

COUNCIL

22 APRIL 2021

REPORT ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ACTIVITY

Report from: Neil Davies, Chief Executive
Author: Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services

Summary

This report provides a summary of the work of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees since the last report to Council on 21 January 2021.

1. Budget and policy framework

1.1. The Council's Constitution provides for the activities of Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committees to be reported to Council meetings. The following is a high-level summary of business conducted. For further detail please refer to the minutes of each Committee which are published on the Council's website using the web links under each section.

2. Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 28 January 2021

2.1. Establishment of a Medway Community Lottery

Outcome:

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked Phil Wright for attending the meeting to give his presentation and answer Members' questions.

2.2. Attendance of the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services

Outcome:

On behalf of the Committee, the Chairman thanked the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services for his attendance and for his detailed responses.

2.3. Medway Norse Update

Outcome:

Members noted the contents of the report and its Appendix.

2.4. Housing Revenue Account Capital and Revenue Budgets 2021/22

Outcome:

The Committee recommended to the Cabinet:

- a) A proposed social rent increase of CPI plus 1% for the housing stock as set out in Appendix A of the report (based on 52 collection weeks) with effect from 05 April 2021.
- b) A proposed affordable rent increase of CPI plus 1% for the housing stock as set out in Appendix B of the report (based on 52 collection weeks) with effect from 05 April 2021.
- c) A proposed rent increase of 5% to be applied to all garage tenure types with effect from 05 April 2020 as stated in section 4 of the report.
- d) That the service charges increases/decreases as set out in Appendix C of the report for 2021/22 be approved.
- e) That the revenue budget for the HRA service for 2021/22 as per Appendix D of the report be approved.
- f) That the proposed 3 year planned maintenance capital programme budget and the funding be approved as set out in section 8.5.3 & 8.5.4 of the report.
- g) To approve the reduction in 2020/21 planned maintenance underspend capital budget of £1.4m as set out in section 8.5.6 of the report.
- h) That the provision for the repayment of debt based on annuity-based payment of £0.410m, on the HRA's outstanding debt for 2021/22 be approved.
- i) That Members approve the revised 30-year HRA Business Plan model as attached at Appendix E of the report.

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors Khan, Maple and Andy Stamp asked that their abstentions be recorded).

2.5. Draft Capital and Revenue Budget 2021/22

Outcome:

- a) The Committee noted that Cabinet has instructed officers to continue to work with Portfolio Holders in formulating robust proposals to balance the budget for 2021/22 and beyond.
- b) The Committee was supportive of the proposals outlined in the draft capital and revenue budgets in so far as they related to the services within the remit of this committee, and also agreed to forward the comments from the individual Overview and Scrutiny Committees, as set out in Appendix 4 of the report.

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors Khan, Maple and Andy Stamp asked that their votes in favour be recorded).

2.6. Voluntary Sector Task Group

Outcome:

The Committee noted the report.

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors Khan, Maple and Andy Stamp asked that their votes in favour be recorded).

2.7. Council Strategy and Council Plan Refresh 2021/22

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) supported the refreshed Council Strategy as shown in Appendix 1 of the report.
- b) supported the refreshed Council Plan measures as shown in Appendix 2 of the report.

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors Khan, Maple and Andy Stamp asked that their votes in favour be recorded).

2.8. Risk Management, Emergency Planning and Business Continuity

Outcome:

Members noted the report.

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors Khan, Maple and Andy Stamp asked that their votes in favour be recorded).

2.9. Risk Strategy Annual Review

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) The Committee reviewed the 2021/22 Risk Management Strategy at Appendix 1 to the report, setting out the Council's approach to Risk Management; and
- b) noted that the Strategy would be submitted to Cabinet for approval on 2 February 2021.

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors Khan, Maple and Andy Stamp asked that their votes in favour be recorded).

2.10. Work programme

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) agreed the proposed changes to the Committee's work programme (Appendix 1 to the report) as set out in paragraph 3 of the report and the addition of a six month progress report on the outcome of the Voluntary Sector Task Group recommendations at the appropriate meeting in the 2021/22 municipal year; and
- b) noted the work programmes of the other overview and scrutiny committees (Appendix 2 to the report).

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors Khan, Maple and Andy Stamp asked that their votes in favour be recorded.)

3. Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 4 March 2021

3.1. Annual Report on School Performance 2019 to 2020

Outcome:

The Committee noted the report and requested to have a report on the plan to address the High Needs Budget deficit.

In accordance with Council rule 12.6, Councillors Howcroft-Scott, Johnson and Osborne requested that their votes in favour be recorded.

3.2. Attendance of the Portfolio Holder for Education and Schools

Outcome:

The Committee thanked the Portfolio Holder for his attendance.

In accordance with Council rule 12.6, Councillors Howcroft-Scott, Johnson and Osborne requested that their votes in favour be recorded.

3.3. Attendance of the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services (Lead Member)

Outcome:

The Committee thanked the Portfolio Holder for her attendance.

In accordance with Council rule 12.6, Councillors Howcroft-Scott, Johnson and Osborne requested that their votes in favour be recorded.

