

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

REGENERATION SCRUTINY PANEL

Setting the Scrutiny Panel's Work Programme 2023-2024

6 SEPTEMBER 2023

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To invite the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel to consider its work programme for the 2023-2024 Municipal Year.

REVIEW OF 2022-2023

2. At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 18 April 2023, a new structure for scrutiny arrangements in Middlesbrough was agreed. As a consequence, the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel is a new Panel for this year. Relevant topics considered by the former Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel in 2022-2023 are listed below for Members' information:

Updates

- Middlesbrough Mayoral Development Corporation.
- Town Centre Strategy – Update on Future High Streets/Towns Fund.
- Enforcement of Planning Conditions.
- Local Plan – Update.
- Nutrient Neutrality.
- Linthorpe Road Cycle Lane.

- Business Rates Pooling.
The Economic Development, Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel has considered this topic on two occasions to date, in January and March 2023. Middlesbrough Council's Head of Finance and Investment provided an overview of business rates pooling and the Deputy Chief Financial Officer, Leeds City Council gave a presentation in relation to Leeds City Council's participation in Business Rates Pooling. Terms of Reference for the scrutiny have not been determined.

BACKGROUND

- 3. At the start of every Municipal Year, scrutiny panels discuss the topics that they would like to review during the coming year.
- 4. 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.
- 5. 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. Priorities from the Strategic Work Plan 2021-2024 are also listed below for information.

Topical issues

Topic	Details
Planning Capacity	<p><i>The role of planning is essential for the building of the homes, infrastructure, and places needed for the benefit of all our communities.</i>¹</p> <p>Capacity to deal with increasing numbers of planning applications, enforcement cases and housing expansion is impacting on the Council’s Planning Service and recruitment and retention of qualified planning officers is a challenge. Middlesbrough Council is also currently undertaking planning functions on behalf of the Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC).</p> <p>The Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has recently published details on a new capacity and capability programme to support local planning authorities to attract, retain and develop skilled planners.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Panel may wish to explore alternative planning delivery models to help address these issues.</p>
Middlesbrough Local Plan - Community Engagement	<p>The Council is required to have a Local Plan which sets out a vision and a framework for the future development of Middlesbrough. Middlesbrough is aiming to have its new Local Plan adopted by 2025.</p> <p>Middlesbrough Local Plan Scoping Report published in November 2022 specifies that:</p> <p><i>The Council has adopted a Statement of Community Involvement that sets out the standards and expectations</i></p>

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/building-planning-capacity-and-capability>

	<p><i>for undertaking community engagement when preparing the Local Plan, and for other planning processes (such as dealing with planning applications). The Council is committed to undertaking full and meaningful engagement with our communities throughout the preparation of the Local Plan.</i></p> <p><i>For each stage of the plan making process, a bespoke consultation and communications plan will be prepared that will set out how the consultation will be undertaken. The specific techniques will vary, and the Council will endeavour to ensure they are appropriate for full and meaningful community engagement. For every consultation, the relevant documents will be made available for inspection in person and online. The Council will ask for comments or representations to be made in writing, and a report of consultation that summarises what has been said alongside the Council's response will be prepared.²</i></p> <p>The Scrutiny Panel may wish to consider ways in which community engagement in the preparation of the Local Plan can be improved.</p>
--	---

Suggestions

Suggestion	Details
Housing	<p><i>Suggestion from a Councillor:</i></p> <p>Middlesbrough Council to build and refurbish houses.</p>
Housing Association Properties	<p><i>Suggestion from a Councillor:</i></p> <p>Housing association properties - the number, the condition and the role housing associations have in estates it operates in - so not only their properties, but the whole areas it has substantial amount of homes in.</p>
Parking Enforcement	<p><i>Suggestion from a Member of the Public:</i></p> <p>I'm a bus driver and I'm constantly being delayed by double parking on Linthorpe Road. Vans parking on hatched lines. There are cars that park constantly day after day on double yellow lines. No tickets are ever issued. No parking wardens are ever out and about.</p>
Events	<p><i>Suggestion from Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Education and Culture:</i></p> <p>Look at the financial cost to the council of removing the events</p>

