

Report To: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of Meeting: 5 December 2023

Report Title: Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme (2023/24) Update

Report By: Coral Harding, Continuous Improvement and democratic Services Officer

Key Decision: N/A

Purpose of Report

To provide an update of progress for the 2023/24 Overview and Scrutiny work programme and proposed follow up actions.

Recommendation(s)

That the committee note the progress of the Overview and Scrutiny work programme for the 2023/24 municipal year and follow up actions.

Reasons for Recommendations

It is the responsibility of members serving on the Overview and Scrutiny committee to set their own work programme for each municipal year and complete the associated actions by the end of year.

Introduction

1. Following the agreement of the work programme at Annual Overview and Scrutiny meeting on 27th July 2023. The committee has since met to provisionally confirm work groups and lines of enquiry.
2. The confirmed work programme can be found in appendix A. These ideas and themes draw on previous Overview and Scrutiny work. The committee have grouped work into 4 themes this year; Finance, Equalities, Living Environment and Follow up 2022

Overview and Scrutiny work programme 2023/24

3. The committee has decided to pursue 4 themes this year;
4. The work programme will use a combination of reviews and updates. It is also accepted that some of the information the require will be obtained from the quarterly review meetings.
5. Appendix A sets out the proposed O&S work programme for the year ahead breaking down the proposed reviews of each theme over the course of the year.
6. The bulk of the investigative work will be done through Quarter 2 and 3. Any recommendations from this work will be reported in Quarter 4. These recommendations will go to Cabinet or Full Council depending on relevance.

Finance Theme

7. The Overview and Scrutiny committee are concerned by the large deficit the council faces this year which is currently estimated at £2.5 million. Overview and Scrutiny committee are keen to help support efforts to lessen the impact of the deficit.
8. The work programme consists of several different areas as followed;
 - Finance Peer Review Meeting with Council Leadership
 - Costs of Homelessness
 - Asset Management Review
 - Tourism & Cultural Strategy
 - Management & Staff restructuring
9. As part of the Asset Management Strategy Overview and Scrutiny called in the Cabinet decision 'Land and Property Disposal Programme' on 15th August. The agenda and minutes for this meeting can be found [here](#).
10. Overview and Scrutiny agreed for the decision to be implemented and sent a report to 2nd October Cabinet with recommendations. The report can be found [here](#)
11. Overview and Scrutiny held the Finance Peer Review meeting on 19th September that reviewed the LGA Finance Peer report with the Leader and other Portfolio Holders. The agenda and minutes for this meeting can be found [here](#)

12. As part of the Tourism & Cultural Strategy Overview and Scrutiny met with the outgoing Major Projects and Marketing Officer to discuss previous and potential tourism strategies. Overview and Scrutiny were very interested in the potential of the Hastings Castle site. The committee would also like to express thanks to Kevin Boorman for all his hard work.
13. Overview and Scrutiny reviewed the Town Deal Programme Update at a meeting on 18th October. The agenda and minutes for this meeting can be found [here](#)
14. Overview and Scrutiny made recommendations and these were sent to 6th November Cabinet. The report for this can be found [here](#)
15. These reviews have been led by Councillor Patmore. All Overview and Scrutiny members have been active in these reviews given the Councils Financial situation.
16. Overview and Scrutiny have contributed to the Budget Planning discussions. They held a meeting on 20th November. The agenda and minutes for this meeting can be found [here](#)

Equalities theme

17. The committee recognises that local residents come from many different backgrounds and have many different needs. The Equalities theme will look at how the council monitors the levels of accessibility and considerations taken in providing public services for a diverse population.
18. The Overview and Scrutiny committee wanted to continue previous work from last years work programme and are keen that the Equalities Working Group continues to meet and explore its line of enquiries. This group will be open to all Councillors.
19. The committee would also like to review the Park Safety works which were completed early in the year in Alexandra Park in response to a resident's petition because of a violent incident.
20. Councillor Carr will lead this review.

Living Environment theme

21. Overview and Scrutiny recognise the need for a healthy living environment that is safe & clean, promotes healthy behaviours and is pleasant to live in.
22. Overview and Scrutiny believe in positively promoting a healthy living environment in the borough and actively support initiatives to reduce issues that can affect this such as pollution, climate change and cleanliness.
23. The review will also look at ways of reducing fly tipping incidences in the borough by investigating the current data from My Hastings and exploring if new incentives can help.
24. The review would scrutinise the changes the council need to undertake to implement the new national refuse and recycling collections.
25. Overview and Scrutiny held a meeting with Head of Environment and Operations on 29th August to discuss these issues and explored in detail My Hastings, fly tipping and the work of the Tidy Up St Leonards group.
26. This review is keen to establish a Climate Change Action Group. This group will support and scrutinise the councils' efforts to build climate resilience in the borough.

27. Councillor Hilton will lead this review.

Follow up theme

28. The previous year's Overview and Scrutiny work programme was not completed in full by the committee, but they would like to continue and monitor progress from previous commitments.
29. The review will complete a review of the performance indicators and will look at the indicators for Finance, Housing and Climate Change as a priority. They are currently working with the Head of Strategic Programmes to achieve this. Senior Managers have been asked to review there current targets.
30. The review would still like to review Sea Changes activities and achievements. The committee are currently looking at ways to explore this review with other partners.
31. The review would also like to meet with Southern water to discuss the future plans for the town and the resolutions to the issues that are currently being experienced.
32. This review will lead by Councillor Sinden.

Action	Key milestone	Due date (provisional)	Responsible
Overview and Scrutiny to agree their work programme actions	Work programme and actions agreed	5 th December 2023	Overview and Scrutiny committee

Wards Affected

Policy Implications

Reading Ease Score:

Have you used relevant project tools?: N/A

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Y/N
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	Y/N
Risk Management	Y/N
Environmental Issues & Climate Change	Y/N
Economic/Financial Implications	Y/N
Human Rights Act	Y/N
Organisational Consequences	Y/N

Local People's Views	Y/N
Anti-Poverty	Y/N
Legal	Y/N

Additional Information

Appendix A- Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2023/24

Officer to Contact

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