

COUNCIL

Report title	Scrutiny Progress Report
Chief Executive or Director	Director of Legal and Governance Services
Date	24 March 2021

Summary

Proposed decision(s)
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.

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 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

Two meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board had been scheduled for 18 December 2020 to consider three call-in requests (two related to the same issue of Residual Waste Collections).

The first meeting related to a decision taken by the Executive on 24 November 2020 – Nunthorpe Grange Farm: Disposal – Church Lane. The meeting was adjourned in order for the Monitoring Officer to obtain further information for the Board. Unfortunately, technical issues prevented the meeting from reconvening on 18 December 2020; a revised date will be scheduled as soon as possible.

The second meeting, scheduled to consider two call-in requests in respect of a decision taken by the Executive on 24 November 2020 – Residual Waste Collections, was also unable to take place due to technical issues. However, at a subsequent meeting of the Executive held on 22 December 2020, a decision was taken to not introduce alternate weekly collections at the present time. Therefore, a revised meeting date to consider these call-in requests would not be required.

SCRUTINY PANEL UPDATES

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

Ad Hoc Scrutiny Panel

The Panel met on 27 January 2021 at which Members were provided with an overview of Council communications and how this related to elected Members. The Panel heard that the Marketing and Communications team were developing a Communications strategy that was more aligned with the Council's strategic objectives.

The Panel also heard that Member engagement with Council communications could be beneficial for Middlesbrough as they act as brand ambassadors. However, the Panel also discussed that, in some cases, Members were not using Council communications in the most effective way. A report for the Panel is currently being drafted.

Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel

At the meeting on 13 January 2021, the Panel heard from the CCG in terms of future work in relation to Palliative and End of life care. The Panel agreed that as the Tees Valley had been chosen to be an exemplar site to support the overarching national agenda for palliative end of life care, the panel would reconsider the issue at a later date.

At the meetings of 10 February 2021 and 10 March 2021, the Panel heard from officers in relation to support for carers. However following agenda distribution for the March meeting the Panel learnt that there was to be a large scale South Tees Carers procurement process which would be completed by October 2021. The panel therefore also agreed to relook at this issue after the procurement process was completed.

Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel

The Scrutiny Panel met on 18 January 2021 to consider further evidence in respect of its review of Behaviour, Discipline and Bullying in Schools. At the meeting, the Director of Education, Prevention and Partnerships; the Strategic Lead for Inclusion and Specialist Support Services; the Head of Access to Education and Alternative Provision; the Specialist Senior Educational Psychologist; the Head of Inclusion, Assessment and Review and the Assessment and Quality Assurance Manager were in attendance to provide:

- detailed information on the causes of pupil behaviour problems e.g. unmet educational or other needs;
- data on the characteristics of excluded pupils (whether permanently or for a fixed period); and
- case study examples demonstrating how certain factors can impact on behaviour, from a child or young person's perspective.

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on 22 March 2021. At this meeting, Members will consider written evidence from a selection of schools highlighting:

- the challenges faced by schools in dealing with poor behaviour;
- the causes of pupil behaviour problems e.g. unmet educational or other needs;
- the types of sanctions used by schools that can impact on a pupil's educational outcomes and life chances; and
- the successful and proactive strategies and solutions used to promote positive behaviour, manage poor behaviour and prevent and tackle bullying.

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

The Scrutiny Panel met on 18 January and 15 February 2021.

On 18 January, the Fostering Service Team Manager provided the Panel with further evidence in relation to the Panel's current scrutiny topic – focussing on foster carers in Middlesbrough, including information on recruitment – and the Children's Services Programme Manager delivered a presentation in relation to the Corporate Parenting Strategy.

The Executive Director of Children's Services was also in attendance to provide a verbal update on Covid recovery in Children's Services and it was agreed that this would become a standard agenda item in accordance with the Children's Services improvement plan.

On 15 February, the Executive Director of Children's Services provided an update in relation to the Commissioner's six month review of Children's Services and it was noted that his report and recommendations had been accepted by the Secretary of State.

The Panel also received a verbal update on Covid recovery in Children's Services.

The Panel's next meeting is scheduled for 22 March 2021.

Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel

The Panel met on 21 January and 18 February 2021 where it considered the following:

At its January meeting the Panel received information from representatives of the British Esports Association as part of its review into Cultural Events in a post Covid world. The Panel received information about the growth, development and impact of esports in the UK, and globally. After hearing how esports had an international audience of approximately 645 million people and international revenue streams totalling \$950 million, the Panel were keen to understand how Middlesbrough could capitalize on such growth.

The Panel learned that holding an esports event in Middlesbrough was achievable and something that could complement the Councils existing cultural offer.

At its February meeting the Panel received an update regarding the Community Safety Partnership. The update informed Members about how the partnership was structured and how the Council was one agency that worked alongside other key agencies in delivering the partnership's agenda. The Panel were also informed that some of the Partnership's achievements included securing £400,000 of Safer Streets Funding that was being used to address acquisitive crime in Newport. The funding has resulted in the acquisition and deployment of extra CCTV cameras, void property screening and alley gate management refresh.

The Panel also received an overview of the Neighbourhood Warden Service as per the Panel's request that a review be undertaken in that area.

The Panel's meeting scheduled for March 18 2021 had to be cancelled due to the unavailability of required guests. The next meeting of the Panel is scheduled for 15 April 2021 at which updates will be received on RIPA and Operation Phoenix (Cleveland Police).

Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel

The Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure (EDEI) Scrutiny Panel met on 20 January and 23 February 2021.

At the January meeting the Panel heard from CityFibre about the company's business and plans for investment in Middlesbrough, and post Covid-19 recovery. CityFibre intended to invest around £40 million installing superfast broadband in Middlesbrough, with an initial target of 70 to 80 thousand homes being connected. The Panel also received an update on flood risk management from the Public Rights of Way Officer.

At the February meeting, the Head of Environment Services and Senior Area Care Manager presented the Council's updated draft Tree Policy for the Panel's consideration. The Panel also approved a Final Report on Pest Control.

The next meeting of the Panel is scheduled for 24 March 2021, when the Panel will be receiving information in relation the Middlesbrough Council's draft Local Implementation Plan (LIP) and an update on the Future High Streets and Towns Fund bids as part of the ongoing scrutiny review into Middlesbrough Regeneration Post Covid-19.

Health Scrutiny Panel

The Health Scrutiny Panel met on 19 January 2021, 2 and 16 February 2021. At the January meeting the panel received a setting the scene presentation in respect of its new topic 'Health for Wealth' and received an update from the Director of Public Health (South Tees) and the Director of Commissioning and Medical Director at Tees Valley CCG in response of the local Public Health / NHS response to COVID.

At the February meetings the Panel received information in respect of the Government's £14 investment and Project ADDER (Addiction, Diversion, Disruption, Enforcement and Recovery) to protect communities from the crime caused by illegal drugs. Project ADDER brings together partners including the police, local councils and health services and will run for 3 financial years in 5 areas with some of the highest rates of drug misuse: Blackpool, Hastings, Middlesbrough, Norwich and Swansea Bay. Middlesbrough has been awarded £4.58 million as part of this project.

The Panel was delighted to receive news on this investment and the work that will be undertaken using the funding was of key importance to the Panel's current review on the topic of Opioid Dependency: What happens next? At the 16 February 2021 meeting the panel considered its Draft Final Report on this topic, which was subsequently approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Board at its meeting on 11 March 2021.

Tees Valley Health Scrutiny Joint Committee

The Committee met on 29 January 2021 and considered the following:-

- North East Ambulance Service Performance Update
- Covid Update
- Tees Suicide Prevention Plan
- Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust: Our Big Conversation – Draft Strategic Framework
- Work Programme and Future Meetings

The Committee met on 19 March 2021 and considered the following:-

- Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust: Our Big Conversation – Draft Strategic Framework
- Community Mental Health Service Framework
- Tees, Esk and Wear Valleys NHS Foundation Trust Quality Accounts Update
- Work Programme and Future Meetings

Tees Valley Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Tees Valley Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 7 January 2021 where it considered the following:

- Group Chief Executive's Update;
- Investment Plan Delivery Update - Q2
- Delegated Decisions;
- Meetings and Forward Plan;
- Confidential – Freeport Bid

SCRUTINY REPORTS SUBMITTED TO EXECUTIVE

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

19 January 2021 – Final Report of the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel – Teesside Crematorium – Service Response

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

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

**COUNCILLOR J THOMPSON
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