

<b>MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL</b>	
------------------------------	--

<b>Report of:</b>	Councillor L Young, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Board and Charlotte Benjamin, Director of Legal and Governance Services (Monitoring Officer)
-------------------	---

<b>Relevant Executive Member:</b>	The Mayor
-----------------------------------	-----------

<b>Submitted to:</b>	Council
----------------------	---------

<b>Date:</b>	9 July 2025
--------------	-------------

<b>Title:</b>	Scrutiny Progress Report
---------------	--------------------------

<b>Report for:</b>	Information
--------------------	-------------

<b>Status:</b>	Public
----------------	--------

<b>Council Plan priority:</b>	Delivering Best Value
-------------------------------	-----------------------

<b>Key decision:</b>	No
----------------------	----

<b>Why:</b>	Report is for information only
-------------	--------------------------------

<b>Subject to call in?:</b>	Not applicable
-----------------------------	----------------

<b>Why:</b>	Not Applicable      Council Report for information only
-------------	---

<b>Proposed decision(s)</b>
That Council note the report.

<b>Executive summary</b>
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.

1. **Purpose of this report and its contribution to the achievement of the Council Plan ambitions**
  - 1.1 To update the position in respect of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Board and scrutiny panels.

1.2

<b>Our ambitions</b>	<b>Summary of how this report will support delivery of these ambitions and the underpinning aims</b>
<b>A successful and ambitious town</b>	By responding effectively and efficiently to constitutional requirements the Council will maintain effective and robust governance arrangements. Robust governance arrangements will allow for effective decisions which inform all the Council's ambitions.
<b>A healthy Place</b>	
<b>Safe and resilient communities</b>	
<b>Delivering best value</b>	

## 2. Recommendations

2.1 That Council note the report.

## 3. Rationale for the recommended decision(s)

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

## 4. Background and relevant information:

### Overview and Scrutiny Board

4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Board met on 19 March and 9 April 2025.

4.2 On the 19 March OSB received updates from the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, Tees Valley Scrutiny, the LGA Peer Review and CQC Inspection. It also considered and approved changes to the scrutiny committee structure.

4.3 In terms of Tees Valley scrutiny update, the Chair of OSB provided background to the workings of scrutiny at the TVCA and explained who Middlesbrough's representatives were. The Chair of OSB was acting as chair of TVCA's Scrutiny Committee in the absence of its Chair, Cllr Steve Nelson (Stockton Council). The Chair of OSB also advised TVCA Scrutiny had a busy programme and had secured an agreement from the Tees Valley Mayor that he would attend a minimum of two meetings a year. Tees Valley Scrutiny Committee was undertaking in-depth reviews into Public Transport and Education, Employment and skills.

4.4 The Executive Member for Neighbourhoods provided an updated on her portfolio area which also included public protection. The main updates to OSB covered the refurbishment of Central Library and government funding to the Neighbourhood Action Partnerships, totalling £1.9million to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour. This money had been used by the Silver Recovery Group for several initiatives including Community Conversations with young people.

4.5 OSB also approved a report recommending changes to the scrutiny structure, namely increasing the number of Scrutiny Panels from two to three. The new Scrutiny Panels

(excluding OSB) were Adult Social Care and Health, Children's and Place Scrutiny Panels).

- 4.6 The Mayor and Chief Executive were also in attendance and advised Members of the key lessons from the LGA Peer review and the Adult Social Care CQC inspection. Members were advised that a Member briefing was being held to cover the Peer Review and CQC update further.
- 4.7 At its 9 April meeting OSB received an update from the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health which included an overview of the services provided within her portfolio area.
- 4.8 The Mayor was also in attendance to provide an update relating to the Transformation programme. As part of his presentation the Mayor advised Members that interventions in Children's Services and the Best Value Notice had ended. The Mayor also advised that the Council's budget was in a healthier position going into the new financial year. In terms of future projects, a significant initiative was to be the Middlesbrough Priorities Fund which looked to create the Childhood enrichment team, improved Ward funding and a Shop Fronts Scheme.
- 4.9 OSB also considered, and approved, the Place Scrutiny Panel's report into Home to School Transport which would be submitted to Executive for its consideration.
- 4.10 OSB was also updated on progress made by the Task and Finish Group looking into Community Cohesion. Members were advised that while progress had been made, more time was needed to provide a more detailed response. It was agreed this would be brought before OSB in the new municipal year.

