

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee 26 February 2024

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Update

Recommendation(s)

I recommend that the Committee:

- a. receive the Work Programme 2023-24 update.
- b. agree the Combined Work Programme (Appendix 1).
- c. note the tracking recommendations and outputs (Appendix 2).

Local Member Interest:

N/A

Report of Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services John Tradewell

Summary

What is the Overview and Scrutiny Committee being asked to do and why?

The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is the overarching scrutiny body with responsibility for developing and agreeing the combined work programme for the Council's four overview and scrutiny committees.

Members are asked to consider the update, consider the combined work programme for the remainder of 2023-24 municipal year and note the tracking of recommendations and outputs.

Report

Background

1. The Local Government Act 2000 states that Councils operating executive arrangements must also make provision for the appointment of one or more overview and scrutiny committees. At their annual meeting on 18 May 2023, the County Council appointed the following committees:

- Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
 - Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny
 - Prosperous Overview and Scrutiny
 - Safeguarding Overview and Scrutiny
4. The Terms of Reference for each Overview and Scrutiny Committee can be viewed in [Section 7 of the County Councils Constitution](#).
 5. Overview and Scrutiny Committee work programmes are reviewed each meeting to ensure the remit falls in the Committees terms of reference and that the matters remain timely and relevant.
 6. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs hold regular Triangulation meetings with Executive Members, Directors, and where applicable senior officers from partner organisations, to discuss emerging matters, priorities and circumstances that might impact on decision making and scrutiny timelines.
 7. The Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee maintains oversight of the combined work programme which provides opportunity to identify matters which might fall under the Terms of Reference of more than one Committee and provides a wider view of the subject matter and related issue(s), to help focus on key lines of enquiry.

Current position

8. September 2023 – January 2024

- a. Nineteen Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee meetings were held in this period.
- b. One informal meeting of the Safeguarding O&S Committee was held to invite the Police and Crime Commissioner to consider 'Right Time, Right Place.'
- c. Five overview and scrutiny working groups have met on a total of nineteen occasions to look in depth at specific issues. A summary of activity can be found in paragraph 10 of this report.

9. Activity Summary

Corporate:

- a. [12 September 2023](#) meeting considered Customer Feedback and Complaints Service, Corporate Services, Annual Report 2022/23 and the Electoral Review of Staffordshire County Council - Draft Recommendations

- b. [6 November 2023](#) scrutiny of the Integrated Performance report – quarter 2, Entrust – Review of Changes, Climate change annual report and action plan and the Climate Change Working Group - Carbon Sequestration and Woodland Creation for Net Zero.
- c. [18 December 2023](#) meeting considered People Strategy 2023 – 2027 Update on Progress, Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion – Principles, Objectives and Action Plan update and the Medium-Term Financial Scrutiny - Draft Working Group Report

Health and Care:

- a. [11 September 2023, 10:00am](#) scrutiny of Good Mental Health in Staffordshire Strategy 2023-2028 – Draft Action Plan and Mental Health Performance
- b. [16 October 2023](#) scrutiny of SSOT Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent ICS (Integrated Care System) People/ Workforce, Staffordshire’s Social Care Workforce: Adult Social Care Update and Freedom to Speak Up
- c. [13 November 2023](#) additional meeting: WMAS (West Midlands Ambulance Service) Performance Update.
- d. [20 November 2023](#) additional meeting: Health impacts of Walleys Quarry Landfill Site, Silverdale.
- e. [27 November 2023](#) scrutiny of Maternity and Neonatal Services Update.
- f. [29th January 2024](#) Scrutiny of Access to General Practice in Staffordshire, Social Prescribing and SSOT ICB Primary Care Dental Overview.

Prosperous:

- a. [28 September 2023](#) scrutiny of Employment and Skills Strategy, HS2 Impact on Staffordshire - Update Oral report/presentation of HS2 and Highways Transformation Progress and Performance Quarterly Update.
- b. [17 October 2023](#) (additional meeting) scrutiny of Avanti West Coast Mainline Rail Services.
- c. [9 November 2023](#) scrutiny of Community Learning Self-Assessment Report 2022 – 2023, Annual Street Works Permit Scheme Reports and draft Traffic and Network Management Plan.
- d. [22 November 2023](#) (site visit to Staffordshire History Centre and additional meeting) scrutiny of Staffordshire History Centre Update and Staffordshire Libraries and Arts Service Performance 2022-2023.
- e. [13 December 2023](#) scrutiny of Natural Environment Strategy, Staffordshire County Council’s Economic Strategy – Delivery Update and Review of Schools Performance.

- f. [11 January 2024](#) scrutiny of Update on the Preparation of the Staffordshire Local Transport Plan, and Lighting for Staffordshire Update and Energy Framework Proposal.

