

COUNCIL

Report title	Scrutiny Progress Report
Chief Executive or Director	Director of Legal and Governance Services
Date	26 January 2022

Summary

Proposed decision(s)
To update the position in respect of the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Board and scrutiny panels. The current position regarding progress made by the Board and each of the panels is set out below.

Report for:	Key decision:	Confidential/Exempt:	Is the report urgent?
To be noted	No	No	Non-urgent report

Contribution to delivery of the 2021-24 Strategic Plan		
People	Place	Business
N/A	N/A	Members will be able to keep abreast of the work carried out through the Scrutiny Process
Ward(s) affected		
No wards in Middlesbrough are directly affected.		

What is the purpose of this report?

1. To update the position in respect of the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Board and scrutiny panels.

Why is this report necessary?

2. The report is necessary so that Members are aware of the work being carried out by the individual Scrutiny Panels and the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

What decision(s) are being asked for?

3. That Council note the report.
4. The current position regarding progress made by the Board and each of the panels is set out below.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

The Overview and Scrutiny Board met on 7 December 2021 and 18 January 2022.

At the 7 December 2021 meeting the Board considered / received information in respect of the following:

- Executive Forward Work Programme;
- Executive Member Update: Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Culture and Communities
- Chief Executive's Update;
- Scrutiny Chairs Updates;
- Revenue and Capital Budget - Projected Outturn position as at Quarter Two 2021/22.

At the 18 January 2022 meeting the Board considered / received information in respect of the following:

- Executive Forward Work Programme;
- Chief Executive's Update;
- Scrutiny Chairs Updates;
- The Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel - Final Report – The Recruitment and Retention of Staff within Adult Social Care;
- Medium Term Financial Plan / Budget Consultation;
- Corporate Performance Report – Quarter 2.

SCRUTINY PANEL UPDATES

The updated position in respect of the work of each of the Council's scrutiny panels is shown below.

Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel

The Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel met on 8 December 2021 and 5 January 2022.

At the 8 December 2021 meeting, the panel considered its draft final report in respect of 'The Recruitment and Retention of Staff within Adult Social Care'. Following agreement, the report will next be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 18 January 2022. The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration was also in attendance at the meeting to provide an update regarding the Integration of Health and Social Care.

At the 5 January 2022 meeting, the panel received an update from the Independent Chair of the Teeswide Safeguarding Adults Board (TSAB), which covered the Board's Annual Report 2020/2021 and its Strategic Business Plan 2021/2022. The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration was in attendance to provide supporting information in respect of the TSAB update, as well as an update regarding the Integration of Health and Social Care. The panel also held a general discussion on the topic of social housing.

Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel

The Scrutiny Panel continues to gather evidence in respect of its current review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

At the meeting held on 13 December 2021, the Scrutiny Panel received a record of the points discussed with Parents4Change, following an informal meeting with the Chair and Vice-Chair on 23 November 2021. Parents4Change is a parent forum group, which offers help and support to parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities and special educational needs. The information received demonstrated how the forum enables the local area to identify problems and implement solutions, ensuring families are well supported in Middlesbrough.

In addition, the Council's Strategic Lead for the Inclusion and Specialist Support Service was in attendance to provide:

- details of how children and young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their families are fully involved in discussions and decision-making about the services and the support they receive through meaningful and ongoing co-production; and
- case studies that demonstrated how the views, wishes and feelings of the child/young person and their parents have impacted on the delivery of services and support.

The Scrutiny Panel last met on 17 January 2022. At the meeting, the Scrutiny Panel received evidence from Middlesbrough College's Vice Principal for Students and Communications, including:

Identifying SEN

- An overview of how the college identifies where a student may be having difficulty, which may be because of SEN.

SEND Support

- An overview of the support that the college provides to those students who have, or may have, SEND.

Partnership Working

- Information on how the college works with the Local Authority to:
 - meet the needs of students and ensure a successful transition into college life; and
 - ensure appropriate support is in place to enable students with SEND to achieve the best possible outcomes in adult life.
- Case studies demonstrating the impact of partnership working.

The Scrutiny Panel also continues to receive regular updates on education and COVID-19 recovery.

