**Council**

**24 April 2025**

**Report on Overview and Scrutiny Activity**

Report from:          Richard Hicks, Chief Executive

Author:          Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services

## Summary

This report provides a summary of the agenda items considered by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees since the last report to Council on 23 January 2025 and the more significant outcomes arising from their deliberations. The comprehensive minutes (not attached) provide greater detail of the work undertaken by each of the committees.

## 1.     Recommendation

1.1.    It is recommended that Council notes the report in relation to Overview and Scrutiny activity.

## 2.     Budget and policy framework

2.1.    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 at the end of the report.

## 3.     Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 30 January 2025

3.1.    Reports considered at Committee:

a.  Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman decision

b.  Attendance of the Portfolio Holder for Business Management

c.  Draft Capital and Revenue Budget 2025/2026

d.  Risk Strategy Annual Review

e.  One Medway Council Plan 2024-2028 Key Performance Indicator refresh 2025/2026

f. Work Programme

Key meeting outcomes:

a. Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman decision – The Committee noted the outcome of the reviews into Planning Enforcement resource (Appendix A) and access of information during the partial building closure due to RACC (Appendix B), in response to the Ombudsman's recommendations.

## 4. Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 26 February 2025

4.1. Reports considered at Committee:

a. Waste Contracts Annual Review - October 2023 to September 2024

b. Attendance of Portfolio Holder for Heritage, Culture and Leisure

c. Property Review: Operational Properties

e. Work programme

4.2. Key meeting outcomes:

a. Attendance of Portfolio Holder for Heritage, Culture and Leisure – The Committee requested copies of the internet safety policies for Libraries to be shared with the Committee.

b. Property Review of Operational Properties: The Committee recommended the following amendments to Cabinet: Lower Stoke car park & Albatross Avenue car park to both be moved from the disposal list at 1.1.2 [of the committee report] into the list of properties at 1.1.3 [of the committee report] where it is recommended that consultation is carried out before Cabinet makes a decision and, Hopewell Drive Business Centre is disposed of subject to: a covenant that restricts it from being used for residential use and the leases to existing occupiers being honoured by the new owner.

## 5. Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 6 March 2025

5.1. Reports considered at Committee:

a. Attendance of the Portfolio Holder for Children's Services

b. Attendance of the Portfolio Holder for Education

c. Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill

d. Capital Budget Monitoring - Round 3 2024/25

e.  Revenue Budget Monitoring - Round 3 2024/25

f.  Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report and Strategic Risk Summary - Quarter 3 2024/25

g.  Work programme

5.2.  Key meeting outcomes:

a.  Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill – The Committee agreed for a mini review led by the Assistant Director of Education and SEND into Elective Home Education to be conducted, with findings to be reported back to the Committee.

## 6.  Health and Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 13 March 2025

6.1.  Reports considered at Committee:

a.  Update on Adult Autism and ADHD Pathway Development and Procurement

b.  Update from South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust

c.  Medway NHS Foundation Trust - Care Quality Commission Emergency Department Inspection

d.  Member's Item: Pharmacy Provision in Rainham

e.  Member's Item: Strood Healthy Living Centre and Primary Care Provision

f.  Healthy Living Centres

g.  Capital Budget Monitoring - Round 3 2024/25

h.  Revenue Budget Monitoring - Round 3 2024/25

i.  Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report and Strategic Risk Summary – Quarter 3 2024/25

j.  Work programme

6.2.  Key meeting outcomes:

a.  Member's Item: Strood Healthy Living Centre and Primary Care Provision – The Committee noted the report and requested that a meeting to discuss the issues further around the lack of a HLC in Strood and primary care provision generally, be held with the Chairperson, Opposition Spokespersons, Ward Councillors and the ICB.

b.  Member's Item: Pharmacy Provision in Rainham – The Committee noted the report and recommended that the Chairperson of the Committee organise a meeting with the Chairperson of the Health and Wellbeing

Board, along with representatives from Public Health and the Integrated Care Board, to discuss the matter further.

## 7. Regeneration, Culture and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 25 March 2025

7.1. Reports considered at Committee:

a. Attendance of Portfolio Holder for Economic and Social Regeneration and Inward Investment

b. Bus Service Improvement Plan

c. Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report and Strategic Risk Summary - Quarter 3 2024/2025

d. Capital Budget Monitoring Round 3 2024/2025

e. Revenue Budget Monitoring Round 3 2024/2025

f. Petitions Report

g. Work programme

7.2. Key meeting outcomes:

a. Attendance of Portfolio Holder for Economic and Social Regeneration and Inward Investment:

i) The Committee noted the report and requested that key performance indicators be explored further.

ii) The Committee requested a briefing at a future Committee regarding the impact of the Lower Thames Crossing on traffic and transport in Medway.

iii) The Committee requested a future report on the Shared Prosperity Fund and outcomes.

b. Revenue Budget Monitoring Round 3 2024/25 – The Committee requested a briefing note from the Head of Highways regarding capacity to repair potholes given the staffing underspend.

## 8. Business Support and Digital Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 27 March 2025

8.1. Reports considered at Committee:

a. Attendance of the Leader of the Council

b. Member's Item: Wellbeing and Employee Welfare

c. Procurement Strategy 2021-2025 Update Report 2025

d. Use of Agency Staff and Consultants

e. Council Plan Performance Monitoring Report and Strategic Risk Summary - Quarter 3 2024/25

f. Revenue Budget Monitoring - Round 3 2024/25

g. Capital Budget Monitoring Round 3, 2024-25

h. Work Programme

8.2. Key meeting outcomes:

a. Attendance of the Leader of the Council – The Committee requested a briefing note setting out the structure of the new Policy Unit created to support Local Government Re-organisaiton.

b. Member's Item: Wellbeing and Employee Welfare – The Committee asked the Council to work with its recognised Trade Unions to further develop staff wellbeing strategies to reduce sickness and increase wellbeing as the Council moves towards the goal of being an employer of choice.

c. Use of Agency Staff and Consultants – The Committee requested a briefing note providing additional data regarding the number of conversations from temporary to permanent roles, details of apprenticeships, and the number of temporary staff which have converted to permanent roles following four years of working as agency staff and the number of agency staff currently eligible to convert to permanent staff following four years of service.

## Contact for further details

Wayne Hemingway, Head of Democratic Services
Telephone: 01634 332509  Email: wayne.hemingway@medway.gov.uk

## Appendices

None

## Links to minutes

| Overview and Scrutiny Committee | Date |
|---|---|
| Business Support and Digital | 30.01.25 |
| | |
| Regeneration, Culture and Environment | 26.02.25 |
| | |
| Children and Young People | 06.03.25 |
| | |
| Health and Adult Social Care | 13.03.25 |

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|---|---|
| [Regeneration, Culture and Environment](#) | 25.03.25 |
| | |
| [Business Support and Digital](#) | 27.03.25 |
| | |

## Background papers

None