

Report of:	The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board and the Director of Legal and Governance Services
Submitted to:	Council
Date:	27 March 2024
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 20 December 2023.

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

- Executive Forward Work Programme
Members noted the Executive Forward Work Programme

- Council Plan 2024 Onwards
The Mayor outlined the need for a Council Plan (formerly known as the Strategic Plan). Having the plan would allow the Council to have a structured approach to achieving its objectives. The Council Plan would consist of several strands with each strand having its own priorities. The Council Plan needed to be financially sustainable and as such would be considered by Council alongside the Budget.
- Council Budget 2024/2025 and MTFP refresh
The Executive Member for Finance and Governance and the Director of Finance provided an overview of the Budget proposals identifying that individual service budget proposals would be considered by the respective scrutiny panel. OSB was advised that the consultation process for the 2024/25 budget had been comprehensive.
- Final Report of the Health Scrutiny Panel - Dental Health and the Impact of Covid-19.
The Board approved the Panel's final report into Dental Health and the impact of Covid-19 and submitted it for Executive consideration.
- Scrutiny Chairs Updates.
Members were updated about the activity within each Scrutiny Panel.

3. The Overview and Scrutiny Board met on 10 January 2024.

- Executive Forward Work Programme
Members noted the Executive Forward Work Programme.
- Council Budget 2024/25 and MTFP refresh - Finance and Governance
The Executive Member for Finance and Governance presented the budget proposals for both the Finance and Legal and Governance Directorates. Both the Executive Member and Directors of Finance and Legal and Governance responded to questions from OSB about the budget proposals.

4. The Overview and Scrutiny Board met on 18 January 2024.

- Executive Forward Work Programme
Members noted the Executive Forward Work Programme
- Budget Consultation - Scrutiny Feedback
OSB considered a summary of discussions that had taken place in every scrutiny panel when they considered their respective budget proposals. OSB was advised that one alternative proposal was submitted to Executive regarding proposal FIN08 and the reduction of Small Grants to community groups.
- Local Government Ward Boundary Review - Phase Two
OSB was advised that Phase Two (Warding Patterns) of the Boundary Review was due to be submitted by 11 March 2024. Phase Two was focussed on ward boundaries and their community make up. OSB agreed that the Council should submit a proposal to the Boundary Commission and that Member workshops should be held to capture community-based information.

5. The Overview and Scrutiny Board met on 7 February 2024.

- Executive Forward Work Programme
Members noted the Executive Forward Work Programme

- Boundary Review 2023/ 2024 – Update
OSB was advised the first of the Member workshops had taken place with positive and collaborative input provided by all those that attended. OSB was also advised that after all the sessions had been held a report would be compiled that would form the Council's submission for Phase Two.
- OSB Work Programme – discussion
OSB discussed its work programme and how best to proceed with the topics it had selected for the municipal year.
- Scrutiny Chairs Update
Members were updated about the activity within each Scrutiny Panel.

6. The Overview and Scrutiny Board met on 28 February 2024.

- Executive Forward Work Programme
Members noted the Executive Forward Work Programme
- Executive Member Update – Environment
The Executive Member for Environment provided an overview of his portfolio and responded to questions from OSB about areas of challenge and opportunity.
- Local Government Boundary Review 2023/24
OSB was presented with the final draft of Phase Two of the Council's submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission. OSB was advised that the Boundary Commission would present its proposals in the summer of 2024 after which all stakeholders, including the Council, would have the opportunity to respond.
- Scrutiny Chairs Update
Members were updated about the activity within each Scrutiny Panel.

7. The Overview and Scrutiny Board met on 6 March 2024.

- Executive Forward Work Programme
Members noted the Executive Forward Work Programme
- Executive Member Update - Community Safety
The Executive Member for Community Safety provided an overview of her portfolio and responded to questions from OSB about areas of challenge and opportunity.
- Scrutiny Chairs Update
Members were updated about the activity within each Scrutiny Panel.

SCRUTINY PANEL UPDATES

8. 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

9. The Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel met on 9 January 2024 and received a presentation on the Council Budget 2024/25 and MTFP refresh - Adult Social Care from the Director of Adult Social Care and Health.
10. The next meeting of the Panel will take place on 26 March 2024, when Members will receive an update from the Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration on progress made on the recommendations from the Scrutiny Panel's 2022 review of Recruitment and Retention of Staff in Adult Social Care.

Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel

11. The Children and Young People's Scrutiny Panel met on 15 January 2024 to consider the Council Budget 2024/2025 and Medium Term Financial Plan Refresh in relation to Children's Services.
12. The Panel met again on 11 March and received a presentation from the Director of Children's Services on the Council's proposals for increasing residential and supported accommodation for children in its care and care leavers. Members also discussed evidence gathering for its new scrutiny topic of School Attendance.
13. The next meeting is scheduled for 8 April 2024.

Environment Scrutiny Panel

14. Since the last update provided to Council, the Environment Scrutiny Panel has met on four occasions.
15. 11 December 2023 - Members heard from Community Action Group, Boro Doughnut, who spoke about how they are working with communities across the town to support the Green Strategy, in the context of the Panel's review of Waste Management.
16. The Panel also received further evidence in relation to its review on: Current education programmes on recycling, litter and fly-tipping, and; Environmental enforcement, including the activity undertaken by the Council and the legal framework it must operate within; penalties and interventions available particularly linked to recycling, littering and fly-tipping.
17. 15 January 2024 – The Panel received further evidence into its scrutiny of Waste Management in relation to bulky waste and fly-tipping collections. The Panel also considered the Council Budget 2024/2025 and Medium Term Financial Plan Refresh in relation to Environment and Community Services.
18. 5 February 2024 – Members were provided with the statutory annual update in relation to the use of the Council's Surveillance Policy for 2023/24 and compliance in accordance with the Statutory Codes of Practice under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA).

