

Overview & Scrutiny Committee Tuesday 5 March 2024

A meeting of the above Committee will be held in Shire Hall, Market Place, Warwick on Tuesday 5 March 2024, at 6.00pm.

Councillor A Milton (Chair)

Councillor D Armstrong (Vice Chair)

Councillor A Barton

Councillor M Luckhurst

Councillor D Browne

Councillor J Payne

Councillor M Collins

Councillor P Redford

Councillor A Day

Councillor D Russell

Councillor D Harrison

Councillor JP Sullivan

Emergency Procedure

At the commencement of the meeting, the emergency procedure for Shire Hall will be announced.

Agenda

1. Apologies & Substitutes

- (a) to receive apologies for absence from any Councillor who is unable to attend; and
- (b) to receive the name of any Councillor who is to act as a substitute, notice of which has been given to the Chief Executive, together with the name of the Councillor for whom they are acting.

2. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare the existence and nature of interests in items on the agenda in accordance with the adopted Code of Conduct.

Declarations should be disclosed during this item. However, the existence and nature of any interest that subsequently becomes apparent during the course of the meeting must be disclosed immediately. If the interest is not registered, Members must notify the Monitoring Officer of the interest within 28 days.

Members are also reminded of the need to declare predetermination on any matter.

If Members are unsure about whether or not they have an interest, or about its nature, they are strongly advised to seek advice from officers prior to the meeting.

3. **Minutes**

To note the record of the Budget Review Group meeting 7 February 2024 (to be appended to the minutes of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's meeting 5 March 2024). **(Pages 1 to 2)**

4. **Work Programme, Forward Plan & Comments from Cabinet**

To consider a report from Governance. **(Pages 1 to 12)**

5. **Cabinet Agenda (Non-Confidential Items and Reports) – Wednesday 6 March 2024**

To consider the non-confidential items on the Cabinet agenda which fall within the remit of this Committee. The only items to be considered are those which Committee Services have received notice of by 9.00am on the morning after Group meetings. **(Circulated Separately)**

6. **Public & Press**

To consider resolving that under Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972 that the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following items by reason of the likely disclosure of exempt information within the paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006.

7. **Cabinet Agenda (Confidential Items and Reports) – Wednesday 6 March 2024**

To consider the confidential items on the Cabinet agenda which fall within the remit of this Committee. The only items to be considered are those which Committee Services have received notice of by 9.00am on the morning after Group meetings. **(Circulated separately)
(Not for publication)**

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General Enquiries: Please contact Warwick District Council, Town Hall, Parade, Royal Leamington Spa, CV32 4AT.

Telephone: 01926 456114

E-Mail: committee@warwickdc.gov.uk

For enquiries about specific reports, please contact the officers named in the reports. You can e-mail the members of the Committee at oandscommittee@warwickdc.gov.uk

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Budget Review Group

Record of the meeting held on Wednesday 7 February 2024 at Shire Hall, Warwick at 6.00pm.

Present: Councillors: Barton, Collins, R Dickson, Hales, and Milton.

Also Present: Councillor Davison, Leader of the Council; Councillor Chilvers, Portfolio Holder – Resources; Andrew Rollins, Head of Finance; Steven Leathley, Strategic Finance Manager; Philip Clarke, Head of Place, Arts and Economy; Andrew Cornfoot, Planning Policy & Major Sites Delivery Manager; and Sophie Vale, Principal Committee Services Officer.

5. **Appointment of Chair**

Councillor Hales was appointed to Chair the meeting.

6. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Browne, Day, Falp, Luckhurst and Tangri.

Members present requested that the Chair write to Group Leaders to encourage them to remind their Group that the Budget Review Group meeting was important, and therefore they should make every effort to attend.

7. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

8. **Cabinet Agenda (Non-Confidential items and reports) – Thursday 8 February 2024**

Item 5 – General Fund Revenue and Capital Budget 2024/25

The Group thanked officers for their hard work in putting together the report.

The Group explored the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the impact on reserves. They were keen to see the upcoming change management strategy and the assumptions underpinning it.

