

Report To:	OVERVIEW PANEL
Date:	26 September 2023
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 the period July 2023 to September 2023.
Recommendations:	That Overview Panel is asked to note the content of the report and summary of scrutiny activity. All related documents can be viewed within the appendices.
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 policy and if appropriate make recommendations to the Executive with regard 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/updates 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. 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. Recommendations from such scrutiny enable improvements to be made to policies and how they are implemented. 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:



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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 also 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 regard to the impact and value of planned activity. This includes the selection and order of topics and updates to be received during the year, with annual work programmes and priorities agreed at the June meetings. The tables below provide a summary and chronology of recent scrutiny activity.

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

PLACE AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS SCRUTINY PANEL	
25 July 2023	12 September 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met Councillor Denise Ward, Executive Member (Climate Emergency & Environmental Services); Councillor Vincent Ricci, Assistant Executive Member (Armed Forces & Enforcement); Julian Jackson, Director of Place; Emma Varnam, Assistant Director; Nick Sayers, Head of Operations and Greenspace; Mike Robinson, Regulatory Services Manager; and Dave Smith, Partnership Manager, to receive an overview of neighbourhood enforcement. Received the Scrutiny Annual Work Programmes for 2023/24. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met Councillor Vimal Choksi, Executive Member (Towns & Communities); Julian Jackson, Director of Place; Emma Varnam, Assistant Director, Operations and Neighbourhoods; and Mike Walsh, Superintendent, Greater Manchester Police, to receive an update on implementation and effectiveness of the GMP neighbourhood model; and forward plan of activity for the Community Safety Partnership. Received Executive Response to the LGSCO focus report: Out of Order – learning lessons from complaints about antisocial behaviour, published August 2023. Received Executive Response to the LGSCO focus report: Not in my back yard – Local people and the planning process, published August 2023.
CHILDREN'S SERVICES SCRUTINY PANEL	
26 July 2023	13 September 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met Councillor Bill Fairfoull, Deputy Executive Leader (Children & Families); Alison Stathers-Tracey, Director of Children's Services; Tony DeCrop, Assistant Director; and Susan Harris, Head of Service, to receive an introduction and overview of care leaver services, to inform a review into 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met Councillor Bill Fairfoull, Deputy Executive Leader (Children and Families); and Allison Parkinson, Director of Children's Services, to receive an update on Children's Social Care.

<p>the effectiveness of services and support to care leavers in Tameside.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received the Children's Services performance scorecard specific to Early Help and Social Care. Received the Scrutiny Annual Work Programmes for 2023/24. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received the Children's Services performance scorecard specific to Early Help and Social Care.
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HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SCRUTINY PANEL	
27 July 2023	14 September 2023
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met Councillor Eleanor Wills, Executive Member (Population Health & Wellbeing), Debbie Watson, Director of Population Health; and Lisa Morris, Strategic Domestic Abuse Manager, to receive an update and overview regarding Domestic Abuse in Tameside. Received the Scrutiny Annual Work Programmes for 2023/24. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Panel met Councillor John Taylor, Executive Member (Adult Social Care, Homelessness & Inclusivity); and Stephanie Butterworth, Director of Adult Services, to receive an update on Adult Social Care Reforms.

Scrutiny activity and working groups

2.2 Scrutiny is progressing review activity in the following areas, as detailed within the annual work programmes.

Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel

- To be determined

Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

- The effectiveness of services and support to care leavers in Tameside

Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Panel

- Domestic Abuse

Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO)

2.3 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.

2.4 Scrutiny activity informed by recently published LGSCO reports includes:

- Focus report – Out of Order, learning lessons from complaints about antisocial behaviour (published August 2023).
 - Report shared with the Executive Member for Towns and Communities. The report and response was tabled at a meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel on 12 September 2023.
- Focus report – Not in my back yard – Local people and the planning process (published August 2023).
 - Report shared with the Executive Member for Planning, Transport & Connectivity. The report and response was tabled at a meeting of the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel on 12 September 2023.

- 2.5 A report from the Administrative Justice Council on Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND): Improving Local Authority Decision Making, was shared with the Executive Member for Education & Achievement on 14 August 2023, for information and awareness.
- 2.6 This has been an area of focus for the LGSCO, including a focus report of 2019 regarding Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). SEND improvement remains a priority area for the Council and the Children's Services Scrutiny Panel received an update report on this at a meeting on 8 March 2023.
- Mid-year Budget Update**
- 2.7 The independence of scrutiny enables members to seek assurances on the Council's financial position during 2023/24 and looking forward to budget planning, process and priorities for 2024/25. Where appropriate, priorities will continue to inform future scrutiny activity and work programmes.
- 2.8 The mid-year budget update sessions for all Scrutiny members, to include the non-executive members of Overview Panel, took place on 25 September 2023. The update was provided by Councillor Jacqueline North, First Deputy – Finance, Resources & Transformation; and Ashley Hughes, Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer).
- 2.9 The Executive will receive a formal response of the Scrutiny Chairs, capturing a range of points and highlighting any concerns and specific areas for consideration in supporting the Council's ongoing work in this area.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

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