



# **BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**25 JANUARY 2022**

## **WORK PROGRAMME**

Report from: Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance

Author: Stephen Platt, 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 and provides an opportunity to shape and direct the Committee's activities over the year.

1. **Budget and Policy Framework**
  - 1.1 Each overview and scrutiny committee has the responsibility for setting its own work programme (Chapter 4 – Rules, paragraph 21.1 (xv) General terms of reference).
2. **Background**
  - 2.1 The Committee's rolling work programme for the 2021/22 municipal year is attached at Appendix 1. 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. **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 took place on 6 January attended by the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Opposition Spokesperson.
  - 3.2 At the meeting, the issues discussed at an informal meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Chairman, Vice Chairman and Opposition Spokespersons held on 5 January were further considered.

### 3.3 Overview and Scrutiny Meetings

3.3.1 The informal meeting had discussed a range of views in relation to reducing the length of Overview and Scrutiny meetings and three key action points were agreed:

- Fewer agenda reports, with a maximum of four or five being considered at each meeting.
- Reports being taken as read; therefore, officers are not required to give introductions at meetings.
- Reports for Members' information to be circulated on the agenda only for noting without questions or debate.

3.3.2 It was recognised at both the informal meeting and the agenda planning meeting that each overview and scrutiny committee has a different focus, nevertheless these recommendations will be trialled across all four committees for a period of six months which will be followed by a review.

### 3.4 Task Groups

3.4.1 In 2011 there was a Council decision that a maximum of three in-depth reviews via Task Groups or themed Committee meetings could be undertaken annually, and these would be taken in turn.

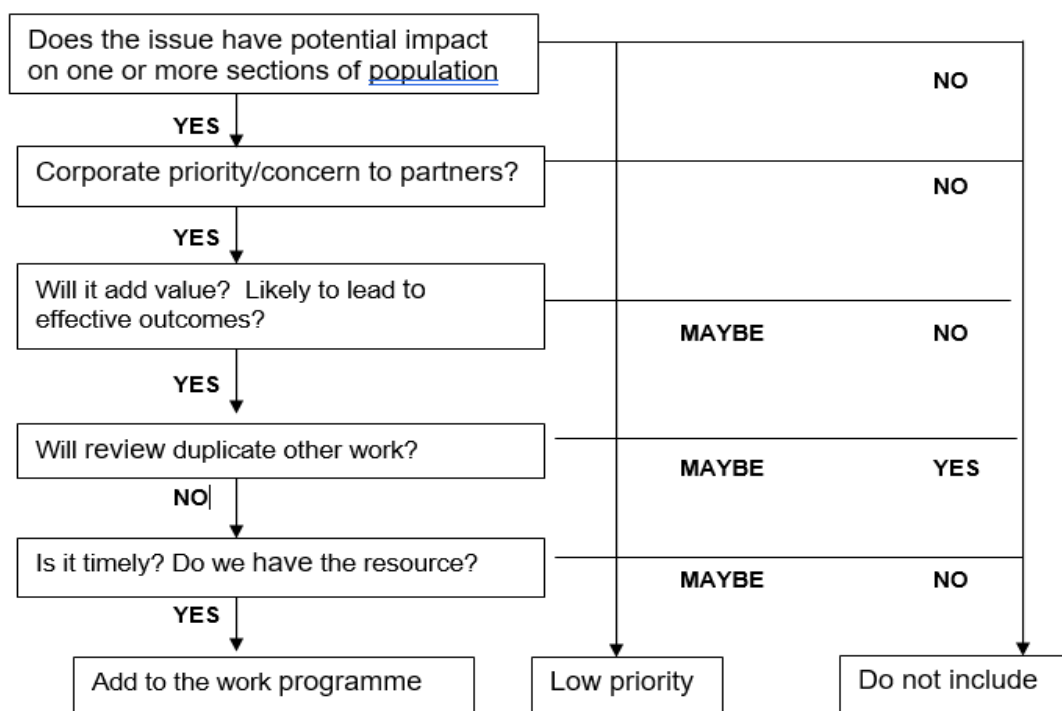
3.4.2 At the last meeting of the Committee (25 November) it was noted that the next scheduled Task Group is Physical Activity followed by Town Centres and Support for Carers.

3.4.3 At the informal meeting on 5 January Members suggested the following:

- That Support for Carers could be undertaken as a themed meeting rather than a Task Group.
- That the issue of GP appointments and access to services be flagged as a possible new Task Group in recognition of the levels of service provided in Medway.

