



# **BUSINESS SUPPORT AND DIGITAL OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**31 AUGUST 2023**

## **WORK PROGRAMME**

Report from: Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services

Author: Steve Dickens, Democratic Services Officer

### **Summary**

This report advises Members of the 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.

#### **1. Recommendations**

1.1. The Committee is asked to agree the work programme at Appendix 1 to the report.

1.2. The Committee is asked to note the work programmes of the other Overview and Scrutiny Committees at Appendix 2

1.3. The Committee is asked to identify up to two potential Task Group topics for consideration at a meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairpersons, Vice Chairpersons and Opposition Spokespersons.

#### **2. Budget and Policy Framework**

2.1. 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).

#### **3. Background**

3.1. 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.

#### 4. Agenda Planning Meeting

- 4.1. Members will be aware that Overview and Scrutiny Committees hold agenda planning meetings on a regular basis. An agenda planning meeting took place on 10 August attended by the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Opposition spokesperson.
- 4.2. At the meeting, the work programme attached at Appendix 1 was discussed and it was recommended that progress on the Employee Survey be considered by the Committee on 1 February 2024.
- 4.3. Following discussion with officers It was agreed that, starting from the first quarter of the new financial year, performance reports and financial monitoring should only present information relevant to the specific remit of the committee, as it does for the other three Overview and Scrutiny Committees. It was further agreed that the Committee no longer required the discussion relating to performance issues to be fed back from other Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings.

#### 5. Forward Plan

- 5.1. The latest Forward Plan of Cabinet decisions was published on 7 August 2023.

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=463&T=4>

- 5.2. 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>
<b>Disabled Facilities Grant and Financial Assistance Policy 2023</b> This report will seek approval of the Disabled Facilities Grant and Financial Assistance Policy. The Policy will set out the Council's intention to provide discretionary interventions alongside the Council's statutory duty to promote independent living and wellbeing within safer, healthier homes.	5 September 2023
<b>Household Support Fund</b> This report will ask the Cabinet to approve changes relating to the disbursement of the grant for the Household Support Fund.	5 September 2023
<b>Treasury Management Outturn</b>	5 September 2023

<p>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 and Digital O&amp;S Committee.</p>	
<p><b>Financial Outlook 2024/25</b> 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><b>Treasury Management Mid-Year Review 2023/24</b> 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 Management on behalf of the Business Support O&amp;S Committee.</p>	26 September 2023
<p><b>Treasury Management Monitoring - Round 1</b> This report will set out the latest monitoring position.</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&amp;S Committee.</p>	24 October 2023
<p><b>Capital Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Round 2</b> This report will set out the latest monitoring position.</p> <p>To be considered by the Business Support and Digital O&amp;S Committee on 30 November.</p>	21 November 2023
<p><b>Capital Strategy</b> This report will seek approval of the Capital Strategy, which will set out how the Council determines its priorities for capital investment and the process for formulating the capital programme.</p>	21 November 2023
<p><b>Council Plan Performance Monitoring and Risk Register Review Quarter 2 2023/24</b> This report will provide details of quarter 2 performance for 2023/24 against the priorities set out in the Council Plan and will bring the latest risk management review.</p>	21 November 2023

To be considered by the Business Support and Digital O&S Committee on 30 November.	
<p><b>Draft Capital and Revenue Budgets 2024/25</b> This report will provide details of the initial budget proposals for 2024/25 prior to consideration by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.</p> <p>To be considered by the Business Support and Digital O&amp;S Committee on 30 November.</p>	21 November 2023
<p><b>Revenue Budget Monitoring 2023/24 - Round 2</b> This report will present the latest monitoring position.</p> <p>To be considered by the Business Support and Digital O&amp;S Committee on 30 November.</p>	21 November 2023

## 6. Scrutiny Task Groups

- 6.1. 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.
- 6.2. The Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered an update on Task Groups on 13 July 2023. The Committee was advised that the last Task Group (GP Access) had been considered and agreed by the Cabinet in June 2023. This meant that the next scheduled Task Group topics were:
- Physical Activity
  - Town Centres; and
  - Support for Carers (as a themed meeting).
- 6.3. The Committee was advised that these Task Group topics were agreed during the previous electoral term (2019-2023), and that the criteria based assessments had been considered and agreed by the Committee in July 2019.
- 6.4. In light of the passage of time since these topics were selected and assessments were completed, the Committee was asked whether it wished for scrutiny Members to identify new Task Group topics. The Committee

agreed 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 chairpersons and opposition spokespersons where a shortlist of 4 topics and their priority order will be recommended to the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee for a final decision.

- 6.5. Therefore, this Committee is asked to identify no more than two potential Task Group topics. To assist, senior officers from the Directorate suggest that the following areas be considered as possible topics:

<b>Topic</b>	<b>O&amp;S Committee</b>
Cost of living support	Business Support and Digital
Climate Change	Business Support and Digital
Medway 2.0	Business Support and Digital

- 6.6. The Business Support and Digital O&S Committee will make a final decision based on the outcome of criteria based assessments which will take the following into account:

- What is the suggested topic?
- What is the reason for the review?
- Is there a potential for the review to impact one or more sections of the population?
- Is this an issue of corporate concern and/or an issue for partners?
- Will it add value/lead to effective outcomes?
- Will the review duplicate other work?
- Is it timely / do we have the resources?
- Will the review provide scope for service improvement?

## 7. Change to Committee's terms of reference

- 7.1. The Committee is advised that Full Council on 20 July 2023 agreed some changes to the terms of reference for all four overview and scrutiny committees. For this Committee, the following changes have been made:

- The name of the Committee has been changed to Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Removal of the scrutiny functions relating to Adult Learning, Community Hubs and Libraries, Strategic Housing, Housing Management and Travellers. These have been transferred to the Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- Addition of scrutiny function relating to Digital Transformation.

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

- 8.1. 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)).
- 8.2. 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.
- 8.3. Appendix 2 to this report sets out the current work programmes of the other three Overview and Scrutiny committees.

## 9. Financial and legal implications

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

### Lead officer contact:

Steve Dickens, Democratic Services Officer

Telephone: 01634 332051 Email: [steve.dickens@medway.gov.uk](mailto:steve.dickens@medway.gov.uk)

### Appendices:

Appendix 1 - Business Support and Digital O&S work programme

Appendix 2 - Other O&S Committees' work programmes

### Background papers:

None