

OVERVIEW PANEL

25 July 2022

Commenced: 14:00

Terminated: 14:23

Present:

Councillors Naylor, M Smith, Cartey, N Sharif, T Sharif, Cooney, Fairfoull and Billington

In Attendance:

Sandra Stewart
Kathy Roe

Chief Executive
Director of Finance

Apologies for Absence: Councillors North and Kitchen

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the Overview Panel meeting on the 8 November 2021 were approved as a correct record.

3. SCRUTINY UPDATE

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Transformation. The report provided a summary of the work undertaken by the Council's Scrutiny Panels for March to July 2022.

Members of the Panel were presented with a breakdown of activity at the Scrutiny Panel meetings held in March 2022. On the 8 March 2022, the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel met with Councillor Allison Gwynne the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods Community Safety and Environment, the Assistant Director for Operation and Neighbourhoods and the Chief Superintendent Rob Cousen for GMP. The Panel were presented with a report following up on the GMICFRS inspection of Greater Manchester Police and received an update on strategic developments for community safety, crime and disorder.

During this meeting the Chair also updated Members on the annual budget letter presented at the joint meeting of Cabinet and Overview Panel on 9 February 2022. Further the Chair presented a summary of scrutiny activity undertaken during the 2021/22 municipal year.

On the 10 March 2022 the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel met with the Deputy Executive Leader and the Director of Children's Services to receive a response to specific points related to Ofsted, sustainability, forward strategy, practice quality and key priorities for the next 12 months.

In addition during the meeting the Chair updated Members on the annual budget letter presented at the joint meeting of Cabinet and Overview Panel on 9 February 2022 and presented a summary of scrutiny activity undertaken during the 2021/22 municipal year.

Members of the Panel were presented with a breakdown of planned activity at the July Scrutiny Panel meetings. It was highlighted that the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel would receive an update on the transport strategy, delivery plan and picking up on local issues. The Children's Services Scrutiny Panel would receive an update on the improvement plan and the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel would receive an update on social care reform White Paper and implications for Tameside.

In regards to training and development, enquiries made with the CfGS to provide a suitable training session for all Scrutiny members in the near future. A plan for this would include the delivery of a one-off session to cover the following:

- The role and potential impact of Scrutiny
- Scrutiny adding value to policy shaping and performance
- Support members to gain specific skills in essential aspects of Scrutiny
- How Scrutiny works collaboratively and constructively with the Executive and officers

Scrutiny Panels continued to review decisions and focus reports published by the ombudsman. Scrutiny activity informed by recently published LGSCO reports included:

- Focus report – Unprecedented pressure: Learning from complaints about council and care provider actions during the Covid-19 pandemic (published February 2022).
- Guidance report – Section 117 aftercare: guidance for practitioners (published April 2022).

RESOLVED

That the content of the report and summary of scrutiny activity be noted.

4. SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMMES

Consideration was given to a report of the Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny Panel / Chair of Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel / Chair of Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel / Director of Transformation.

Members were advised that there was a range of options available to each Scrutiny Panel as to how activity was planned and undertaken. Scrutiny Chairs work closely with panel members in order to adopt a combination of approaches to review service and performance updates, respond to formal consultations, focus reports of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman and areas in need of more in-depth review.

Each Scrutiny Panel held a work programme session in June 2022, with all members provided with the opportunity to attend, comment and contribute to the list topics included in the annual work programmes.

Scrutiny activity would continue to be undertaken outside of the formal meetings and through working groups, with all findings and recommendations presented to the full panel for comment and approval. This flexibility allowed responsive and timely work to be undertaken, creating an enhanced opportunity to both influence and inform the impact of decisions.

In order to prevent delay, Scrutiny Panels had agreed the topics to be considered at the next round of public meetings in July.

- **Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel – 26 July 2022**
Transport for Greater Manchester – delivery plans and supporting local issues (Invitation to the Executive Member for Planning, Transport and Connectivity)
- **Children's Services Scrutiny Panel – 27 July 2022**
Scene setting regarding children's social care and review of the improvement plan (Invitation to the Deputy Executive Leader – Children and Families)
- **Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel – 28 July 2022**
Adult Social Care White Paper and implications for Tameside (Invitation to the Executive Member for Adult Services)

The Chair of Place and External Relations, Chair of Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel and Chair of Children's Services Scrutiny Panel provided set out the work programme for 2022-2024 for the respective Panels.

RESOLVED

That the content of the work programmes and planned activity of the Scrutiny Panels be noted.

5. ASSURANCE REVIEW OF LGSCO FOCUS REPORT - LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS ABOUT COUNCIL AND CARE PROVIDER ACTIONS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Consideration was given to a report of the Chair of Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel / Director of Transformation. The report set out the Assurance Review of LGSCO Focus Report Unprecedented Pressure: learning from complaints about Council and Care Provider Actions during the Covid-19 pandemic.

It was reported that the Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel had made a formal request to the Executive Member for Adult Services, to review a LGSCO Focus Report and to collate a service response to a number of questions aimed to improve local accountability.

Members were advised that in May 2020, the ombudsman issued a short guide to council's and care providers, setting out the approach to considering complaints about the delivery of services during Covid-19. The guide pulled together learning from Covid-19 casework under six principles of good administration and practice.

- Getting it right (process and record keeping)
- Being service-user focused
- Being open and accountable
- Acting fairly and proportionately
- Putting things right (inform, consider, explain)
- Seeking continuous improvement

The focus report summarised common issues identified through cases on which the ombudsman carried out a full investigation. It also provided headline figures and trends from those cases where initial assessment did not prompt a full investigation.

At the end of March 2020, the ombudsman recognised the impact the pandemic was having on councils and care providers, with a decision made to suspend casework investigations. Active investigations restarted after the initial pause, with analysis in the report covering a period of June 2020 to November 2021.

The main categories of Covid-19 complaints investigated were:

- Benefits and Tax (41%)
- Adult Social Care (20%)
- Education and Children's Services (12%)

It was stated that focus reports promote local accountability and included a comprehensive set of questions for Scrutiny to seek assurance at a local level. The service response, attached at Appendix 1, responded directly to questions listed on pages 44 of the focus report, attached at Appendix 2. The Scrutiny Panel requested that a response of the Executive was to consider and review questions in connection to Adult Services and care provision in Tameside.

RESOLVED

That the content of the report and the ongoing activity of the Scrutiny Panels to review LGSCO decisions to inform and improve local service delivery be noted.

6. CORPORATE PLAN SCORECARD

Consideration was given to a report of the Director of Transformation. The report set out the corporate plan outcomes scorecard, which provides evidence to demonstrate progress towards

achievement of the Corporate Plan and improving the services provided to residents, businesses and key stakeholders within the locality.

The outcomes scorecard, which contained long term outcome measures that tracked progress to improve the quality of life for local residents, was attached to the report at Appendix 1.

Appendix 2 to the report, was the Tameside Policy & Performance Framework for the organisation, under which the scorecards operated. The framework clearly set out the different elements that contributed towards the achievement of the Corporate Plan priorities.

RESOLVED

That the report be noted

7. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

CHAIR