

Report of:	The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board and the Director of Legal and Governance Services
Submitted to:	Council
Date:	29 November 2023
Title:	Scrutiny Progress Report
Report for:	Information
Status:	Public
Strategic priority:	All
Key decision:	No
Why:	Not applicable
Urgent:	No
Why:	Not applicable

Executive summary

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.

Purpose

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

Background and relevant information**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

2. The Overview and Scrutiny Board met on 18 October 2023.

At that meeting the Board considered / received information in respect of the following:

- Executive Member Update – Children's Services

- Members were updated with the Executive Member for Children's Services priorities and work within his portfolio area. This included progress of the Improvement Plan, the work of the Multi Agency Children's Hub and the Virtual School.
- Executive Forward Work Programme
 - Members noted the Executive Forward Work Programme.
- Middlesbrough Local Boundary Review 2023
 - Members received the final draft submission of the Council's Ward Boundary proposal. OSB were advised that some amendments had been made since the earlier draft and should any additional issues arise before the deadline of 31 October 2023 an additional meeting of OSB would be called.
- Scrutiny Chairs Updates.
 - Members were updated about the activity within each Scrutiny Panel.

3. The Overview and Scrutiny Board met on 15 November 2023.

At that meeting the Board considered / received information in respect of the following:

- Executive Member Update – Finance and Governance
 - Members were updated with the Executive Member for Finance and Governance's priorities and work within her portfolio area. This included the work being carried out to avoid issuing a section 114 notice, implementing the actions from the recommendations of the internal audit report including improving culture and governance in the Council as well improving transparency for Members regarding the 2024/25 budget.
- Executive Forward Work Programme
 - Members noted the Executive Forward Work Programme.
- Scrutiny Chairs Updates.
 - Members were updated about the activity within each Scrutiny Panel.

SCRUTINY PANEL UPDATES

4. 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

5. The Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel met on 17 October 2023 and received a setting the scene presentation in relation to Care Homes and DDA compliance and accessibility.
6. The Panel had requested information following some concerns from members that not all care homes were able to cater for individual needs.
7. Following the presentation and discussion, members felt that there was no value to investigate further the issue of DDA compliance, however it would be more beneficial to look at the Preventative side of adult social care, e.g. staying put agency. It was therefore agreed that a setting the scene presentation would be brought to the next meeting of the panel.
8. In terms of the work programme, the panel had a further discussion and it was agreed that Hospital discharge would be removed from the work programme. This was because there was already comprehensive measures in place and the investigation would add value. The Panel would continue to examine the agreed topics and ensure they receive information on performance date for the CQC.

9. The next meeting of the Panel would take place on 21 November 2023.

Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel

10. The Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel met on 30 October 2023. At that meeting, the Panel commenced the School Attendance review.

11. Members received a general overview / introduction to the topic by the Director of Education and Partnerships and the Executive Director of Children's Services.

12. The Panel also received an update from the South Tees Safeguarding Children Partnership's Partnership Manager, who presented the Partnership's Annual Report 2022/2023.

13. The next meeting will be held on 4 December 2023 and the Panel will continue with its current review with a presentation from the Head of Access to Education and Alternative Provision.

Environment Scrutiny Panel

14. At its meeting on 13 November 2023, Officers from Environment Services were in attendance to provide further information in relation to the Panel's current topic of 'Waste Management'. This included: details around recycling rates and how Middlesbrough compares locally and nationally; the types and amounts of materials collected; frequent contaminants; data on disposal and processing.

15. The Panel also agreed Terms of Reference for its review and received a verbal update from the Vice Chair regarding the Crustacean Deaths Collaborative Working Group.

16. The Panel's next meeting is scheduled for 11 December 2023. Community Action Group, Boro Doughnut, will be in attendance to talk about its work in supporting the town's One Planet Living strategy.

Health Scrutiny Panel

17. The Health Scrutiny Panel last met on 23 October 2023. At the meeting, the Scrutiny Panel continued to gather evidence in respect of its review of Dental Health and the Impact of Covid-19.

18. At the meeting, Mark Adams (Director of Public Health) presented evidence pertaining to Oral Health in Middlesbrough, which included:

- an overview of Public Health's responsibilities in respect of oral health;
- statistical data and information in respect of oral health in Middlesbrough and the impact of Covid-19; and
- details of any future developments and innovative practice that plan to improve the oral health of Middlesbrough's population.

19. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on 20 November 2023. At this meeting, the Panel will receive the following evidence:

- Professor Tim Thompson, from Teesside University, will provide:
 - an overview of the wide range of free dental treatments offered by the University's dental practice;
 - details of the restorative and preventive treatments offered by the University's dental practice for adults and children;
 - information on how the University works with local dental practices; and
 - details of the patient referral process.

- The Project Development Manager and Project Lead from Healthwatch South Tees will provide:
 - information on the local population's views and experiences of accessing and using NHS dental services; and
 - details of the impacts of Covid-19 on members of the public being able to see a local dentist for both regular check-ups and emergency treatments.

Regeneration Scrutiny Panel

20. The Regeneration Panel met on Wednesday 1 November and received a presentation from Pete Ford, Principal Consultant from the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) in relation to the current scrutiny investigation of Planning Capacity at Middlesbrough Council.
21. The PAS had recently undertaken a short review of Development Management in Middlesbrough Council and the results of that review were shared with the Panel at the meeting. The review identified some of the issues with the current service, highlighted the very positive work being carried out, and provided short, medium and long-term recommendations for improvement.
22. Middlesbrough was currently slightly below the threshold of 60% for the speed of decision making on major applications between October 2021 and September 2023. Designation could be applied by the Secretary of State when a planning authority was not meeting performance targets. Middlesbrough was below the thresholds on all other performance targets.
23. The Panel also received a brief verbal update on progress with the Local Plan from the Head of Planning.
24. The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 6 December 2023 and the Panel will continue with its current review with a presentation from the Royal Town Planning Institute (RPTI) in relation to new legislation in the Regeneration and Levelling Up Act 2023 and the impact on planning.

South Tees Health Scrutiny Joint Committee

25. The South Tees Health Scrutiny Joint Committee (STHSJC) met on 27 September 2023. At the meeting, the Committee considered the following items:
 - Protocol for the South Tees Health Scrutiny Joint Committee
 - An Overview of NHS Health
 - An Update on the Live Well South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board
 - Setting the Work Programme for 2023/24

Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Joint Committee

26. The Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Joint Committee (TVHSJC) met informally on 2 November 2023. At the meeting, the Committee considered the following items:
 - Presentation: North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust/South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Group Model & Partnership Agreement
 - Work Programme 2023-2024

Tees Valley Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee

23. The Tees Valley Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 2 March 2023.
24. At its meeting on the 2 March 2023 the Committee considered the following:-

- Martin Waters, Business Growth Manager of TVCA delivered a presentation to the committee on supporting local businesses.
- Councillor Bob Cook from Stockton Council together with Shona Duncan Head of Education & Skills at TVCA presented a report with an update on the activity and forward plan to date. The Committee sought clarity on the number of apprentices in Tees Valley and were informed that there were around 500 live vacancies at this time.
- The TVCA Monitoring Officer discussed the requirements for the Committee to either deal with presentations or reports.
- It was explained that the time of the next meeting could not be confirmed until after the May elections, when new members would have been ratified by TVCA cabinet.
- Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-2023
- UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Business Update
- EES Update

SCRUTINY REPORTS SUBMITTED TO EXECUTIVE

25. Since the last update to Council, the following Final Scrutiny report has been submitted to Executive:-

Executive – 24 January 2023 - Final Report of Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel in respect of a review of the role of the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in supporting Adult Social Care (with a focus on COVID-19 and Recovery).

What decision(s) are being recommended?

26. That Council note the report.

Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

27. The Constitution requires the Council to be provided with an update with regard to the work of the Overview and Scrutiny function.

Other potential decision(s) and why these have not been recommended

28. That an update on the work of the scrutiny function is not provided to full Council. This would not comply with the requirements for updates on the scrutiny function, to be reported to full Council.

Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Legal

29. The Constitution requires regular updates on the scrutiny function, to be submitted to full Council.

Strategic priorities and risks

30. The relevant risks this decision would influence are cited below, with an explanation as to why they are relevant and how it would affect each risk.

Risk No	Risk Description	Impact
O8-054	Failure to adhere to Local Code of Corporate Governance and deliver governance improvements outlined in the Annual Governance Statement.	If updates on the work of the scrutiny function were not provided to Council, it would not be in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution.

Human Rights, Equality and Data Protection

31. The subject of this report is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. It is considered that an equality impact assessment is not required.

Financial

32. There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations within this report

Actions to be taken to implement the recommended decision(s)

Action	Responsible Officer	Deadline

Appendices

1	
2	
3	

Background papers

Body	Report title	Date

Contact: Charlotte Benjamin
Email: charlotte_benjamin@middlesbrough.gov.uk