

# Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, 2022-23.

This report will be considered formally by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) at its meeting on the 13 April 2023.

## Committee Membership:

Councillors English (Chairman), Cannon (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Blackmore, Brice, Cleator, Conyard, Garten, Hastie, Hinder, Jeffery, Knatchbull, McKenna and T Wilkinson.

Further information relating to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can be found here: [Your Councillors - Maidstone Borough Council](#)

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## **Training**

The OSC undertook two training sessions conducted by external providers before its first meeting in June 2022. These were:

- Introduction to Overview and Scrutiny for Elected Members
- Questioning Skills

## **Meetings and Reviews**

The OSC undertook an ambitious work programme for the 2022/23 Municipal Year; Originally, the reviews chosen were:

- Safety and Enforcement
- Waste and Recycling Strategy, 2018-2023
- Water Management Cycle
- Health Inequality

By December 2022, the OSC agreed to amend its work programme as it was not feasible to complete all of the reviews in one municipal year. In response, the Night-time Economy and Enforcement aspects of the first review, alongside the Health Inequality review, were moved to the 2023-24 work programme.

The tables below provide the details for each of the review's conducted by the OSC this year.

The OSC has met on 15 occasions across the year; 8 of these meetings were scheduled through the calendar of meetings, 7 of these meetings were additional meetings.

**Review Title & Objectives:** Safety in the Town Centre & 'Review existing safety measures to identify any required changes'.

**Outcomes:** The Committee produced a total of 15 recommendations, 14 of which were applicable to the Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement's portfolio; the remaining action was for the Committee to appoint a rapporteur to conduct a post-review evaluation. The recommendations were grouped thematically to include; Greater Communications, Member Support and Future Actions.

Information relating to the review can be accessed here: [Your Councillors - Maidstone Borough Council](#)

**Next Steps:** The report will be presented to the Executive at its 18 April 2023 meeting, with a formal response to be provided early in the next Municipal Year.

| <b>Meetings</b> | <b>Attendees</b>   | <b>Evidence Provided</b>   |
|-----------------|--|--|
| 6 October 2022  | Community & Strategic Partnerships Manager (MBC)<br>Youth Hub Delivery Manager Maidstone (KCC)<br>Partnership Sergeant, Maidstone, Community Safety Partnership (Kent Police)  | Community Safety Plan Extract<br>Data extract from the Town Centre Strategy Data Pack<br>Joint presentation from attendees, and Q&A session.   |
| 18 Oct 2022     | Community & Strategic Partnerships Manager (MBC)<br>District Commander (Kent Police)<br>Inspector (Kent Police)<br>Youth Hub Delivery Manager Maidstone (KCC)<br>Bid Manager (One Maidstone)<br>Violence Reduction Unit Co-ordinator (Kent and Medway Violence Reduction Unit) | Themes from Member Briefing.<br>Verbal Q&A Session with attendees.   |
| 20 Dec 2022     | Communications Manager (MBC)<br>Community and Strategic Partnerships Manager (MBC)<br>Head of Housing and Regulatory Services (MBC)  | Written responses from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 18 Oct attendees concerning future actions;</li><li>• Housing Associations within the Town Centre.</li></ul> Safer Streets Communication Plan & Verbal Q&A Session with attendees. |

**Review Title & Objectives:** The Council’s Performance against the Waste and Recycling Strategy, 2018-2023 & to:

- a) Assess customer satisfaction with the service, including interaction with customer services and educational communications, to identify improvements;
- b) To identify which actions within the Waste Strategy correspond with actions within the Biodiversity and Climate Change strategy, and make recommendations to improve their shared achievement;
- c) Explore options for increasingly recycling rates through assessing the best practice of other Local Authorities with similar waste collection service. This will also include reducing overall waste; and
- d) To review the impact of shared waste collection facilities within/from new Housing Development on the achievement of Waste Strategy targets.

Information relating to the review can be accessed here: [Your Councillors - Maidstone Borough Council](#)

**Outcomes:** The Committee produced a total of 27 recommendations; 24 applied to the Executive, 2 applied to the Planning Committee and the remainder applied to the OSC.

The Committee’s report was presented to the Executive at its 25 January 2023 Meeting, and a formal response was published within the 22 March 2023 Executive agenda; 17 of the actions were agreed, 3 were noted and 1 was not agreed. This was then included within the 13 April 2023 OSC agenda papers for noting.

