

Report To:	OVERVIEW PANEL
Date:	26 September 2022
Reporting Officer:	Sandra Stewart – Chief Executive
Subject:	SCRUTINY UPDATE
Report Summary:	To receive for information, a summary of the work undertaken by the Council's Scrutiny Panels for July to September 2022.
Recommendations:	That Overview Panel is asked to note the content of the report and summary of scrutiny activity.
Links to Corporate Plan:	Scrutiny work programmes are linked to the Council's corporate priorities. Scrutiny activity seeks to support effective decision-making and priorities across Tameside.
Policy Implications:	The work programmes comprise activity that seeks to check the effective implementation of the Strategic Commission's policies and if appropriate make recommendations to the Executive with regards to development, performance monitoring, outcomes and value for money.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the Section 151 Officer)	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Any changes to policy or service delivery arising from scrutiny work programmes will need to be accommodated within existing budgets or subject to a separate report.
Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)	<p>The Overview Panel supports the role that scrutiny plays in holding the authority's decision-makers to account making it fundamentally important to the successful functioning of local democracy by ensuring the efficient delivery of public services and driving improvements within the authority. In reviewing the summary of the work undertaken the Panel the Panel can consider how this function is being discharged.</p> <p>Both Overview and Scrutiny Committees have statutory powers to scrutinise decisions the executive is planning to take, those it plans to implement, and those that have already been taken/implemented.</p> <p>Recommendations from such scrutiny enable improvements to be made to policies and how they are implemented.</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committees also play a valuable role in developing policy. Effective overview and scrutiny should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide constructive 'critical friend' challenge; • Amplify the voices and concerns of the public; • Be led by those independent of the decision makers who take responsibility for their role; and • Drive improvement in public services
Risk Management:	Regular updates to Overview Panel provide assurance that scrutiny is progressing with an effective work programme, supporting good decision making and service improvement.

Access to Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Paul Radcliffe, Policy and Strategy Lead by:



Telephone: 0161 342 2199



e-mail: paul.radcliffe@tameside.gov.uk

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Scrutiny Update provides a platform for appropriate insight, activity, outcomes and proposals to be relayed. This method of reporting supports the improved responsiveness of scrutiny work and prevents any delay in the communication of key messages.
- 1.2 The report, by nature, aims to provide members with a general summary of scrutiny activity and proposals. It remains that all reports produced by scrutiny as a result of in-depth review will be tabled separately at the earliest opportunity.

2. SCRUTINY ACTIVITY

- 2.1 Scrutiny in practice remains mindful of the suitability and appropriateness of timings with regards to the impact and value of planned activity. This includes the selection and order of topics and updates to be received during the year. The tables below provide a summary and chronology of scrutiny activity.

Figure 1: Breakdown of activity at the formal Scrutiny Panel meetings

PLACE AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS SCRUTINY PANEL	
26 July 2022	20 September 2021
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Panel met Councillor Jan Jackson, Executive Member (Planning, Transport & Connectivity); Nick Fenwick, Interim Director of Place; Ian Palmer, Head of Modelling and Analysis, TfGM; and Rosalind O'Driscoll, Head of Policy, TfGM, to receive an update on transport strategy and delivery plan• Agreed Annual Work Programme and future work priorities.• Received the Corporate Performance Scorecard, for information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Panel met Councillor Vimal Choksi, Executive Member (Town Centres, Communities, Corporate Land & Community Assets); and Gregg Stott, Assistant Director, to receive a strategic overview and proposals on next steps for Tameside town centres and regeneration.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL	
27 July 2022	21 September 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Panel met Councillor Bill Fairfoull, Deputy Executive Leader (Children and Families); and Alison Stathers-Tracey, Director of Children's Services for scene setting with regard to children's social care and to review the improvement plan.• Agreed Annual Work Programme and future work priorities.• Received the Corporate Performance Scorecard, for information.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Panel met Councillor Leanne Feeley, Executive Member (Education & Achievement); and Tim Bowman, Director of Education, to receive a response to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman Focus Report – Out of School, out of sight? Ensuring children out of school get a good education, published July 2022.• The Panel met Tony Decrop, Assistant Director of Children's Social Care, to review the Children's Social Care self-evaluation (SEF).• Received the Children's Social Care Scorecard.

HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY PANEL	
28 July 2022	22 September 2022
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met Councillor John Taylor, Executive Member (Adult Services); and Tracy Harrison, Assistant Director of Adult Services, to receive an update on the social care reform White Paper and implications for Tameside. Received Executive Response to the LGSCO learning report: Unprecedented pressure: Learning from complaints about council and care provider actions during the Covid-19 pandemic, specific to Adult Services. Agreed Annual Work Programme and future work priorities. Received the Corporate Performance Scorecard, for information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met with Population Health, to receive an overview of strategic priorities for local health outcomes and inequalities, considering aspects of rising cost of living and poverty, future priorities and work streams.

Mid-year Budget Update

- 2.2 The independence of scrutiny enables members to seek assurances on the Council's financial position during 2022/23 and looking forward to budget planning, process and priorities for 2023/24. Where appropriate, priorities will continue to inform future scrutiny activity and work programmes.
- 2.3 Mid-year budget update sessions for all Scrutiny members, to include the non-executive members of Overview Panel, will take place on 3 October 2022. The update to be provided by Councillor Jacqueline North, First Deputy – Finance, Resources & Transformation; and Caroline Barlow, Assistant Director of Finance (Deputy Section 151 Officer).

Training and Development

- 2.4 There is an ongoing commitment to ensure all scrutiny members receive a suitable level of training and guidance. In addition to online resources, it is important that new and existing members have access to external provision based on scrutiny principles, national guidance and expectations.
- 2.5 All scrutiny members have now received, 'A Councillors Workbook on Scrutiny' published by the Local Government Association (LGA), further supported with links shared to a range of e-learning opportunities for councillors, including a scrutiny module.
- 2.6 Details listed below on training and development sessions delivered since the start of the 2022/23 municipal year.
- 20 July 2022** - Chairs and Deputy Chairs of Scrutiny and Overview Panel invited to attend an afternoon training session delivered by the LGA and Councillor Bryony Rudkin (Political Peer).
 - 5 September 2022** - All Scrutiny Panel members invited to attend a training session delivered by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) - Essentials of Effective Scrutiny.

- **12 September 2022** - All members of the Children's Scrutiny Panel invited to attend an online training session on Children's Safeguarding, delivered by the Safeguarding and Quality Assurance Team within Tameside Children's Services, to include scene setting delivered by the Assistant Director.
- **14 September 2022** – All members of the Children's Scrutiny Panel invited to a visit of Children's Social Care Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) / Early Help access point.

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

- 2.7 Scrutiny Panels continue to review decisions and focus reports published by the ombudsman. This ensures learning opportunities are identified and shared with the Executive and services in a timely manner and where necessary, a formal response and/or position statement returned to the appropriate Scrutiny Panel within agreed timescales.
- 2.8 Scrutiny activity informed by recently published LGSCO reports includes:
- Focus report – Out of school, out of sight? Ensuring children out of school get a good education (published July 2022).
 - Report shared with the Executive Member for Education & Achievement and Director of Education. The report and Executive Response is tabled in a separate report to Overview Panel on 26 September 2022.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 As set out on the front of the report.