3.4.4 Should any Committees wish to consider a new topic, then the following tool should be used as a way of selecting and prioritising a topic.

### Questions to ask when prioritising topics for review



3.4.4 Officers have used this method to assess the suitability of this topic for a forthcoming Task Group and this is attached as Appendix 3. Members will note that the Director of Public Health has set out the reasons why he considers a review of GP appointments and access to services should be deferred at the present time.

3.4.5 Should Members be minded to accept the Director of Public Health's advice, then the next scheduled Task Group to take place will be Physical Activity, as highlighted in paragraph 3.4.2, therefore Members' further views on the Task Group programme are sought.

## 4. Forward Plan

4.1 The latest Forward Plan of forthcoming Cabinet decisions was published on 10 January 2022.

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=423&T=4>

4.2 The items that are relevant to the Business Support O&S Committee are set out below so that Members have an opportunity to identify any further items they wish to consider as pre-decision scrutiny (where dates permit) other than those already programmed.

<b>Title of Decision</b>	<b>Anticipated Decision Date</b>
<p><b>Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23</b></p> <p>This report will provide details of the Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23, following initial consideration by the Audit Committee on 4 January 2022. The Cabinet will be asked to make a recommendation to Council on 24 February 2022 for final consideration and approval.</p>	<p><b>8 February 2022</b></p>
<p><b>Capital Budget Monitoring Round 3 2021/2022</b></p> <p>This report will set out the latest monitoring position.</p>	<p><b>8 March 2022</b> (on the work programme for 31 March 2022)</p>
<p><b>Council Plan Performance Monitoring and Risk Register Review Quarter 3 2021/2022</b></p> <p>This report will provide details of Quarter 3 performance for 2021/22 against the priorities set out in the Council Plan and will bring forward the latest risk management review.</p>	<p><b>8 March 2022</b> (on the work programme for 31 March 2022)</p>
<p><b>Discretionary Council Tax Relief for Care Leavers</b></p> <p>This report will set out options in relation to discretionary Council Tax relief for care leavers. Section 13A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 grants the billing authority the power to reduce the amount of council tax payable and this may be exercised by determining a class of case in which liability is to be reduced.</p>	<p><b>8 March 2022</b></p>
<p><b>Kyndi - Six Monthly Report</b></p> <p>This report will set out details of performance for the latest monitoring period for Kyndi Ltd.</p>	<p><b>8 March 2022</b> (on the work programme for 31 March 2022)</p>
<p><b>Revenue Budget Monitoring Round 3 2021/2022</b></p> <p>This report will set out the latest monitoring position.</p>	<p><b>8 March 2022</b> (on the work programme for 31 March 2022)</p>
<p><b>Medway Development Company Ltd - Six Monthly Report</b></p> <p>This report will set out details of performance for the latest monitoring period for Medway Development Company Ltd.</p>	<p><b>10 May 2022</b></p>

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

- 5.1 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 (Constitution, Chapter 4 – Rules – paragraph 22.2 (xxiii)).
- 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.
- 5.3 Appendix 2 to this report sets out the current work programmes of the other three overview and scrutiny committees.

## 6. Financial and legal implications

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

## 7. Recommendations

- 7.1 Members are asked to:

- a) agree the Committee's work programme at Appendix 1;
- b) note the work programmes of the other overview and scrutiny committees at Appendix 2;
- c) agree the following measures, the aim of which is to reduce the length of overview and scrutiny meetings, on a trial basis for six months across all four Overview and Scrutiny Committees, with a review at the end of the trial:
  - Set a maximum of 4-5 reports per agenda.
  - Reports to be taken as read at meetings, therefore, officers not required to give introductions at meetings.
  - Reports for information circulated on the agenda are not subject to questions and debate.
- d) consider the Director of Public Health's advice in relation to undertaking a Task Group on GP appointments and access to services at the present time.
- e) agree the schedule for the remaining Task Groups:

Physical Activity; GP appointments and access to services; Town Centres;  
and Support for Carers (as a themed meeting).

**Lead officer contact:**

Stephen Platt, Democratic Services Officer

Telephone: 01634 332011 Email: [stephen.platt@medway.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.platt@medway.gov.uk)

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1 - Business Support O&S work programme

Appendix 2 - Other O&S Committees' work programmes

Appendix 3 – Assessment of GP appointments and access to services as a Task  
Group topic

**Background papers:**

None