

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL
CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SCRUTINY PANEL

**Setting the Scrutiny Panel's Work Programme
2022/23**

23 June 2022

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To invite the Culture and Communities scrutiny panel to consider its work programme for the 2022/2023 municipal year.

BACKGROUND

2. At the start of every municipal year, scrutiny panels discuss the topics that they would like to review during the coming year.
3. Work programmes are useful as they provide some structure to a scrutiny panel's activity and allow for the effective planning and preparation of work.
4. As part of the process for establishing the work programme, support officers gather information/views from a number of sources. Below is a list of topics which are anticipated to be of particular interest to the scrutiny panel. Members are advised that the list of possible topics is not exhaustive and that additional topics can be added and considered at the scrutiny panel meeting.

Topics completed in 2021/22

- Cultural events in Middlesbrough.
- Tough Enough? Enforcement in Middlesbrough and its impact on crime and anti-social behaviour- submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Board, 22 June 2022.

Topics agreed in 2022/22, which have not been investigated

- Middlesbrough's struggling high street-

The Future High Street Fund (FHSF) is a government programme supporting 72 areas in England to enhance their local economy and deliver ambitious high street regeneration plans. The programme was launched in December 2018, with 15 councils getting funding in the first phase. Middlesbrough Council was awarded £14.1m in the second phase, which was announced in March 2021.

A bright future is seen for the highstreet and the programme focusses on rebalancing the economic mix and diversifying floor space for residential, commercial, and leisure uses. This will create a more balanced and attractive offer to support and enhance our town centre.

The vision is based on building a new urban community in the heart of the town, by bringing more people to live and work in central Middlesbrough. The £14.1m funding will be used for the following schemes:

- development of residential property
- adaptations to transport services and improving safety and security of town centre areas
- cultural animation and experiences
- grant funding for businesses to mitigate the impact of COVID-19
- transformation of Captain Cook Square for leisure use

Funding is geographically restricted (in line with approved FHSF programme guidance) to Middlesbrough town centre.

As work in being undertaken, the panel may like to receive an update on the scheme and hear plans in place to improve Middlesbrough high street.

Topical and local Issues

Topic	Details
<p>Community safety</p> <p>Support Neighbourhood Watch schemes across the Town.</p>	<p>.</p> <p>Part of the Strategic Plan work plan 2022-24 (ASB 02)</p> <p>Neighbourhood Watch is about people getting together with their neighbours to take action to reduce crime.</p> <p>They're community initiatives owned and run by their members which are supported by the police but not owned by them, although we sometimes run them.</p> <p>They work by developing a close relationship between community members and the local police.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Watch schemes can:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cut crime and the opportunities for crime • help and reassure those who live in the area • encourage neighbourliness and closer communities <p>Some areas of Middlesbrough are part of the scheme, however members may like to explore the benefits of Neighbourhood watch and ways to promote the scheme by looking at examples of good practice.</p>
<p>Reward and Champion individuals for being good neighbours.</p>	<p>ASB 06- would link into above</p>

Encourage more residents to report crime and anti-social behaviour.	ASB 05- would link into above.
Increased enforcement against problem properties/ streets and gardens of disrepair.	What initiatives and future plans are in place to increase enforcement?
Culture Cultural events- increasing visitor number and ticket sales	Strategic plan workplan 2022-24 CUL 01, 05, 06 and 07 As we look to recovering from the covid pandemic, how does Middlesbrough intend to boost its visitor attractions/ numbers for the town?
Cultural Strategy	The Council has a Cultural Strategy in place. The Panel may like to have an annual review of the Strategy, which would allow them to ask how the Council seek to improve visitor numbers to the town.

Review Topic Suggestions

Suggestion	Details
Communities Scrambling bikes and illegal quad bikes	<i>Suggestion from member of the public</i> In 2019, operation kickstart was launched by Cleveland police. Police and partner agencies in Stockton were issuing a warning that the illegal use of motorcycles would not be tolerated. Officers and colleagues from the local authority and housing association Thirteen coordinated Operation Kick Start, a proactive operation to tackle the illegal use of motorcycles. Riding off-road bikes, mini-motos, pit bikes and quads on any public land anywhere across Cleveland is illegal. There has been an increase of bikes and illegal quadbike use over the past year in certain areas of the town. Has operation kickstart been rolled into Middlesbrough and if not, what is the council and Cleveland Police doing to combat this issue? .
The impact of private rented properties on areas of owner occupied properties and areas of social housing and what can be done to mitigate negative effects.	<i>Suggestion from Councillor</i> There has been a massive increase in the number of private rented properties in wards across Middlesbrough. The increase has been more noticeable since landlord licensing was introduced in Newport and

	North Ormesby. Unfortunately some landlords are irresponsible which causes numerous problems for the local communities. People have started moving away and stable communities are deteriorating.
Cohesion/ Asylum Seekers and support for Ukraine families.	Whilst the panel recently undertook a review of cohesion, there has been a significant number of changes, including the recent war in Ukraine. Middlesbrough Council has provided immense support for those families and the panel may like to have a one-off meeting regarding this and future plans.