Children and Young People's Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel

The Children and Young People's Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel met on 22 November and 13 December 2021.

At the 22 November meeting, as part of the Panel's current review, 'Locality Working from a Children's Services Perspective', a number of Officers from Children's Social Care were in attendance: Executive Director of Children's Services, Director of Children's Care, Head of Prevention, Early Help Team Manager, Social Care Team Manager; and the Newport Neighbourhood Manager. The Panel was provided with further details around the work being undertaken by Early Help and Social Care services within the locality pilot areas which prompted discussion and questions from the Panel.

At the 13 December meeting, representatives from several services/organisations working within the locality pilot model were in attendance to discuss their roles within the locality model and to provide feedback on the multi-agency locality approach. Representatives from Public Protection and Public Health spoke about their wider involvement across Newport and North Ormesby and representatives from Newport Primary School and Newport Neighbourhood Police spoke specifically in relation to the Newport locality.

The Panel's next meeting is scheduled for 25 January 2022 when representatives linked to the North Ormesby locality will be in attendance.

Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel

The Culture and Communities Panel met on 16 December 2021 and continued their review on Tough enough? Enforcement in Middlesbrough and its impact on crime and anti-social behaviour.

As part of the current review, the Head of Stronger Communities provided an overview of the current crime and anti-social behaviour levels in Middlesbrough and discussed partnership working across the town.

The panel also were joined by Chief Inspector Daryll Tomlinson, Cleveland Police, who provided a presentation with regards to Neighbourhood Policing in Middlesbrough.

The next meeting of the Panel will take place on Thursday 10 February 2022.

Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel

The Economic Development Infrastructure and Environment Scrutiny Panel met on 12 January 2022.

The Panel received an update on the regeneration of Captain Cook Square Shopping Centre from the Director of Regeneration for information. This was a topic from the Panel's Work Programme 2021-2022. Information was also shared on the Council's very recent acquisition of the Cleveland Centre.

As part of the current review into Middlesbrough Council's Green Strategy, the Head of Economic Growth and the Transport and Infrastructure Manager attended the meeting and provided information in relation to Middlesbrough Council's Equity and Local Economy and Sustainable Transport Action Groups.

The next meeting of the Panel is scheduled for 9 February 2022 and the Panel is scheduled to receive an update on Bus Services from the Tees Valley Combined Authority, and will also continue gathering evidence for the Green Strategy review.

Health Scrutiny Panel

At the Panel's meeting of the 6th December Members received an update of progress regarding Opioid dependency and the actions arising from the Panel's report into the issue.

Representatives from Public Health and Foundations Practice informed the Panel there was a significantly higher rate of deaths relating to drug misuse in the North East than there was in other English Regions. Based on 2018-20 figures Hartlepool and Middlesbrough had two of the highest rates for drug misuse or poisoning deaths, with only Blackpool showing higher figures.

The provisional data for alcohol related deaths also showed there had been a significant increase in deaths with specific alcohol causes in 2020 from 2019. Indeed, while the data remains to be validated it is possible there may have been an increase of 66% in alcohol related deaths in 2020 which equated to approximately 100 people. Although there were many complex factors to explain this increase government data showed that alcohol consumption had undoubtedly increased since the covid-19 pandemic.

The Panel also received an update on the Heroin Assisted Treatment (HAT) pilot programme from representatives of the specialist GP practice, Foundations. Members were made aware that Foundations offered specialist support those suffering from problems with substance misuse. The Panel also heard that HAT was the first programme of its kind in the UK.

The majority of drug users in the town used heroin with one treatment method being Methadone maintenance. However, Members were also made aware that five to ten percent with an addiction to heroin failed to benefit from that treatment. With approximately 1,000 people in receipt of such treatment this equates to approximately 100 people unable to benefit from methadone treatment.

After operating for two years, the HAT has been shown to have a positive outcome for individuals, including psychological and social well-being element as well as having a community impact. In essence the service acts as wrap-around service for users.

Members were also made aware that Public Health ensured there was a fully integrated system-wide approach to all system like the HAT.

Members were also made aware that significant investment from Government had been recently announced that would greatly contribute to projects such as the HAT and Project ADDER (Addiction, Diversion, Disruption, Enforcement and Recovery). For example, over £300 million would be invested over three years for enforcement actions and £780 million for treatment and recovery and project ADDER would have funding extended until 2025.

