



# **Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee 21 August 2024 Work Programme**

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## **Summary**

This report advises Members of the work programme for 2024/25 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 provisional 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 to the report.

### **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 provisional work programme for the 2024/25 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 31 July 2024 attended by the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.

4.2. At the meeting the following amendments to the work programme were proposed:

4.2.1. The addition of an item Reduction in Use of Non-Permanent Staff for March 2025 as suggested at the last meeting of the Committee in June 2024.

#### 5. Forward Plan

5.1. The latest Forward Plan of Cabinet decisions was published on 29 July 2024.

<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=493&T=4>

5.2. The items that are relevant to the Business Support and Digital 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>Capital Budget Monitoring - Quarter 1 2024/25</b> This report will set out the latest monitoring position.	27 August 2024
<b>Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 1 2024/25</b> This report will set out the latest monitoring position.	27 August 2024
<b>Medium Term Financial Outlook</b> This report will set out the financial pressures projected by the Council's services alongside projections of the Council's income streams.	27 August 2024
<b>Treasury Management Monitoring - Quarter 1 2024/25</b> This report will set out the latest monitoring position.  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&S Committee.	22 October 2024
<b>Capital Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2 2024/25</b> This report will set out the latest monitoring position.	19 November 2024
<b>Revenue Budget Monitoring - Quarter 2 2024/25</b> This report will set out the latest monitoring position.	19 November 2024
<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.	19 November 2024

<p><b>Council Plan Performance Monitoring and Risk Register Review - Quarters 1 and 2 2024/25</b></p> <p>This report will provide details of performance for the first half of 2024/25 against the priorities set out in the One Medway Council Plan and will bring forward the latest risk management review.</p>	<p>19 November 2024</p>
<p><b>Draft Capital and Revenue Budgets 2025/26 Proposals</b></p> <p>This report will provide details of the initial budget proposals for 2025/26 prior to consideration by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees.</p>	<p>19 November 2024</p>

## 6. The Co-ordinating Role of the Business Support and Digital 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. Scrutiny of Local Authority Trading Companies (LATCOs)

- 7.1. Following the review of the governance arrangements for Medway Council LATCOs which was undertaken last year, three Cabinet Sub-Committees were established, one for each of Kyndi, Medway Development Company and Medway Norse.
- 7.2. The first two LATCOs above are wholly owned by the Council and changes to the decision-making structures within those companies, i.e. the board of directors not comprising elected members or officers is underway with the relevant Sub-Committee having approved a recruitment process for non-executive directors in May/June this year.
- 7.3. The third of the LATCOs, Medway Norse is a joint venture company with Norfolk County Council (NCC). Changes to its governance model involved discussions with NCC and were recently concluded and set out in a report to the [Cabinet Sub-Committee in June 2024](#).
- 7.4. The final part of the governance review is the role that overview and scrutiny can play in holding the LATCOs to account. The current arrangements see only Medway Norse performance being reported to the Business Support and

Digital O&S Committee (strategic) and the Regeneration, Culture and Environment O&S Committee (operational) on a regular basis, i.e. once a year. This split between two O&S committees can lead to confusion as to what can be asked at which committee, duplication of information, Member and officer energy and most unsatisfactorily, items falling between the remits. Further, there is no regular reporting to O&S in relation to Kyndi and Medway Development Company.

- 7.5. It is proposed that the scrutiny for LATCOs arrangements are strengthened, clarified and simplified, and each Portfolio Holder can be held to account for LATCO performance, it is proposed that:
- 7.6. Each LATCO falls within the remit of a single O&S Committee. The O&S committee is responsible for the scrutiny, overview and holding to account functions of each LATCO.
- 7.7. The O&S Committee will have an opportunity to do this when the relevant Portfolio Holder (supported by key officers) is held to account:
  - Kyndi – Councillor Murray (HASC)
  - Medway Development Company – Councillor L. Prenter (RCE)
  - Medway Norse – Councillor Curry (RCE)
- 7.8. The ability for O&S to undertake pre-decision scrutiny and call in Cabinet/Cabinet Sub-Committee decisions in respect of our LATCOs, would remain unchanged. that these changes will take effect this year when Portfolio Holders are held to account at O&S meetings.

## 8. Financial and legal implications

- 8.1. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

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### Appendices:

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

Appendix 2 - Other O&S Committees' work programmes

### Background papers:

None