Safeguarding:

- a. [14 September 2023](#) scrutiny of Impact of Cabinet Investment in Children's Services and Children in Care Programme
- b. [24 October 2023](#) scrutiny of Strategic Vision for Early Years.
- c. 24 October 2023: Informal meeting 'Right Care, Right Person' interview with the Police Fire and Crime Commissioner.
- d. [23 November 2023](#) scrutiny of Family Hubs in Staffordshire and Trading Standards including Vaping Safeguarding Concerns.
- e. [4 January 2024](#) scrutiny of Homes for Children in Our Car, Family Help Model, Staffordshire Safeguarding Children's Board (SSCB) Annual Report 2022-2023 and Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Adult Safeguarding Partnership Board (SSASPB) Annual Report 2022/2023.

10. Working Groups Activity

Climate Change	7 September: Expert witnesses from Forestry Commission and The National Forest Company. 14 September: Evaluation of evidence, drawing conclusions and recommendations. 4 October: Consider draft report and recommendations. 6 November: Corporate agreed the report. 17 January 2024: Cabinet received the report and will respond to recommendations.
Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)	13 September: Tracking & Outturn underspends. 27 September: Dedicated Schols Grant HHB. 4 October: DSG – Cabinet Member interview. 25 October: Leader /Cabinet Member interview Draft MTFS 6 November: Testing/ evaluating evidence / conclusions. 4 December: Consider draft report and recommendations. 18 December: Report agreed at Corporate OSC. 24 January 2024: Cabinet received the report and will respond to recommendations.
Women's Health Strategy	26 September: Meeting with ICS Lead: National strategy august 2022 and Staffordshire Women's Health assessment. 18 October: agreed focus on Endometriosis and lines of Enquiry. 19 January 2024: The Chair met with Stafford MP to discuss birth trauma and women's health matters within the working group scope. 23 February 2024: Evidence gathering session.

Adult Social Care (ASC)	7 September: Workshop feedback Digital Information 9 October: Care Act Assessment Workshop 19 October: Theme Working with People 6 November: Theme Providing Support 4 December: Theme Ensuring Safety within the system 9 January 2024: Theme Leadership 21 February 2024: findings and draft report
Integrated Care Hubs	Carried forward – paused whilst ICH bid process ongoing.
Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE)	5 September: Agreed terms of reference, methodology and timetable of work. 17 October: Feedback from Primary evidence gathering sessions - shadowing CPE officers; reviewing existing Service Level Agreement and data re current provision. 11 December: Taking evidence from Police Fire and Crime Commissioner and existing service Provider. Further feedback from shadowing CPE officers. 15 February 2024 – evidence feedback and evaluation of findings.

11. Chair/Vice-chair Forum update

To ensure the continuous development of the scrutiny function Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Overview and Scrutiny Committees meet regularly with the Scrutiny and Support Team to reflect on, discuss and develop working processes and share good practice:

- a. 12 September improving scrutiny mechanisms, the Executive /Scrutiny Protocol and leadership essentials training.
- b. 28 November effective work programming and methods of scrutiny.
- c. 24 January 2024 Process improvement, committee remits and Overview and Scrutiny Members Survey.

12. Scrutiny Member Training and Development

Summary of training activities:

- a. LGA (Local Government Association) Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Leadership training sessions are planned in January / February 2024. An in-house training session for Chairs and Vice-Chairs has been requested for Spring 2024.
- b. 30 January four members attended LGA Charing Skills online training.

13. Work Programme – Planned items

- a. The Overview and Scrutiny Committees work programme items, work group meetings and other Scrutiny work for the remainder of the municipal year (February – April 2024) are listed for consideration (Appendix 1).
- b. The Work Programmes for each Overview and Scrutiny Committee are working documents and are continuously reviewed and updated.
- c. Triangulation meetings and agenda planning in advance of the scheduled meetings determines the timeliness and relevance of items and the need for prioritisation of emerging issues.
- c. Committee is requested to identify any matters that cut across or duplicate planned work and consider the most appropriate way to carry out scrutiny of the issue.

14. Tracking and Monitoring Recommendations

A detailed action log is maintained by Scrutiny and Support Officers for each committee. The update on progress against agreed actions is included in the work programme update report to each meeting. A tracker log to highlight progress and outcomes of recommendations made to Cabinet / Cabinet Members and Partners has been included in this report for information (Appendix 2).

15. Link to Strategic Plan

The Overview and Scrutiny Committees' remits and work programmes are developed to ensure that scrutiny reinforces the value and importance of challenge, and they are aligned to the ambitions and delivery of the principles, priorities, and outcomes of the Strategic Plan 2022-2026.

16. Link to Other Overview and Scrutiny Activity

The Combined Work Programme will co-ordinate scrutiny activity between the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees, identify matters for joint scrutiny or determine the lead committee for an issue, and consider where and when scrutiny can add value and influence decision making.

Background Documents:

Link 1: Corporate O&S Committee Work Programme: [26.02.2024](#)

Link 2: Health and Care O&S Committee Work Programme: [29.01.2024](#)

Link 3: Prosperous O&S Committee Work Programme: [11.01.2024](#)

Link 4: Safeguarding O&S Committee Work Programme: [04.01.2024](#)

Contact Details

Director: John Tradewell, Deputy Chief Executive & Director for Corporate Services

Report Author: Deb Breedon
Job Title: Scrutiny and Support Manager
Telephone No.: 01785 276061
E-Mail Address: Deborah.breedon@staffordshire.gov.uk