3.4. Alternative Provision: Progress since the review in 2018

Outcome:

The Committee noted the report.

In accordance with Council rule 12.6, Councillors Howcroft-Scott, Johnson and Osborne requested that their votes in favour be recorded.

3.5. Member's Item: Management of Youth Centres

Outcome:

The Committee noted the report.

In accordance with Council rule 12.6, Councillors Howcroft-Scott, Johnson and Osborne requested that their votes in favour be recorded.

3.6. Council Plan Performance Monitoring and Risk Register Review Quarter 3 2020 to 2021

Outcome:

The Committee noted the report.

In accordance with Council rule 12.6, Councillors Howcroft-Scott, Johnson and Osborne requested that their votes in favour be recorded.

3.7. Petition

Outcome:

The Committee note the report.

In accordance with Council rule 12.6, Councillors Howcroft-Scott, Johnson and Osborne requested that their votes in favour be recorded.

3.8. Work Programme

Outcome:

The Committee agreed the work programme as set out at Appendix 1 to the report, subject to accepting the propose changes, outlined in italic text on Appendix 1.

In accordance with Council rule 12.6, Councillors Howcroft-Scott, Johnson and Osborne requested that their votes in favour be recorded.

4. Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 11 March 2021

4.1. Petitions

Outcome:

The Committee agreed to:

- a) note the response provided to the petition and the reasons for referring the response to the Committee.
- b) welcome the assurance given by the CCG that local people will be consulted and engaged on any proposals relating to the Rainham Health Living Centre.
- c) welcome the commitment given by the CCG that this Committee will be consulted on any proposals to change the current primary care provision at the Rainham Healthy Living Centre.
- d) request a briefing paper from the CCG on GP numbers across Medway, including the numbers of other primary care practitioners.
- e) request that a meeting take place between Rainham Councillors, the CCG and the Primary Care Network to discuss the events at, and proposals for, the Blue Suite, including the processes involved in any proposed closure and also the use of the Rainham Health Living Centre.
- f) request that a briefing be sent to local councillors on the issues referred to in (e) in advance of the meeting referred to.

- g) request a briefing note from the CCG on the development of a Kent and Medway GP estate strategy and also the CCG's plans to encourage the creation of GP training practices.

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors Murray and Price asked that their votes in favour be recorded.)

4.2. Transforming Mental Health Services in Kent and Medway - Eradicating Dormitory Wards

Outcome:

The Committee agreed to:

- a) note recommendations a) to e) in the report.
- b) agree that the reprovision of services from Ruby ward at Medway Maritime Hospital to the Maidstone Hospital site is a substantial variation to services.
- c) recommend that a 6-week period of public consultation takes place with this Committee and local people including patients, families and carers who have used the Ruby ward service, to identify alternative sites or solutions to urgently eradicate the Trust's remaining dormitory ward by 2022.
- d) request that the CCG and KMPT investigate further Harmony House, Canada House, the Medway ambulance site and Elizabeth House as possible alternative sites for the new facility and also explore further with the Medway Foundation Site whether a suitable site can be found at Medway Maritime Hospital.
- e) agree that the outcomes of these investigations and discussions be discussed with a small Member Working Group.

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors McDonald, Murray and Price asked that their votes in favour be recorded.)

4.3. Transforming Mental Health Care Services in Kent and Medway - Redesigning the Model of Care for Dementia Patients, Including those with Complex Dementia and Challenging Behaviour

Outcome:

The Committee agreed to:

- a) note the recent work to date and next steps outlined within the paper.
- b) agree that a further update on progress on this programme comes to the June meeting.

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors McDonald, Murray and Price asked that their votes in favour be recorded.)

4.4. "Health Inequality in Medway" Director of Public Health's Annual Report 2019-20

Outcome:

The Committee agreed to:

- a) note the comments of the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- b) note the Annual Public Health Report, including its findings and recommendations.
- c) consider whether the Committee should receive regular reports from the Health and Wellbeing Board.

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors McDonald, Murray and Price asked that their votes in favour be recorded.)

4.5. Council Plan Performance Monitoring and Risk Register Review Quarter 3 2020/21

Outcome:

The Committee agreed to note the Q3 2020/21 performance against the measures used to monitor progress against the Council's priorities, and to also note the amended Strategic Risk Register as set out in Appendix 2 to the report.

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors McDonald, Murray and Price asked that their votes in favour be recorded.)

4.6. Healthwatch Medway - Caring for Someone During a Pandemic

Outcome:

The Committee agreed to:

- a) thank Healthwatch Medway for their report and note its findings.
- b) request an update on progress in implementing the report's recommendations.

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors McDonald, Murray and Price asked that their votes in favour be recorded.)

4.7. Work Programme

Outcome:

The Committee agreed the proposed changes to the work programme as set out in Section 3 of the report.

(In accordance with Council Rule 12.6, Councillors McDonald, Murray and Price asked that their votes in favour be recorded.)

5. Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 23 March 2021

5.1. Attendance of the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community Services

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) noted that the Portfolio Holder will consider the possible extension of the hours of opening of the Strand Swimming Pool in 2021.
- b) noted that the Portfolio Holder will request officers to supply to the Committee a list of sites that had benefitted from the grass verge initiative and that he welcomed suggestions from Ward Councillors for possible sites to be included in the initiative.
- c) requested that its appreciation be extended to the Archives Team and officers involved in securing funding from the Forestry Commission as part of the Urban Tree Challenge Fund.
- d) noted that the Portfolio Holder has offered to investigate and discuss with officers the issue of non-attendance at pre-booked swimming sessions at Medway Park.
- e) noted that the Portfolio Holder will investigate whether the European Regional Development Fund which formed part of the South East Creative Cultural and Digital Support would be available beyond June 2021.
- f) noted that the Portfolio Holder has offered to ask officers to investigate further with the Member concerned, the possibility of providing digital support to Friends Groups.
- g) noted that the Portfolio Holder had offered to liaise direct with the Member concerned on the promotion of the Corn Exchange for events and ways of improving communications concerning cancelled events to businesses in Rochester.

In accordance with Council rule 12.6, Councillors Browne, Mahil and Andy Stamp requested that their votes in favour be recorded.

5.2. Annual Review of Waste Contracts, Contract Year October 2019 - September 2020

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) expressed its appreciation to all staff within the various teams operating the waste collection service and in particular, for the excellent service that they have provided over the past year during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- b) noted the content of the report including the Annual Service Reports set out at Appendices 1 and 2.
- c) noted that the Democratic Services Officer will supply a copy of the recent Flytipping Briefing Note to the Member concerned.
- d) requested that the Committee receive an update on the findings of the customer satisfaction survey due to be undertaken at Household Waste Recycling Centres in April.
- e) noted that Ward Councillors have been invited to submit to officers sites where they would benefit from an increase in the frequency of litterbin emptying.
- f) requested an update on the programme of replacing vehicles within the fleet to electric or ultra-low emission either by way of information via the Climate Change Action Group or by way of a Briefing Note to this Committee.
- g) noted that the issue of potential use of CCTV cameras at flytipping hotspots will be referred to the Council's Enforcement Teams for investigation.

In accordance with Council rule 12.6, Councillors Browne, Mahil and Andy Stamp requested that their votes in favour be recorded.

5.3. Update on the Housing Infrastructure Fund Programme

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) noted the report.

- b) noted the officer's response to questions and that consideration would be given to the points raised going forward and that a more detailed report would be submitted in six months.
- c) noted that the Assistant Director Regeneration has agreed to consider the cross-referencing of the email responses with questionnaires received in response to the consultation process.

In accordance with Council rule 12.6, Councillors Browne, Mahil and Andy Stamp requested that their votes in favour be recorded.

5.4. Council Plan Performance Monitoring and Risk Register Review Quarter 3 2020/21

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) noted that increased information would be included in the Performance Monitoring Report at Quarter 4 on LRCC4a – Number of jobs created and safeguarded but in the meantime, information was being reported to both Cabinet and the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Council's recovery plan after the Covid-19 pandemic response and recovery plan to the Covid-19 pandemic on 30 March 2021.
- b) a report be included on the Committee's work programme on the possible opportunities for increased commercial use of the river.
- c) noted that the Assistant Director Front Line Services will provide information as to the likely start date of the LGF project for journey time and accessibility improvements on Medway City Estate to the Member direct.

In accordance with Council rule 12.6, Councillors Browne, Mahil and Andy Stamp requested that their votes in favour be recorded.

5.5. Petitions

Outcome:

The Committee noted the petition response set out in paragraph 3 of the report.

5.6. Work Programme

Outcome:

The Committee:

- a) noted that a further update report on the HIF programme would be submitted to the Committee in 6 months.
- b) agreed that a report be added to the Committee's work programme on the potential for increasing commercial use of the river.

6. Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 30 March 2021

6.1. The following reports were considered by the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 30 March 2021 and are listed here to enable the Council to discuss any issues arising at this meeting as the minutes are not yet available:

6.2. Petitions

6.3. Council Plan Performance Monitoring and Risk Register Review Quarter 3 2020/21

6.4. Capital Budget Monitoring Report Round 3 2020/21

6.5. Revenue Budget Monitoring Report Round 3 2020/21

6.6. Covid-19 Response and Recovery

6.7. Work programme

6.8. Pentagon Centre – Update

7. Contact for further details

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8. Appendices

None.

9. Background papers

[Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 28 January 2021
https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=123&MIId=4808&Ver=4](https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=123&MIId=4808&Ver=4)

[Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 4 March 2021](https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=378&MId=4692&Ver=4)

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=378&MId=4692&Ver=4>

[Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 11 March 2021](https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=131)

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgCommitteeDetails.aspx?ID=131>

[Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 23 March 2021](https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=437&MId=4766&Ver=4)

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=437&MId=4766&Ver=4>

[Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 30 March 2021](https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=123&MId=4809&Ver=4)

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=123&MId=4809&Ver=4>