The Panel also received an update on Covid-19 rates and heard that Middlesbrough's Covid-19 rates was 316 per 100,000 meaning Middlesbrough 135th in the league

tables. Ultimately, while rates were high in the town, they were not as high as other places. Members also heard that hospital rates were declining with numbers being approximately 50 which was down from 70. However, the hospital system continued to be strained.

Members also heard that while data was still formative, the Omicron variant posed a significant and was more infectious than both the Alpha and Delta variant.

At the Panel's meeting of the 11 January 2022 Members received the South Tees NHS Trust's bi-annual performance update and heard that while Covid-19 remained a significant preoccupation for the Health Service, patients had continued to be treated safely. The panel heard that 46,000 patients had required overnight stays whereas 79,000 patients had been able to return home after receiving their treatment. The Panel also heard that patient feedback had been positive with results having improved on previous years. In the face of the Omicron variant the Trust was grateful to the community for helping to protect everyone.

95% of staff at the Trust had also received at least two doses of the vaccine with the remaining 5% of staff being small amounts in real terms. Work was continuing to ensure staff had received their vaccine.

Winter pressures were acute for the Trust and while it was coping well, the pressures were nevertheless taking its toll on staff and resources. The Trust stressed that the community helping to protect itself from Covid-19 was paramount and that to alleviate pressures on the system there were other means of accessing health care other than emergency services. The Panel expressed their thanks to all involved in the Health Service for their continued commitment.

The Panel also received information from the Secretary of the Cleveland Local Medical Council in pursuance of its review into health inequalities from the perspective of GPs during which the Panel were made aware of the challenges faced by GPs in this regard.

Latest Covid-19 statistics showed that Middlesbrough now topped the league tables for number of infections. While weekly infection rates had increased by 47% the Panel was also informed that the previous week had seen the rate increase by 246%. Therefore, while the rate of infection was increasing there were signs it was beginning to slow. The highest rate of infections by age were within the 20-59 age brackets which was having an impact on frontline services as this is the working population. In terms of hospital admissions there had been an increase from 36 inpatients just before Christmas to 144 inpatients across the Trust, although the number of patients in critical care remained stable at 6. Vaccination take up rates remained a challenge however Members were encouraged by the success of so-called pop-up vaccine centres and suggested that this initiative be continued.

Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

The Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee met on 10 December 2022 and considered the following:

- Local NHS / Public Health response to Covid-19;
- TVCCG - Update - Learning Disabilities Respite Review / Breast Diagnostic Services;

- TVJHSC Visit to Lotus Ward - Acklam Road Hospital - 9 December 2021;
- North East Ambulance Service (NEAS) Performance Update.

Tees Valley Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Tees Valley Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 13 January 2022 and considered the following:

- Chief Executive's Update;
- Finance and Resources Sub Committee Budget Consultation Report;
- Investment Plan Delivery Update;
- Delegated Decisions;
- Constitution Review.

SCRUTINY REPORTS SUBMITTED TO EXECUTIVE

Since the last update to Council the Final Report of the Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel - Cultural Events in Middlesbrough: Their Impact and Future has been submitted to Executive and deferred.

The Final Report of the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel - Middlesbrough Regeneration Post COVID-19 has also been submitted to Executive and deferred.

The reports listed above will both be considered by Executive at its next meeting, scheduled to be held on 14 February 2022.

Other potential decisions and why these have not been recommended

5. No other options were considered.

Impact(s) of recommended decision(s)

Legal

6. There are no legal implications as a result of the proposed appointments.

Financial

7. There are no financial implications arising from this report.

The Mayor's Vision for Middlesbrough

8. The report is line with the Mayor's vision for Middlesbrough.

Policy Framework

9. The report does not impact on the overall budget and policy framework.

Wards

10. The report does not impact on wards.

Risk

11. Not applicable.

Equality and Diversity

12. An Impact Assessment has not been completed, as it is not applicable.

Actions to be taken to implement the decision(s)

13. Not applicable.

Background papers

14. No unpublished background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

**COUNCILLOR M SAUNDERS
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