



BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13 JULY 2023

WORK PROGRAMME

Report from: Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services

Author: Steve Dickens, Democratic Services Officer

Summary

This report advises Members of the provisional work programme for 2023/24 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.

The report also provides an overview of the Committee's work over the last four years.

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 work programme for the 2023/24 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 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. An agenda planning meeting took place on 22 June attended by the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson.
 - 3.2 At the meeting, the work programme attached at Appendix 1 was discussed and was recommended that reports on the Emergency Cost of Living Plan and Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCOs) should be added to the work programme for the 31 August meeting. The reports are scheduled for decision

by Cabinet on 11 July. It had therefore been necessary to move reports relating to Universal Credit and Welfare Reforms Annual Progress Report and Reducing the use of non-permanent staff which had been due to come to this meeting to the October meeting. It was also recommended that a report on How the Council's equality policy, and accessibility of the same ensures equal access to all Council services for the diverse members of our community (internally and externally) be added to the work programme on a date to be determined.

3.3 It was also recommended that Portfolio Holders be invited to attend the meetings arranged for 26 October, 30 November, 1 February, and 4 April, subject to their availability and the number of other items scheduled for those meetings.

4. Forward Plan

4.1 The latest Forward Plan of Cabinet decisions was published on 28 June 2023.

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=460&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.

Title of Decision	Anticipated Decision Date
<p>Cabinet Advisory Groups This report will seek approval of the establishment of the Cabinet Advisory Groups for 2023/2024.</p>	11 July 2023
<p>Emergency Cost of Living Plan This report will set out plans to assist Medway residents with the cost of living crisis.</p>	11 July 2023
<p>Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCOs) This report will ask the Cabinet to approve the establishment of three shareholder boards (Cabinet sub-committees) in order to ensure proper oversight of three Council trading companies, Kyndi, Medway Development Company and Medway Norse.</p>	11 July 2023
<p>Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/24 Round 1 This report will set out the latest monitoring position. To be considered by the Business Support O&S Committee on 31 August.</p>	8 August 2023

Title of Decision	Anticipated Decision Date
<p>Council Plan Performance Monitoring and Risk Register Review Quarter 1 2023/24 This report will provide details of Quarter 1 performance for 2023/24 against the priorities set out in the Council Plan and will bring forward the latest risk management review.</p> <p>To be considered by the Business Support O&S Committee on 31 August.</p>	8 August 2023
<p>Lease Renewal of Kingfisher Nursery This report will ask the Cabinet to agree to the renewal of the lease for the nursery premises at Kingfisher Primary School for when the current lease expires in January 2024.</p>	8 August 2023
<p>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Round 1 This report will set out the latest monitoring position.</p> <p>To be considered by the Business Support O&S Committee on 31 August.</p>	8 August 2023
<p>Treasury Management Outturn This report will provide an overview of treasury management activity for 2022/23.</p> <p>This report will be considered by the Audit Committee which undertakes the scrutiny function of Treasury Management on behalf of the Business Support O&S Committee.</p>	5 September
<p>Financial Outlook 2024/25 This report will set out the financial pressures projected by the Council's services alongside projections of the Council's income streams insofar as they impact the 2024/25 budget.</p>	26 September 2023
<p>Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2023/24 This report will set out the mid-year review of the Treasury Management Strategy, in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountancy (CIPFA) Code of Practice.</p> <p>This report will be considered by the Audit Committee which undertakes the scrutiny function of Treasury</p>	26 September 2023

Title of Decision	Anticipated Decision Date
Management on behalf of the Business Support O&S Committee.	

5. Scrutiny Task Groups

- 5.1. The Council has agreed that up to three in-depth scrutiny Task Groups or themed Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings can be supported in total across all four of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees every year, with each review running successively. The length of a review would be dependent on the pace the Task Group wished to take. A process for determining the programme of Task Group themes and activity has been agreed, with the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee having a co-ordinating role. Topics are prioritised on a criteria selection basis reflecting best practice.
- 5.2. The current round of topics was confirmed by this Committee in March 2022:
- 5.2.1. GP appointments and access to services;
- 5.2.2. Physical activity;
- 5.2.3. Town centres; and
- 5.2.4 Support for carers (as a themed meeting).
- 5.3. Members will be aware that the GP Access Task Group was considered and agreed by the Cabinet in June 2023.
- 5.4. Given that the remaining three Task Group topics were agreed during the previous electoral term (2019-2023), and for ease of reference the rationale and criteria based assessments presented to this Committee back in July 2019 for topics listed in sections 5.2.2-5.2.4 above are attached at Appendix 3 for information.
- 5.5. In light of the passage of time since these topics were selected and assessments were completed, should members wish to proceed with all or some of the topics set out in paragraphs 5.2.2 – 5.2.4 above it is considered that new assessments would be required and reported to the next meeting of the committee before a final decision is made.
- 5.6 Should members wish to identify new topics it is proposed that each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees are provided with an opportunity to recommend a maximum of two Task Group topics. A meeting of the Chairpersons, Vice Chairpersons and Opposition Spokespersons will then consider the proposals and recommend a shortlist of no more than four topics to this Committee for a final decision.

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

- 6.1 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)).
- 6.2 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.
- 6.3 Appendix 2 to this report sets out the current work programmes of the other three Overview and Scrutiny committees.

7. Financial and legal implications

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

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 Members are asked to:
 - a. agree the Committee's provisional work programme at Appendix 1.
 - b. note the work programmes of the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees at Appendix 2
 - c. request that each Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends no more than two topics for future task groups, to be considered at a meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairpersons, Vice chairperson and opposition spokesperson where a shortlist of 4 topics and their priority order will be recommended to this Committee for a final decision.

Lead officer contact:

Steve Dickens, Democratic Services Officer

Telephone: 01634 332051 Email: steve.dickens@medway.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Business Support O&S work programme

Appendix 2 - Other O&S Committees' work programmes

Appendix 3 – Assessment of Task Group Topics July 2019

Background papers:

None