
  - b) that an annual invitation be extended to SELEP to appear at RCE Overview and Scrutiny Committee – similar to the arrangement for scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership – maybe coinciding with the relevant Portfolio Holder being held to account. This can be kept under review as best practice emerges up and down the country to see if it is an effective way of scrutinising the LEP.
  - c) That the Committee should consider how it might scrutinise economic growth at a local level. Subject to timings, one example might be an opportunity to comment on the Kent and Medway Enterprise and Productivity Strategy which will sit underneath the SELEP Industrial Strategy.
- 4.10 In addition, a link will be provided from the Council's web pages to the papers for meetings of the SELEP Partnership Ltd and the SELEP Accountability Board with an alert to all Members of Accountability Board call-in deadlines so this is more widely advertised. (Note: Each constituent upper tier Council may call-in Accountability Board decisions within three days of publication insofar as they relate to a decision affecting their own area and excluding any day to day management or routine operational decisions.)

## 5. Cabinet Forward Plan

- 5.1 The latest Forward Plan of forthcoming Cabinet decisions was published on 14 May 2020. Set out overleaf is a list of items featuring on the Forward Plan that fall within the terms of reference of the Regeneration, Culture and Environment 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.

Title of decision	Anticipated decision date
Council Plan Monitoring and Risk Register Review 2019/2020 - Quarter 4	9 June 2020
Community Safety Plan – <i>On this RCE O&amp;S Committee agenda</i>	7 July 2020
Medway Housing Delivery Test Action Plan 2020	4 August 2020
Council Plan Monitoring and Risk Register Review 2020/21 – Quarter 1 – <i>On RCE O&amp;S Committee work programme for 15 October 2020</i>	25 August 2020

## 6. Financial and legal implications

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

## 7. Recommendations

7.1 The Committee is asked to;

- a) note the current work programme;
- b) identify any additional items for inclusion in the work programme;
- c) agree the proposed approach to the scrutiny of SELEP as set in section 4 of the report.

## Lead officer contact

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## Appendices

Appendix A – Work programme

## Background papers

None