Members requested that communications material be made available detailing all of the grants that the Council had access to, and information be provided so that residents could see what was being delivered with those grant funds.

Item 6 – Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Budget 2024/25 (including Housing Rent Setting)

The Group acknowledged the need for greater general awareness of the details of the Housing Revenue Account across the Council and requested that a briefing be organised to ensure Councillors' full understanding.

They noted the report and awaited answers to the questions asked about the Council's social rent rates in comparison to other Councils across Warwickshire.

(The meeting ended at 7.15pm)

CHAIR OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
5 March 2024

CHAIR AUDIT & STANDARDS COMMITTEE
27 February 2024

Overview & Scrutiny Committee
5 March 2024

Title: Work Programme, Forward Plan & Comments from Cabinet
Lead Officer: Lesley Dury, Principal Committee Services Officer
Portfolio Holder: Not applicable
Public report
Wards of the District directly affected: Not applicable

Summary

This report informs Members of Overview & Scrutiny Committee:

- (1) of the Committee's work programme for 2023 (Appendix 1); and
- (2) responses that Cabinet gave to comments and recommendations made by the Budget Review Group regarding the reports to Cabinet 8 February 2024 (Appendix 2).

Recommendations

- (1) That Members consider the work programme (Appendix 1), the themes the Committee intends to scrutinise this year and agree changes to its Work Programme appropriately.
 - (2) That the Committee:
 - identifies any Cabinet items on the [Forward Plan](#) on which it wishes to have an input before the Cabinet makes its decision; and
 - nominates a Member to investigate that future decision and report back to the Committee.
 - (3) That Members note the responses made by Cabinet on the Comments from the Cabinet report (Appendix 2).
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1 Background/Information & Reasons for the Recommendation

- 1.1 The five main roles of overview and scrutiny in local government are: holding to account; performance management; policy review; policy development; and external scrutiny.
- 1.2 Two of the five main roles of overview and scrutiny in local government are to undertake pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions and to feed into policy development.
- 1.3 The pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions falls within the role of 'holding to account'. To feed into the pre-decision scrutiny of Cabinet decisions, the Committee needs to examine the Council's Forward Plan and identify items which it would like to have an impact upon.

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1.4 The Council's Forward Plan is published 28 days before each Cabinet meeting and sets out the key decisions that are expected to be taken by the Cabinet in the next twelve months.

1.5 A key decision means a decision made in the exercise of an executive function by any person (including officers) or body which meets one or more of the following conditions:

- (1) The decision is likely to result in the Council incurring expenditure or the making of savings in excess of £150,000. Excluded from this are all loans to banks or other financial institutions made in accordance with the Treasury Management Strategy.

Officers' delegated powers to make the cabinet decisions are subject to the key decision/call-in regime where it is likely that the Council would incur expenditure or make savings above the threshold of £150,000.

In relation to letting contracts the key decision is the proposal to let a contract for a particular type of work. The subsequent decision to award the contract to a specific contractor will not be a key decision provided the value of the contract does not vary above the estimated amount by more than 10% for contracts with a value of up to £500,000 or 5% for contracts of over £500,000.

- (2) The decision is likely to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in any two or more Wards.

In considering whether a decision is likely to be significant, a decision-maker will need to consider the strategic nature of the decision and whether the outcome will have an impact, for better or worse on the amenity of the community or quality of service provided by the Council to a significant number of people living or working in the locality affected.

1.6 The Forward Plan is considered at each meeting and allows the Committee to look at future items and become involved in those Cabinet decisions to be taken if members so wish.

1.7 The Forward Plan also identifies non-key decisions to be taken by Cabinet in the next twelve months, and the Committee, if it wishes, may also pre-scrutinise these decisions.

1.8 There may also be policies identified on the Forward Plan, either as key or non-key decisions, which the Committee could pre-scrutinise and have an impact upon how these are formulated.

1.9 The Committee should be mindful that any work it wishes to undertake would need to be undertaken without the need to change the timescales as set out within the Forward Plan.