## **5. Scrutiny Panel Updates**

- 5.1 The updated position in respect of the work of each of the Council's scrutiny panels is shown below.

### **Children's Scrutiny Panel**

- 5.2 At the initial meeting of the Children's Scrutiny Panel meeting held on 24 June 2025, the Interim Director for Education and Partnerships and the Head of Safeguarding, Care Planning and Children with Disabilities were in attendance to provide Members with an overview of the services delivered across their directorates, and to highlight the strategic and departmental priorities for the coming year. The Panel noted the information provided in preparation for formulating the 2025/2026 work programme, which would take place at the next meeting on 15 July 2025.

### **People Scrutiny Panel**

- 5.3 Meetings of the People Scrutiny Panel were held on 24 March 2025, 14 April 2025 and 12 May 2025.

- 5.4 At the 24 March 2025 meeting, Members received the Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys (TEWV) NHS Foundation Trust CQC Inspection Outcome and Improvement Plan Update. The Panel also received the Adult Social Care CQC Inspection Outcome report, together with further evidence in relation to the Homelessness review.
- 5.5 At the 14 April 2025 meeting, the Panel considered the draft final report of the Children Missing Education review. Members approved the draft report and six recommendations, which would next be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 30 July 2025.
- 5.6 At the 12 May 2025 meeting, representatives from South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust and TEWV NHS Foundation Trust delivered updates to the Members in respect of their 2024/2025 Quality Accounts.
- 5.7 The People Scrutiny Panel was retired at the end of the Municipal Year, with the remit split between two new Panels for 2025/2026: Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Panel and Children's Scrutiny Panel.

### **Place Scrutiny Panel**

- 5.8 The last meeting of the Place Scrutiny Panel was held on 29 April 2025. The Panel considered the content of the draft Final Report on Empty Properties and agreed recommendations for inclusion in the report. The Final Report was approved and will be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Board for consideration.
- 5.9 The Chair also updated the Panel on the Crustacean Deaths Working Group's final report following the investigation into the mass crustacean die-off along the north-east coast had been published. A copy of the report had been circulated to all Place Scrutiny Panel members.
- 5.10 The die-off had originally been attributed to dredging operations carried out during the construction of Teesport. However, the Working Group's investigations had concluded that whilst the dredging operations may have been a contributory factor, there were multi-causal factors for the die off. Concern had been identified in relation to inadequate monitoring systems and the report had made some recommendations for future improvements.
- 5.11 It was agreed that all Middlesbrough Councillors would be informed of the above outcome via this report at the next Council meeting.
- 5.12 At the April meeting, the Panel also continued its current scrutiny investigation of Barriers to Regeneration with a presentation from Neighbourhood Officers in relation to tackling anti-social behaviour in Middlesbrough.
- 5.13 The next meeting of the Place Scrutiny Panel is scheduled to take place on Monday 30 June 2025, when the Panel will be receiving presentations from the Directors of Regeneration and also Environment and Community Services who will be providing overviews of their respective Directorates.

## Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

- 5.14 The Tees Valley Joint Health Scrutiny Committee met on 8 May 2025. The following agenda items were discussed: Protocol and Terms of Reference; South Tees Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Quality Account for 2024/2025; North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust Quality Account for 2024/2025; and Work Programme 2025/2026.

## Scrutiny Reports Submitted to Executive

- 5.15 Since the last update to Council, no Final Reports have been submitted to Executive.

## 6. Ward Member Engagement if relevant and appropriate.

- 6.1 Not applicable.

## 7. Other potential alternative(s) and why these have not been recommended

- 7.1 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.

## 8. Impact(s) of the recommended decision(s)

Topic	Impact
Financial (including procurement and Social Value)	There are no financial implications or impact on any budgets or the Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP) arising from the content of this report.
Legal	The Constitution requires regular updates on the scrutiny function, to be submitted to full Council.
Risk	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, this would not be in accordance with the requirements of the Constitution.
Human Rights, Public Sector Equality Duty and Community Cohesion	Not applicable as this a report to update Council on the work of the scrutiny function and does not change any policy.
Climate Change / Environmental	Not applicable as this a report to update Council on the work of the scrutiny function and does not change any policy.
Children and Young People Cared for by the Authority and Care Leavers	Not applicable as this a report to update Council on the work of the scrutiny function and does not change any policy.
Data Protection	Not applicable as this a report to update Council on the work of the scrutiny function and does not change any policy.

### **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](mailto:charlotte_benjamin@middlesbrough.gov.uk)**