Possible updates

Topic	Details
CLEVELAND POLICE Operation Phoenix	In July 2019, Cleveland Police launched a major campaign to prevent crime, protect communities and tackle serious crime. The Panel last received an update on 15 April 2021 and the Panel may like to consider receiving an update on the Operation's progress.

Standing Updates

Surveillance Policy RIPA - Last update received 15 April 2021.	RIPA is the law governing the use of surveillance techniques by public authorities, including local authorities. RIPA requires that when public authorities need to use covert techniques to obtain private information about someone, they only do so if surveillance is necessary, proportionate, and compatible with human rights. Typically this relates to suspected criminal activity that is likely to result in a custodial sentence of six months or more. At the last update the Panel learnt that the policy would be reviewed and this should be embedded in time for the annual update, through the Surveillance Policy. The annual review will be taking place in September 2022 and therefore if the panel are in agreement, an update will be scheduled for October/ November.
Preventing Terrorism Last Update received 7 January 2021	In 2011, the Prevent strand of the UK's long-term strategy for countering international terrorism, known as CONTEST was explicitly changed by the Government to deal with all forms of terrorism, and target not just violent extremism but also non-violent extremism. This

	<p>change in strategic direction was enacted in the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The Act, which became law in February 2015, places a duty on specified authorities to have “<i>Due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism</i>”. In response an Action Plan for Middlesbrough was developed to respond to the specific elements of the Prevent agenda. The panel hosted a scrutiny seminar on the Prevent agenda in October 2015.</p> <p>In 2018, the Counter-Terrorism Strategy was published and the panel received an update regarding PREVENT actions.</p>
<p>Community Safety Partnership Last Update received 18 February 2022</p>	<p>Middlesbrough’s Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP). The powers of the Police and Justice Act 2006 relating to Crime and Disorder (Overview and Scrutiny) Regulations 2009 require the CDRP to present the partnerships intentions, and actions to Scrutiny on an annual basis. This requirement commenced in 2009 and the panel has met with the CDPR each year since that time.</p> <p>There is due to be a refresh of the community safety plan and community safety partnership which will be submitted to the Executive in October 2022. As the panel has recently looked at the CSP, a look at the updates/ refresh would be welcome.</p>

5. It should be noted that the suggested topics outlined above are exactly that, suggestions. The content of the scrutiny panel’s work programme is entirely a decision for the panel to make. When considering the work programme, the panel is advised to select topics that are of interest to it, as well as topics that the panel feels by considering, it could add value to the Local Authority’s work.
6. In addition to undertaking the agreed work programme, scrutiny panels have also previously responded on an ad-hoc basis to emerging issues - such as considering relevant new legislation, guidance or Government consultation documents. This approach occasionally results in further topics being identified for investigation or review throughout the year.
7. On occasion ad-hoc scrutiny panels may also be established throughout the year to undertake additional investigations, for example to examine areas of work which overlap more than one scrutiny panel.

The panel also had a responsibility to address certain issues each year and these are presented below:

8. The scrutiny panel is also advised that, under the terms of the Local Government Act 2000, local authorities have a responsibility of community leadership and a power to secure the effective promotion of community well-being. Therefore, in addition to the scrutiny panel’s generally recognised powers (of holding the Executive to account, reviewing service provision, developing policy, considering budget plans and performance and financial monitoring), panels also have the power to consider **any** matters which are not the responsibility of the Council but which affect the local authority **or** the inhabitants of its area. For example, nationally, local authorities have undertaken scrutiny work on issues such as post office closures, rural bus services, policing matters and flood defence schemes.

9. Each year, the panel has responsibility for addressing certain issues, these are as follows:

- **Community Safety Partnership** See above for details.
- **Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act (RIPA)** See above for details.
- **Preventing Terrorism** See above for details.

10. It should be noted that it is in the panel's gift to identify the time and frequency for when the panel receives updates on the above issues.

Scrutiny work plan prioritisation aid

11. Members may wish to use the aid attached at **Appendix 1** to prioritise issues where scrutiny can make an impact, add value or contribute to policy development.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

12. The scrutiny panel is asked to consider and agree its work programme for the 2020/21 municipal year.

13. When considering its work programme, the scrutiny panel is asked to ensure that topics agreed for inclusion:

- Affect a group of people living within the Middlesbrough area.
- Relate to a service, event or issue in which the Council has a significant stake or over which the Council has an influence.
- Are not issues which the Overview and Scrutiny Board or the scrutiny panels have considered during the last 12 months.
- Do not relate to an individual service complaint; and
- Do not relate to matters dealt with by another Council committee, unless the issue deals with procedure.

14. It is suggested that the scrutiny panel has a mixture of working styles in its programme. This can include detailed and in-depth reviews, shorter topics, or one-off investigations.

15. Once the scrutiny panel has identified the areas of priority, support staff will draw those topics into a programme for approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

RECOMMENDATION

16. That the scrutiny panel identifies two topics it would like to include in its work programme for 2020/21, for consideration/approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

17. Throughout the report, reference is made to documents published by the Local Government Association, Cleveland Police and Strategic Plan 2020/21

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