

**Report To:** **JOINT EXECUTIVE CABINET/OVERVIEW PANEL**

**Date:** 12 February 2020

**Reporting Officer:** Sarah Threlfall, Assistant Director – Policy, Performance and Communications  
Sandra Stewart, Director – Governance and Pensions

**Subject:** **SCRUTINY UPDATE**

**Report Summary:** To receive for information, a summary of the work undertaken by the Council's two Scrutiny Panels.

**Recommendations:** That Overview Panel are 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 across Tameside.

**Policy Implications:** 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 as a result of this report. Any costs incurred by the Scrutiny Panels must be met from existing budgets.

**Legal Implications:**  
**(Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)** There is a need to ensure that there is a robust and effective scrutiny function that facilitates effective decision-making across the Council.

**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 Panels as a result of in-depth review will be tabled separately and 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 annual work programmes and priorities were agreed at the June meetings and this coincides with consultation activity for which a valued response and input can be achieved. The tables below provide a summary and chronology of Scrutiny activity by Panel.

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

PLACE AND EXTERNAL RELATIONS	
5 November 2019	7 January 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sarah Exall, Consultant Public Health:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Feedback on Healthy Spaces peer review</li></ul></li><li>• Scrutiny response to consultation on a New Deal for Renting, submitted on 12 October 2019.</li><li>• Corporate Performance Scorecard<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Quarterly review / monitoring</li></ul></li><li>• Greater Manchester Scrutiny<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Feedback on priorities from the individual members that attend meetings</li></ul></li><li>• Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Reporting methods and scrutiny oversight going forward</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lee Holland, Head of Engineering Services:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Highways and Flood Prevention</li></ul></li><li>• Scrutiny response to regional consultation – ‘Doing buses differently – proposed franchising scheme for Greater Manchester.</li><li>• Greater Manchester Scrutiny<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Feedback on priorities from the individual members that attend meetings</li></ul></li></ul>

<b>INTEGRATED CARE AND WELLBEING</b>	
<b>7 November 2019</b>	<b>9 January 2020</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• James Mallion, Consultant in Public Health:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feedback on Domestic Abuse peer review</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Scrutiny response to consultation on VCSE in Greater Manchester, submitted on 30 September 2019.</li> <li>• Corporate Performance Scorecard               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quarterly review / monitoring</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Greater Manchester Scrutiny               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feedback on priorities from the individual members that attend meetings</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting methods and scrutiny oversight going forward.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Councillor Leanne Feeley, Executive Member; and Tim Bowman, Assistant Director of Education:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Response to Ombudsman focus report on SEND</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Scrutiny report on Recruitment and Retention of Foster Carers</li> <li>• Greater Manchester Scrutiny               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Feedback on priorities from the individual members that attend meetings</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

2.2 The table below provides an additional summary of Scrutiny activity and oversight carried out during 2019/20, covering a period June 2019 to January 2020. This includes in-depth reviews and updates to seek assurance on service provision and outcomes where necessary. A separate sub-section has been included within this report titled 'Consultation and Engagement', which provides detail specific to Scrutiny responses from September 2018 onwards.

**Figure 2: Summary of Scrutiny activity and oversight (June 2019 to January 2020)**

<b>Place and External Relations</b>	<b>Integrated Care and Wellbeing</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GM Clean Air Proposals and public conversation</li> <li>• Housing Strategy               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quality and standards in the private rented sector</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Peer review of Healthy Spaces</li> <li>• Highways and flood prevention</li> <li>• LGSCO – focus reports and shared learning</li> <li>• Corporate Plan / Performance Monitoring</li> <li>• Cooperative Council update</li> <li>• Mid-year budget update</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality of care homes</li> <li>• Children's Services improvement               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recruitment and retention of foster carers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Peer review of Domestic Abuse</li> <li>• Urgent Treatment Centre / Winter preparedness</li> <li>• LGSCO – focus reports and shared learning</li> <li>• Corporate Plan / Performance Monitoring</li> <li>• Cooperative Council update</li> <li>• Mid-year budget update</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Children's Working Group</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcomes from activity and recommendations to the Executive on:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reading</li> <li>- Attendance / Exclusions.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Children's mental health and wellbeing</li> </ul>

### **In-depth reviews**

2.3 The following in-depth reviews have been carried out during 2019/20:

#### **2.4 Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel**

A review completed on Quality and Standards in the Private Rented Sector. Report and Executive Response presented at Overview Panel on 18 November 2019. Scrutiny will remain involved in consultation and developments to inform the local approach.

