

Maidstone Borough Council

Scrutiny Coordinating Committee

Thursday 28 November 2013

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2013-14

Report of: Christian Scade, Senior Corporate Policy Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The terms of reference for the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee includes developing mechanisms for addressing cross cutting issues and to prevent duplication in the work of individual committees.
- 1.2 This is also an opportunity for the Coordinating Committee to review individual work programmes (attached at **Appendix A**) to identify what is working well, to share best practice and to discuss how the scrutiny work programme could be improved moving forward.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee:
 - (a) Review the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme (attached at **Appendix A**)
 - (b) Agree that there are no current work programme issues that fall within the remit of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee

3. Work Programme Topics and Reviews

- 3.1 The work programme for each of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees is attached at **Appendix A**.
- 3.2 It is evident from the work carried out by scrutiny committees and national research that Overview and Scrutiny has many roles. The following are the key roles Overview and Scrutiny seeks to fulfil:
 - Policy Development
 - Through carrying out reviews in new areas and aiding the cabinet in its policy work
 - Holding the Executive to Account
 - Through pre- and post-cabinet decision scrutiny

- Policy Review
 - Keeping an eye on the policies developed by the council and the cabinet and making recommendations where appropriate for improvement
- Performance Management
 - Reviewing performance management information, identifying services that are not performing and making recommendations for improvement
- External Scrutiny
 - Looking outside the council at other services provided to the public.
- Engaging the public
 - A key role for scrutiny is to engage the public in its work and to give the public a voice. This can be achieved through co-option, working with the local media and asking for the public's input into the scrutiny work programme.

3.3 Moving forward, the scrutiny work programme should be developed to ensure the four principles of good public scrutiny, highlighted by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS), are fulfilled –

- Constructive 'critical friend' challenge
- Amplifies the voices and concerns of the public
- Led by independent people who take responsibility for their role
- Drives improvement in public services

4. Matters Covering More Than One O&S Committee

- 4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee structure has changed for the 2013-14 municipal year. As a result of the Governance Review, and the development of an Enhanced Scrutiny Model, the number of Committees has increased from 3 to 4.
- 4.2 Each Committee has been newly formed with revised terms of reference which mirror Cabinet portfolios.

<p align="center">Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services</p> <p>Leader; and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services</p>	<p align="center">Community, Leisure Services and Environment</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services; & Cabinet Member for Environment</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing performance and ensuring appropriate action is identified and executed to remedy performance issues • Asset Management • Communications • Human Resources • Business Transformation and the Corporate Improvement Programme • Equalities • Democratic services • Scrutinising standards of governance and conduct are achieved throughout the business of the Council • Customer service • Corporate finance including regular budget monitoring • Information Technology including scrutiny of the shared service • Council Tax and Housing Benefit including the Revenues and Benefits Shared Service • Mid Kent Improvement Partnership • Democratic Services including electoral services and member services • Procurement, Property Services and Facilities Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing • Community Development • Community Safety (To act as the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership OSC twice a year) • Safety In Action • Voluntary and Community Sectors • Health • Parks, open spaces and allotments including grounds maintenance • Leisure activities including sporting and recreational based activities and including services provided via the Maidstone Leisure Centre • Community engagement • Allocation and monitoring of grants • Air Quality • Contaminated Land • Water • Climate change • Licensing • Carbon Management • Local Biodiversity • Waste minimisation, recycling and collection • Cleansing services • Environmental Health services • Bereavement i.e. services provided from the cemetery and crematorium • Capital projects and programmes relevant to the portfolio • Cobtree Golf Course • Climate Change

<p style="text-align: center;">Planning, Transport and Development</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Economic and Commercial Development</p> <p>Cabinet Member for Economic and Commercial Development</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council’s contribution to securing sustainable construction with respect to development in the borough. • Spatial planning including the Local Development Framework and other spatial planning documents including Development Plan Documents, Development Management policies and development briefs • Transport and Infrastructure (including Highways, Parking, Park and Ride and Public Transport) • Development Management including planning enforcement and land charges • Landscape and Conservation • Building Control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development and Regeneration • Commercial Services Development • The Visitor Economy including the Hazlitt Arts Centre, Maidstone museums, tourism, the Kent Conference Bureau and Maidstone market. • Capital projects and programmes relevant to the portfolio including regeneration and public realm improvement schemes • Events and venues

4.3 From time to time, matters may arise which fall within the remit of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, set out in Part 4 of the Council’s Constitution, state:

"In such instances, one of the relevant Committees may decide to establish a working group which can be made up of representatives from the appropriate committees. The Report will be considered by the appropriate committee following the opportunity of all other appropriate committees to comment, before it is forwarded to the Executive for a response.

Before submitting its findings to the Executive and/or Council for consideration, the report of the reviewing Overview and Scrutiny Committee shall be considered by the other Overview and Scrutiny Committee for comment. Those comments shall be incorporated into the report which is then sent to that body for consideration.

If a single committee decides to examine an issue that falls within the remit of another committee, its report shall be passed to the other relevant committee(s) for comment before its findings are submitted to the Executive and/or Council for consideration. Those comments shall be incorporated into the report which is then sent to that body for consideration."

4.4 The role of the Coordinating Committee is to review the work of the individual committees, to address overlap and identify opportunities for joint working. However, at present there are no issues that fall

within the remit of more than one Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

5. Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 5.1 The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee will primarily consider reports that deliver against all the Council's priorities: For Maidstone to have a growing economy, For Maidstone to be a decent place to live and Corporate and Customer Excellence.
- 5.2 The Strategic Plan sets the Council's key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the Council's priorities. Actions to deliver these key objectives may therefore include work that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee will consider throughout the coming year.

6 Background Documents

- 6.1 None.