19. The Panel identified a potential gap in the current process in relation to non-RIPA investigations and made a recommendation to be considered for inclusion in the Surveillance Policy, as follows:-

“That the approval pathway for sanctioning non-RIPA surveillance should be strengthened by including approval from the Monitoring Officer, in addition to notifying the Chief Executive, for each case”.

20. Members felt this would ensure a more robust process and independence for non-RIPA investigations, which tended to relate to staff or Council contractors.

21. 4 March 2024 – The Panel was provided with statutory annual updates in relation to the Community Safety Partnership and the Prevent and Chanel Programmes. This included the work being undertaken by each and relevant data, targets and outcomes.

22. The Vice Chair provided a further update in relation to the Crustacean Deaths Collaborative Working Group and details around the Group’s Draft Final Report.

Health Scrutiny Panel

23. The Health Scrutiny Panel last met on 19 February 2024.

24. In 2021, the Executive had considered the Health Scrutiny Panel’s final report on Opioid Dependency - What Happens Next? and approved the action plan responding to the Scrutiny Panel’s recommendations. At the last meeting, the Head of Health Inclusion for Public Health South Tees was in attendance to provide an update on the progress made with implementing the recommendations and an update on the current in-house Substance Misuse Clinical Prescribing Service, including:

- an overview of how the service was planned, developed and implemented safely, in conjunction with relevant partners and stakeholders;
- information on service demand (both previously at Foundations and for the in-house service); and
- an outline of opportunities, benefits and challenges associated with service delivery.

25. At the meeting on 19 February, the Panel also considered, discussed and agreed the Terms of Reference for its new review of Avoidable Deaths and Preventable Mortality.

26. The next meeting is scheduled to be held on 19 March 2024. At this meeting, the Panel will receive further evidence on the topic of Avoidable Deaths and Preventable Mortality. Representatives from the NHS North of England Commissioning Support Unit (NECS) and the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (ICB) will be in attendance to provide:

- Key data and information held by the NHS/ICB on Middlesbrough’s:
 - leading causes of avoidable deaths (those that are either preventable or treatable); and
 - risk factors for ill health.
- Information on the role of the NHS and ICB in helping people to make healthier lifestyle choices and treat avoidable illness early on.
- An overview of the work undertaken by the NHS/ICB to reduce the number of avoidable deaths, e.g., healthcare interventions.
- Information on evidence-based best practice that could further contribute towards tackling the local population’s major risk factors driving preventable ill health and avoidable deaths.

Regeneration Scrutiny Panel

27. Since the last update to Council there had been two meetings of the Regeneration Scrutiny Panel. On 17 January 2024 the Regeneration Service budget was presented to the Panel for comment. The Panel also received an update from the Head of Planning in relation to the Local Plan. The draft Local Plan was scheduled to be considered for approval for consultation by the Executive later that day. Further evidence was also provided for the current scrutiny investigation into Planning Capacity.
28. At the meeting on 21 February 2024, the Assistant Director Planning at South Hams District Council and West Devon Borough Council was in virtual to provide information in relation to shared services as evidence for the current review. The two Councils had worked together since 2006 and delivered a wide range of services, including planning, for residents and businesses across south west Devon in a shared service partnership.
29. The next Panel meeting is scheduled for Wednesday 20 March 2024 when the Panel will be discussing and approving the draft Final Report on Planning Capacity. In addition, the Director of Regeneration and the Chair of the Captain Cook Birthplace Trust will be in attendance to provide Members with an overview of the Captain Cook Birthplace Museum and the work of the Trust.

South Tees Health Scrutiny Joint Committee

30. The South Tees Health Scrutiny Joint Committee will next meet on 20 March 2024. At this meeting, the Committee will consider the following items:
- Live Well South Tees Health and Wellbeing Board
The Joint Committee will receive an update on the Board's work programme, the performance framework and priority indicators.
 - Social Prescribing
Representatives from Public Health and MIND will be in attendance to present:
 - the aim and core principles of social prescribing and community-based support;
 - the schemes that are in place locally (across South Tees); and
 - the impact of social prescribing on the person, the health and care system and community groups.

Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Joint Committee

31. The Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Joint Committee met on 15 March 2024. At this meeting, the Committee considered the following items:
- North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board - Update on Recent Re-structure
The Committee received an update on the recent re-structure of the North East and North Cumbria Integrated Care Board (NENC ICB).
 - Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust - Quality Account 2023-2024
Representatives of Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust (TEWV) outlined performance against the Trust's quality priorities for 2023-2024 and informed the Committee of the emerging priorities for the next year.
 - North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust - Quality Account 2023-2024
Representatives of North East Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (NEAS) outlined performance against the Trust's quality priorities for 2023-2024 and informed the Committee of the emerging priorities for the next year.
 - Work Programme 2023-2024

Tees Valley Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee

32. The Tees Valley Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 2 March 2023.

33. 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

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

Executive – 13 March 2024 - Final Report of Health Scrutiny Panel in respect of a review of Dental Health and the Impact of Covid-19.

What decision(s) are being recommended?

35. That Council note the report.

Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

36. 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

37. 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

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

Strategic priorities and risks

39. 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

40. 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

41. 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

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