

MIDDLESBROUGH COUNCIL

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT AND INFRASTRUCTURE SCRUTINY PANEL

Setting the Scrutiny Panel's Work Programme 2021/2022

30 JUNE 2021

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1. To invite the Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel to consider its work programme for the 2021-2022 Municipal Year.

REVIEW OF 2020-2021

2. The topics considered by the Panel in 2020-2021 are listed below for Members' information:
 - Teesside Crematorium.
 - Pest Control.

Updates

- Air Quality.
- Boro Youth Climate Action Team.
- Parking on Grass Verges.
- Review of the Tree Policy.
- Flood Risk.

Ongoing Investigations

- Middlesbrough Regeneration Post Covid-19.

The aim of the investigation is to determine ways in which Middlesbrough can regenerate the town physically, economically and socially, following the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020-2021.

It is anticipated that the Panel will conclude this investigation in July 2021 and issue a Final Report in September 2021.

- Recycling and Waste Management/Waste Disposal Facility.

The aim of the investigation is to examine recycling and waste management delivery in Middlesbrough and reduce the amount of waste produced in

Middlesbrough which needs managing, thereby reducing costs and protecting the environment.

The Panel carried this investigation over from the previous year but no additional investigation has been undertaken during 2020-2021 due to time constraints.

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.

Topical issues

Topic	Details
Food Waste	<p>On 27 May 2021, the Council's Executive approved the adoption of a Green Strategy and the Year One Action Plan. The Green Strategy is an overarching climate change and sustainability strategy that contains a number of themed action plans based upon the One Planet Living (OPL) framework and principles.¹</p> <p>One of the nine OPL themes is Zero Waste. It is suggested that the Panel may wish to investigate strategies for the reduction of food waste in Middlesbrough. By 2023 local authorities will be required to collect food waste separately from all households, businesses and organisations.</p> <p><i>"The fact that substantial amounts of food are produced but not eaten by humans has substantial negative impacts: environmentally, socially and economically. Estimates suggest that 8-10% of global greenhouse gas emissions are associated with food that is not consumed. Reducing food waste at retail, food service and household level can provide multi-faceted benefits for both people and the planet."</i>²</p>
Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Charging Project – Tees Valley	<p>From 2030 the sale of new cars that run solely on diesel or petrol will be banned in the UK. The UK is aiming to achieve at least a 68% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by the end of the decade, compared to 1990 levels. <i>"Tees Valley is one of the most carbon-</i></p>

¹ Green Strategy – Report to Executive – 27 May 2021

² <https://www.unep.org/resources/report/unep-food-waste-index-report-2021>

<p>Combined Authority (TVCA)</p>	<p><i>intense regions in the UK, with emissions per capita over twice the national average. Transport contributed 17.3% of CO₂ emissions in Tees Valley in 2017. This was mainly from private car usage, although road freight also made a significant contribution to emissions.</i></p> <p><i>This project will coordinate and improve Electric Vehicle Charging Point (EVCP) provision across Tees Valley. Up to £2,000,000 has been allocated to this project to develop the EVCP infrastructure and encourage more people to switch to electric vehicles.”³</i></p> <p>The Panel may wish to investigate ways in which the transition to electric vehicles can be accelerated.</p>
<p>National Model Design Code</p>	<p><i>The National Planning Policy Framework expects local planning authorities to develop local design codes or guides, taking account of the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code. This guidance sets out clear design parameters to help local authorities and communities decide what good quality design looks like in their area, based on local aspirations for how their area will develop, following appropriate local consultation.⁴</i></p> <p>Fourteen Councils across England have been awarded £50,000 each to develop new design codes which will set out design principles for new development in local areas. Local design codes will be expected to enhance the character of the local area, and selected areas will test how to give communities a real say in the layout, design and appearance of buildings in their locality. Given the Council’s ambition for approximately 650 new town centre homes for around 1,500 residents this topic may be of interest to the Panel.</p>

Suggestions

Suggestion	Details
<p>Planning Processes</p>	<p>Suggestion from a member of the public who raises various issues in relation to the current planning regime including the time permitted for objectors to speak at meetings, enforcement, and notification of applications.</p>
<p>Verge and Pavement Damage</p>	<p>Suggestion from a Councillor in relation to damage to grass verges and pavements caused by cars and wagons being driven over and parked on them, as well as skips parked on them while work is being done to houses.</p>

³ <https://teesvalley-ca.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/EVCP-Business-Case-Executive-Summary.pdf>

⁴ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/957205/National_Model_Design_Code.pdf

	<i>(The EDEI Scrutiny Panel received a presentation in relation to parking on grass verges at a meeting held on 18 November 2020.)</i>
Teesside Freeport	Suggestion from a Panel Member.
Future uses for the Transporter Bridge	Suggestion from a Panel Member.
Middlehaven – Housing Development	Suggestion from a Panel Member in relation to the proposed housing development at Middlehaven and plans for infrastructure including schools, healthcare provision, shops, public transport etc.
Bus Services	Suggestion from a Panel Member with regard to bus companies not always being consulted about new housing and commercial developments in the town which might impact on service provision.

Updates

Teesside Crematorium	The Panel previously requested that a six-monthly update on income and any mitigation required, be provided until further notice.
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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 may wish to use the aid attached at **Appendix 1** to prioritise issues where scrutiny can make an impact, add value or contribute to policy development.

PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

11. The scrutiny panel is asked to consider and agree its work programme for the 2021/22 municipal year.
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.
14. Once the scrutiny panel has identified the areas of priority, support staff will draw those topics into a programme for approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

RECOMMENDATION

15. That the scrutiny panel identifies topics it would like to include in its work programme for 2021/22, for consideration/approval by the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

16. Within the report, reference is made to:
 - Middlesbrough Council's Green Strategy – Report to Executive – 27 May 2021.
 - United Nations Environment Programme (2021). Food Waste Index Report 2021.
 - Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Business Case - Executive Summary – Tees Valley Combined Authority.
 - National Model Design Code – Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.

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APPENDIX 1