² Middlesbrough Local Plan Scoping Report- November 2022

	<p>budget. I would like to know how much more removing the budget has cost the council in lost revenue and events.</p>
Museums	<p><i>Suggestion from Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Education and Culture:</i></p> <p>How much money have the museums brought into the town and how can this be strengthened/improved on?</p>
Play Equipment in Parks	<p><i>Suggestion from Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Education and Culture:</i></p> <p>What are the barriers in terms of play park repairs and renovations and how can these barriers be removed so that our play parks are usable and safe and repairs carried out in a timely fashion?</p>
Poverty Strategy	<p><i>Suggestion from Executive Deputy Mayor and Executive Member for Education and Culture:</i></p> <p>As we are forming a strategy to tackle poverty across the town, I would like scrutiny to have a direct involvement in shaping the policy. Would it be at all possible for scrutiny panels to investigate their issues with the aim to see how they impact levels of poverty across the town?</p> <p><i>The Executive is developing a strategy to tackle poverty across the town and would like scrutiny to have a direct involvement in shaping the policy. The panel may wish to obtain further details on the draft policy and consider how issues within regeneration might impact levels of poverty across the town.</i></p>
Local Plan	<p><i>Suggestion from Executive Member for Regeneration:</i></p> <p>Have a local Plan in place by mid-way through the 4 year term.</p>
Tees AMP 2	<p><i>Suggestion from Executive Member for Regeneration:</i></p> <p>Bring forward Tees AMP 2.</p>
Pedestrian/Cycling Infrastructure	<p><i>Suggestion from Executive Member for Regeneration:</i></p> <p>Improve pedestrian/cycle networks through the council area.</p>
Low Traffic Neighbourhoods	<p><i>Suggestion from Executive Member for Regeneration:</i></p> <p>Introduce Low Traffic Neighbourhoods with consultation with the local residents.</p>
Housing Provision	<p><i>Suggestion from Executive Member for Regeneration:</i></p> <p>Increase the number of homes provided for single occupancy to</p>

	allow people to move so they don't under occupy homes.
Culture and Tourism	<i>Suggestion from Head of Economic Growth and Infrastructure:</i> The Tees Valley Investment in Culture and Tourism and how Middlesbrough Council can align/capitalise on the funding available.
Cultural Capital Investment Prospectus	<i>Suggestion from Head of Economic Growth and Infrastructure:</i> Cultural Capital Investment Prospectus.
Library	<i>Suggestion from Head of Economic Growth and Infrastructure:</i> The library project.
Cultural Partnership	<i>Suggestion from Head of Economic Growth and Infrastructure:</i> The role and work of the cultural partnership.

Updates

Electric Vehicle Charging Points	<p>In October 2021, during a scrutiny investigation on Middlesbrough Council's Green Strategy, the Economic Development, Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel received a presentation from the Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA) on the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Project.</p> <p>At that meeting it was envisaged that Phase 1 of the Tees Valley EVCP network would be operational by Summer 2023. The Regeneration Panel may wish to receive an update on the Project.</p>
----------------------------------	---

Strategic Plan Workplan 2021-24

<p>Priority: Physical Environment Supports the following aim(s): People and Place Description: We will work closely with local communities to protect our green spaces and make sure that our roads, streets and open spaces are well-designed, clean and safe.</p>
<p>Priority: Town Centre Supports the following aim(s): People, Place and Business Description: We will transform our town centre, improving accessibility, revitalising unused assets, developing iconic spaces and building more town centre homes.</p>
<p>Priority: Culture Supports the following aim(s): People, Place and Business Description: We will invest in our existing cultural assets, create new spaces and events and improve access to culture.</p>

6. It should be noted that the topics and updates outlined above are 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, could add value to the Local Authority's work.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.

Scrutiny work plan prioritisation aid

10. Members are asked to use the aid attached at Appendix 1 to prioritise issues where scrutiny can make an impact, add value or contribute to policy development in order to determine which topics are suitable for inclusion in its final work programme.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

11. The scrutiny panel is asked to consider its work programme for the 2023-2024 municipal year. Further information can be requested from relevant officers if required, for example with regard to timely scheduling.
12. 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.

- Do not relate to matters dealt with by another Council Committee, unless the issue deals with procedure.
13. 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.

RECOMMENDATION

14. That, by utilising the Scrutiny Work Plan Prioritisation Aid (see Appendix 1), the Scrutiny Panel identifies two topics it would like to include in its work programme for 2023/24, for submission to Overview and Scrutiny Board for consideration/approval.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

15. Within the report, reference is made to:
- Economic Development, Environment and Regeneration Scrutiny Panel – minutes of meetings held 18 January and 22 March 2023.
 - Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities – Guidance on Building Planning Capacity and Capability, published 24 July 2023.
 - Middlesbrough Local Plan Scoping Report – November 2022.
 - Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Project – Tees Valley Combined Authority (TVCA).

Contact Officer

Susan Lightwing

Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 01642 729712

Email: susan_lightwing@middlesbrough.gov.uk

APPENDIX 1