#### **2.5 Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel**

A review completed on the Recruitment and Retention of Foster Carers. Report and Executive Response presented at the joint meeting of Executive Cabinet and Overview Panel on 12 February 2020. Scrutiny to periodically review the impact of sustainability projects directly aimed to improve fostering placements and outcomes

2.6 The Children's Working Group is a fixed sub-group of the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel. The group is currently reviewing Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing, with findings and recommendations to be reported to the overarching Scrutiny Panel in March 2020.

### **LGSCO – Assurance reviews**

2.7 On 9 September 2019, Overview Panel received a report on the 'Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) Annual Report for Complaints Monitoring'. A recommendation was made for the Council's Scrutiny Panels to develop a consistent approach to review learning and improvement outcomes to inform future work priorities.

2.8 At the next meeting of Overview Panel on 18 November 2019 a further report provided detail on the planned approach of Scrutiny Panels to routinely review decisions and focus reports published by the Ombudsman. A new approach has been adopted to ensure shared learning opportunities are directly communicated with service areas and that a formal response and/or position statement be returned to the appropriate Scrutiny Panel within agreed timescales.

2.9 It will remain important to ensure that the subject matter is appropriate, proportionate and can add value. This allows Scrutiny to seek assurances that learning opportunities are noted by services and acted upon.

2.10 Work in this area has now progressed, with a plan to ensure responses are reported to Overview Panel at the earliest opportunity. Activity informed by recent LGSCO focus reports is listed below:

- Focus report - Not going to plan? Education, Health and Care Plans two years on (published in October 2019).
  - Response of the Executive and Assistant Director of Education presented to the Integrated Care and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel on 9 January 2020.
  - Report presented at the joint meeting of Executive Cabinet and Overview Panel on 12 February 2020.
- Focus report – Focus on Housing Benefit (published in January 2020).
  - Response of the Executive and Assistant Director of Exchequer to be received in February 2020 and reported to the Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel in March 2020.

### **Budget Consultation**

2.11 All Scrutiny Panel members were provided with an opportunity to attend one of two budget briefing sessions held on 14 and 15 January 2020. This follows on from a mid-year budget position update received at panel meetings held in September 2019. The independence of scrutiny enables members to seek assurances on budget planning, process and priorities for 2020/21 and beyond. It can also be considered appropriate for budget priorities to inform future Scrutiny activity and work programmes.

- 2.12 A number of points were discussed with regards to demand pressures on statutory services along with the tailoring of financial priorities to a neighbourhood model. Details of the discussions have been drafted in a letter of the Scrutiny Chairs to the Executive Member for Finance and Economic Growth; and the Director of Finance – Section 151 Officer, **Appendix 1**.

#### **Consultation and Engagement**

- 2.13 Scrutiny will remain suitably informed of open consultations at a local, regional and national level. Past responses include:
- Over the Counter Medicines – 14 September 2018
  - Greater Manchester Clean Air Conversation – 30 June 2019
  - New Rent Standard – 30 July 2019
  - Domestic Abuse Services – 2 August 2019
  - VCSE in Greater Manchester – 30 September 2019
  - A New Deal for Renting – 12 October 2019
- 2.14 The Place and External Relations Scrutiny Panel submitted a formal response to the following regional consultation on 8 January 2020. Efforts were made to ensure input and insight was sought from relevant services and partners to inform the submission.
- Greater Manchester – Doing Buses Differently, **Appendix 2**.

#### **Keeping Scrutiny Members Informed**

- 2.15 All Scrutiny Panel members receive a regular update email, with the purpose of raising awareness to a variety of materials to support them in their role, to provide access to scrutiny resources and the ongoing opportunity for councillors to contribute and share any open consultations and engagement exercises. This will continue to include a wide variety of topic areas for consideration.
- 2.16 The update email also includes links to Greater Manchester priorities and work of the Combined Authority Scrutiny Panels. The emails create a further opportunity to inform members how the work of scrutiny is shared and reported within the Council. Recent updates include November 2019 and January 2020, **Appendix 3 & 4**.

### **3. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 As set out on the front of the report