

COUNCIL

Report title	Scrutiny Progress Report
Chief Executive or Director	Director of Legal and Governance Services
Date	25 November 2020

Summary

Proposed decision(s)
To update the position in respect of the Council’s Overview and Scrutiny Board (OSB) 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:	Is the report urgent?
To be noted	No	The report is not confidential	Non-urgent report

Contribution to delivery of the 2020-23 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 (OSB) 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 5 November 2020 and considered the following:-

- a) Executive Forward Work Programme;
- b) Middlesbrough Council's Response to COVID-19;
- c) Executive Member Update: Deputy Mayor and Lead Member for Children's Social Care;
- d) Overview and Scrutiny Board Membership;
- e) Final Report – Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel – Physical Activity for Older People (Aged 65-Plus);
- f) Final Report – Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel – Addressing Poverty Issues and the Impact on Learning;
- g) Final Report – Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel – Teesside Crematorium; and
- h) Scrutiny Chairs Update.

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 Panel met on 11 November 2020 and received updates from officers in relation to a previous review on Reducing Loneliness and/ or social isolation in later life. The Panel also received information on what is being done to combat isolation during Covid 19.

The Panel also received an update from the Aging Better Middlesbrough Programme Manager who updated the panel on work undertaken to date, impact of Covid 19, together with plans for the future.

Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel

At its last meeting on 3 November 2020 the Panel received information from the Director of Legal and Governance, the Head of Information, Strategy and Governance and the Health and Safety Manager in relation to its review of the Council's Health and Safety provision.

Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel

The Scrutiny Panel met on 12 October 2020 to:

- agree the final report in respect of the topic of Addressing Poverty Issues and the Impact on Learning; and
- receive an update on the progress made with the implementation of recommendations in respect of the previous review of Mental Health in Schools.

The Panel last met on 9 November 2020. At that meeting, the Scrutiny Panel began its new review of Behaviour, Discipline and Bullying in Schools. The Director of Education, Prevention and Partnerships; the Head of Access to Education and Alternative Provision and the Strategic Lead for Inclusion and Specialist Support Services were in attendance to provide the scrutiny panel with:

- an overview of the powers and duties of schools to manage behaviour and discipline pupils;
- data over recent academic years in respect of the number of fixed-term and permanent exclusions in each Middlesbrough school (both primary and secondary), including the reasons schools report for excluding pupils; and
- an outline of the Local Authority's role in supporting schools with behaviour management.

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

The Scrutiny Panel met on 12 October 2020 and received a detailed presentation from the Executive Director of Children's Services and the Director of Children's Care in relation to the profile of Middlesbrough's Children Looked After population.

The presentation provided the Panel with a better understanding of the children in our care and included data on numbers and placement types and comparisons nationally and with statistical neighbours.

In addition, a Member of the Scrutiny Panel shared their personal story of their pathway through Children's Social Care, giving the Panel an insight from the child/young person's perspective and how they might feel they are perceived.

The Panel met again on 9 November 2020 and was provided with an update on the recent Ofsted monitoring visit to the Multi-Agency Children's Hub (MACH) in Middlesbrough. The Panel was also provided with information in relation to fostering placement stability and placement breakdowns as part of evidence-gathering for its current scrutiny topic. The Panel also considered the Terms of Reference for its current review.

The Scrutiny Panel's next meeting is scheduled for 7 December 2020.

Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel

The Panel met on 15 October 2020 where it was provided with an overview of the Council's approach to supporting and delivering Cultural Events by the Director of Regeneration and Culture.

The Panel heard that the Council largely supported events, and those delivering them, rather than deliver them directly. The Council had significant plans to grow its event base for 2020, primarily to grow the Middlesbrough brand. However, the Covid pandemic has paused the majority event activity.

The Panel also learned that instead of trying to cultivate cultural activities around historically based themes (such as Steel and Iron) it may be better to capitalise on existing and emerging themes such as Multicultural events and e-gaming.

At the Panel's next meeting on 12 November the Panel will discuss potential Terms of Reference for its Cultural Events review. It will so be receiving an update on the PREVENT agenda as well as considering the draft final report into its review of Community Cohesion.

Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel

The Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure (EDEI) Scrutiny Panel met on 7 October 2020 and received an update on Air Quality from the Head of Public Protection. The Head of Public Protection provided assurance in relation to information reported in local media earlier this year, in the Centre for Cities Report 2020, which appeared to contradict evidence provided to the Panel previously. The Panel was reassured that the air quality in Middlesbrough continues to meet national standards and all efforts are made to ensure the air quality is as good as it can be.

The Panel's main topic for this year is Middlesbrough Regeneration Post Covid-19. As an introduction to the review, the Head of Economic Growth, Town Centre Manager and the Towns Fund Co-ordinator, provided an overview of the Future High Street and Towns Fund Bids at the meeting.

The Final Report on Teesside Crematorium was approved by the Panel and submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Board for consideration.

The EDEI Scrutiny Panel's next meeting is scheduled for 18 November 2020, when it is due to receive an update on the Local Plan as well as information in relation to the issue of parking on grass verges.

Health Scrutiny Panel

The Scrutiny Panel is currently investigating the topic of Opioid Dependency. The Panel met on 13 October 2020 to receive evidence from Tees Esk and Wear Valley NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV), Dr Baxi Sinha (Consultant Psychiatrist) and Dominic Gardener (Director of Operations – Teesside) were in attendance along with Jonathan Bowden and Rachel Burns from the Council's Public Health Team.

TEWV advised that in terms of working with those addicted to opioids it was felt difficulties were increasing (anecdotal reports), getting the right help at the right time (in terms of helping an individual addicted to opioids) could be challenging and there was an association with adverse outcomes including fatalities.

In addition the Director of Public Health (South Tees), Director of Commissioning (TVCCG) and Medical Director (TVCCG) were also in attendance to provide an update in respect of COVID-19 and the local Public Health / NHS response.

The Scrutiny Panel also met on 10 November 2020. At this meeting, the Panel received a further update in respect of COVID-19. The Panel heard that the COVID-19 infection rate (rolling 7 day average) in Middlesbrough had increased from 297 per 100,000 (as of 13 October 2020) to 410 per 100,000 (as of 8 November 2020).

Healthwatch were also in attendance at the meeting to present on the work they'd undertaken with the local community in 2019/20, as well as to discuss with the Panel their report on 'Experiences of lockdown across South Tees'.

Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Joint Committee

The Committee met on 20 November 2020 and considered the following items:-

- Local Covid Response – Presentation from the Director of Public Health for South Tees.
- Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust updates: Teesside Rehabilitation Services Development Update, Roseberry Park Remedial Works Update, West Lane Hospital.
- Work Programme and Future Meetings.

Tees Valley Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Committee met on 12 November 2020 and considered the following items:-

- Business Growth Portfolio Update: Mayor Andy Preston
- Group Chief Executive's Update
- Culture Taskforce Update: Annabel Turpin
- Acquisition of South Tees Site Company Limited by South Tees Development Corporation
- Delegated Decisions
- Meetings and Forward Plan

SCRUTINY REPORTS SUBMITTED TO EXECUTIVE

Since the last update to Council, the following Scrutiny Panel reports have been submitted to Executive.

16 June 2020 - Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel - review of Infrastructure Delivery.

14 July 2020 - Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel - review of Foodbanks

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

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

**COUNCILLOR J THOMPSON
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