**Next Steps:** None currently, although recommendation 27 would be action following the commencement of the waste collection services contract in 2024.

| Meetings             | Attendees  | Evidence Provided  |
|----------------------|--|--|
| 2 & 3<br>Nov<br>2022 | Customer Services Manager<br>Communications Manager<br>Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager<br>Waste Crime Manager<br>Head of Environmental Services and Public Realm<br>Major Projects Team Leader<br>Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid, Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement<br>Councillor Martin Round, Lead Member for Environmental Services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Council’s Waste and Recycling Strategy, 2018-2023</li> <li>• Recycling Data across the period 2018-2022</li> <li>• Relevant excerpt from the Council’s Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan</li> <li>• Summary of Waste Services related Communications from January 2021-October 2022</li> <li>• Data on Stage 1 and 2 complaints relating to Waste Services</li> <li>• Relevant excerpt of the results from the Residents Survey 2022 – Waste &amp; Recycling Summary</li> </ul> |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
|  |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Table of Top Performing Local Authorities 2020/21 (with similar waste collection services to those provided at the Council)</li> <li>• Information relating to developments with Shared Waste Collection Facilities</li> </ul> <p>Verbal evidence from Q&amp;A session with attendees.</p> |
|--|--|---|

**Review Title & Objectives:** The Water Management Cycle (conducted via a Working Group) & 'To identify actions to be taken by the Council and/or its partner organisations to improve the management and resilience of the water management cycle framework'.

The detailed lines of enquiry were:

|                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| Supply of Water                     | Mitigating effects of increased rainfall, including capacity;<br>General supply of water  |
| Disposal of Water                   | Importance and influence of development management;<br>Flooding mitigation Mechanisms <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To effectively control water</li> <li>ii. Natural flood mitigation measures</li> </ul> Management of highway and surface water flooding;<br>Working with partners |
| Disposal of Sewage in Water Courses | Combined systems (also relevant to point b) and link to foul and surface water mixing.<br>Council powers and partnership Working<br>Working with partners<br>Water neutrality and planning  |

Information relating to the review can be accessed here (see 13 April 2023 meeting): [Your Councillors - Maidstone Borough Council](#)

**Outcomes:** The Group's report was reviewed by the OSC at the 13 April 2023 Meeting. The outcomes included a list of 22 actions; 21 of which fall within the Executive's remit, and 1 is for the Overview and Scrutiny.

**Next Steps:** The Committee is considering whether to conduct a second phase review, as put forward by the Working Group, to focus on other aspects linked to the review that could not be reviewed in time for the end of the 2022/23 municipal year.

| Meetings  | Attendees   | Evidence Provided   |
|-----------|---|---|
| 1 Nov 22  | Working Group Only  | None.   |
| 5 Dec 22  | Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement   | Technical Briefing from the Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement on the Council's actions so far on the topic. |
| 15 Dec 22 | Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement<br>Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager<br>Emergency Planning and Resilience Manager | Evidence collection through Officer interviews  |
| 22 Dec 22 | Director of Regeneration and Place<br>Interim Local Plan Review Director<br>Principal Planning Officer x2<br>Environmental Health Manager       | As Above.   |
| 27 Jan 23 | Upper Medway Internal Drainage Board<br>Southeast Rivers Trust<br>Kent County Council   | Evidence collection through interviews.   |
| 7 Feb 23  | Southeast Water<br>Southern Water   | As Above.   |
| 1 Mar 23  | Working Group Only  | Review of remaining written evidence:<br>Southern Water wish-list<br>Southeast Rivers Trust wish-list                             |
| 20 Mar 23 | Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement   | Recommendations produced.   |
| 28 Mar 23 | Working Group Only  | Report Reviewed.  |

## **Call-In**

It is a legislative power of the OSC and takes place when either:

- The OSC Chairman; OR
- Any three Council Members

Request to call-in a decision for review, after it has been made by the Executive but before the end of the call-in period included in the decision notice.

The OSC has reviewed one call-in request which it reviewed on the 22 November 2022, on the 'Proposed Change to Maidstone AQMA and Request to Consult on New Air Quality Action Plan'.

The Lead Member for Environmental Services and relevant Council Officers attended the meeting and answered questions from the Committee and Members that had called-in the decision. Assurance was given on the quality and applicability of the data used to inform the decision and the Lead Member for Environmental Services suggested alternative ways to provide future updates.

## **2023-24**

It is likely that further training will be provided to the Committee on the roles and powers of Overview and Scrutiny, as the function continues to develop at Maidstone Borough Council.

The OSC's current work programme for 2023-2024 is shown on the next page, with any changes to the programme to be agreed by the Committee.

## Committee Work Programme 2023-24.

| <b>Review Title &amp; Objectives</b>   | <b>Expected Start Date &amp; Method</b> | <b>Relevant Officer/s</b>  | <b>Timetable</b> |
|--|---|--|------------------|
| <u>Enforcement</u>   | Post-May 2023                           | To be confirmed.   | To be confirmed. |
| <u>Night-Time Economy</u><br><br>To review the twilight and night-time economy within Maidstone Town Centre.   | Post-May 2023                           | <b>Shared Review</b> with the Policy, Communities and Engagement and the Economic Development Teams                                | To be confirmed. |
| <u>Health Inequality</u><br><br>Increased understanding of health inequalities across the borough and an overview of strategy and police across the relevant bodies. | Post-May 2023                           | Alison Broom, Chief Executive,<br><br>John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Regulatory Services<br><br>Senior Public Health Officer | To be confirmed. |