

COUNCIL

Report title	Scrutiny Progress Report
Chief Executive or Director	Director of Legal and Governance Services
Date	24 November 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/Exempt:	Is the report urgent?
To be noted	No	No	Non-urgent report

Contribution to delivery of the 2021-24 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

The Overview and Scrutiny Board are scheduled to meet on 20 October 2021.

At the 9 November 2021 meeting, the Board will consider / receive information in respect of the following:

- Executive Forward Work Programme;
- Executive Member for Environment and Finance and Governance Update;
- Chief Executive's Update;
- Scrutiny Chairs Updates;
- The Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel - Final Report - Middlesbrough Regeneration Post Covid-19;

SCRUTINY PANEL UPDATES

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

The Adult Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel met on 13 October 2021 and 10 November 2021.

At the 13 October 2021 meeting, the panel received information from Ageing Better Middlesbrough's Programme Manager and the Chief Executive Officer of Middlesbrough and Stockton Mind regarding work undertaken to date, and next steps for the future / legacy planning. The Council's Head of Strategic Commissioning and Procurement also provided an update in respect of Aster Care Home.

Following an addition to the panel's work programme to look at the topic of 'The Recruitment and Retention of Adult Social Care Staff', with particular focus upon Social Workers and Social Care Workers, the panel commenced the investigation at the 10 November 2021 meeting. The Director of Adult Social Care and Health Integration was in attendance to provide information. Owing to the urgency surrounding this topic, the panel requested that a draft report be produced in preparation for its next meeting on 8 December 2021.

Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel

At the last meeting, held on 8 November 2021, the Scrutiny Panel continued gathering evidence in respect of its current review of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

At the meeting, a number of officers and representatives from early years settings were in attendance. The Scrutiny Panel was provided with an overview of how early years providers work with the Local Authority to identify and support children with SEN or disabilities and promote equality of opportunity for children in their care. Members received information in respect of:

- the SEND Code of Practice;
- the work of the Early Years and Primary Support Service;
- early years partnership working in Middlesbrough;

- identifying, assessing and meeting needs; and
- case studies from Green Lane Primary Academy, Caldicotes Primary Academy and Rosedene Nursery Easterside.

The Scrutiny Panel also received an update on education and COVID-19 recovery.

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

The Children and Young People’s Social Care and Services Scrutiny Panel met on 25 October 2021. The Executive Director of Children’s Services, Director of Children’s Care and Head of Stronger Communities provided the Panel with further information in relation to its current scrutiny topic of ‘Locality Working from a Children’s Services Perspective’.

The presentation included details of the nine themes of locality working; staffing arrangements in relation to early help and children’s social care within the pilot hubs; a snapshot of progress to date; and the benefits of locality working.

The Panel also agreed its Terms of Reference for the review.

The Panel is scheduled to meet on 22 November where appropriate officers will be in attendance to provide further details about the work being undertaken by Early Help and Children’s Social Care staff within the locality hubs.

Culture and Communities Scrutiny Panel

The Culture and Communities Panel met on 21 October 2021 and received an excellent presentation from Marion Walker, Head of Stronger Communities and Dale Metcalf, Operational Community Safety Manager in respect to our community safety team and an update on the community safety partnership.

Since the new enforcement powers have been introduced, the panel were pleased to hear of the results but also the joint up working which is occurring in the Town. It seems that the Community safety partnership is growing from strength to strength and we hope this continues to do so.

Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure Scrutiny Panel

The Economic Development, Environment and Infrastructure (EDEI) Scrutiny Panel met on 3 November 2021.

The Panel received a presentation from the Director of Environment and Community Services and the Operational Community Service Manager in relation to Fly Tipping and the Bulky Waste Collection Service.

The Panel also discussed and approved Terms of Reference for the scrutiny review of Middlesbrough Council’s Green Strategy.

The next meeting is scheduled to be held on 1 December 2021 and the Panel will receive an update Derelict and/or Eyesore Commercial Properties in the town from the Director of Regeneration. The Panel will also be continuing its review of the Green Strategy at this meeting.

Health Scrutiny Panel

The Health Scrutiny Panel met on 1 November 2021 where it received information from representatives of the Regeneration and Public Health departments. The Panel received information in relation to its continuing review into health inequalities. As part of that information the panel heard how Middlesbrough suffered from significant health concerns and there was a need to embed public health principles into regeneration initiatives. Work to achieve this objective had already begun, with collaboration between Public Health and Planning departments having been cited as an example.

The panel heard that the council was in receipt of funding from several sources that could assist with this process including the Towns Fund and the Future High Street Fund. While those funding streams were time limited it was important to explore with developers what possibilities were available.

There had been work carried out utilising these funding streams including future proofing new venues, investment in green spaces and improved cycling and walking routes. The Panel also heard how other areas, such as Bicester and Leeds, had been able to improve health inequalities through effective regeneration schemes.

The Panel also received an update in respect of COVID-19 from the Public Health Intelligence Specialist. During that update the panel discussed current Covid-19 infection rates and were advised that rates continued to fall in Middlesbrough albeit slowly. In terms of case numbers the average was 90 in the week of 24th October, however this did represent a gradual increase since the start of October. Demographically, there was a slight increase in Covid-19 rates within the 40-59 age group (16%). This was expected to rise as this was an age range of parents.

The panel was advised that not all school cases were being sent to the Public health team, but from the available data the rates stood at 428 cases. However this data gap was likely due to half term. On a Ward basis the Ward with the highest number of cases was Park, however when cases per population are considered Stainton and Thornton ward had the highest number of cases. However it was important to note that the numbers were spread evenly across all age ranges and were not high in their own right. South Tees Trust had 76 patients which was an increase from 66 the previous week. The NHS continued to be stressed.

At its next meeting on 6 December the Panel will hear evidence into how economic and regeneration initiatives can help to close gaps in health inequalities from Chair of the Tees Valley LEP.

Tees Valley Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee

On 4 November members of the TVCA OSC were invited to an Induction Course at Cavendish House to meet and converse with officers of TVCA. Presentations were given on Transport, Education, and Culture. After lunch members were taken on a tour of the Teesside Works land at Redcar. Members were shown the demolition that is taking place and the new wharf for the Freeport.

The next two meetings of the TVCA OSC will be held in December 2021 and they will both be draft budget consultation meetings.

SCRUTINY REPORTS SUBMITTED TO EXECUTIVE

Since the last update to Council the Children and Young People's Learning Scrutiny Panel's Final Report on Behaviour, Discipline and Bullying in Schools has been submitted to Executive and approved.

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 M SAUNDERS
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