1.10 At each meeting, the Committee will consider its work programme and make amendments where necessary, and also make comments on specific Cabinet items, where notice has been given by 9am on the morning after Group meetings. The Committee will also receive a report detailing the response

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from the Cabinet, on the comments the Committee made on the Cabinet agenda in the previous cycle.

- 1.11 The Committee will consider issues that have due significance with reference to the following criteria:
 - The number of residents impacted and the significance of that impact.
 - The amount of spend involved.
 - It concerns a strategic priority of the Council or key project.
- 1.12 On the day of publication of the Cabinet agenda all Councillors are sent an e-mail asking them to contact Committee Services, by 09.00am on the day of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting to advise which Cabinet items they would like the Committee to consider.
- 1.13 The proposed plan at Appendix 1 has been developed in order for the Committee to focus on the four agreed core themes (Risk, Climate Emergency Action Plan, Medium Term Financial Strategy and Corporate Strategy).

Criteria for Items on the work plan	Scheduled Meeting dates
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High Risk 2. High Value 3. Major Project 4. Decreasing Performance 5. Statutory/Constitution requirement 	<p>5/3/2024 26/3/2024 (NC) 9/4/24 4/6/2024 2/7/2024 30/7/2024 (NC) 3/9/2024 24/9/2024 (NC) 15/10/2024 13/11/24 (NC) 3/12/2024 21/1/2025 (NC) 4/2/2025 18/2/2025 (NC) 18/3/2025 *NC = No Cabinet meeting</p>

Agenda Item 4
Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Lead Officer / Councillor	Meeting Date	Where did item originate from	Notes	Continue?
Future High Streets Fund update – the Committee asked for amendments to the Risk Register see confidential minutes 4 July 2023.	Martin O’Neill	5/3/2024 & Cabinet 6/3/2024	O&S February 2023	Every 3 months until further notice	1, 2, and 3
Summary of the role, responsibilities and performance of the SWCSP. Invite Councillor Falp (non-Exec rep) and the PH Safer Communities to O&S	Liz Young / Marianne Rolfe.	5/3/2024	This is a Statutory requirement	Annual report next due March 2025	5
Review of the Significant Business Risk Register	Chris Elliott Councillor Davison	5/3/2024 & Cabinet 6/3/24	Forward Plan ref 1374		Yes to identify themes and risks
Digital Strategy Update from the Cabinet Agenda	David Elkington Councillor J Harrison	5/3/2024 & Cabinet 6/3/24	O&S November 2021	June 2024	1,2,3
Leisure Services Provider 2017 (contract ref WDC0108) The Chair to lead the O&S Committee in discussion to determine the points it wishes detailed in the report that will come to it at its 13 November meeting. These will be relayed to the report author and PH by the CSO.	The Chair	26/3/2024	O&S Feb 2024		

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Lead Officer / Councillor	Meeting Date	Where did item originate from	Notes	Continue?
O&S End of Term report.	Committee Services Officer.	9/4/2024	Standing Annual Item, Constitution requirement	Annual report 18 March 2025	5
General Fund Budget Medium Term Financial Strategy, how it is calculated and associated risks	Andrew Rollins Councillor Chilvers	9 /4/2024			
Quarterly Budget Update	Steven Leathley Councillor Chilvers	4/6/2024 (Cab report)			1 & 2
Housing Revenue Account Budget the risks associated with it	Lisa Barker Councillors Chilvers & Wightman	4/6/2024			
Appoint Children's and Adults' Safeguarding Champion		4/6/2024	Standing Annual Item.	On-going at the first meeting of each Municipal Year	5
To appoint members to the Budget Review Group (add the Group's remit which is saved to the annex in the Constitution)		4/6/2024	Standing Annual Item.	On-going at the first meeting of each	5

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Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Lead Officer / Councillor	Meeting Date	Where did item originate from	Notes	Continue?
				Municipal Year	
Elect a Chair and Vice Chair if this was not done after Annual Council		4/6/2024	Standing Annual Item	On-going at the first meeting of each Municipal Year	5
General housing repairs & voids Contract ref WDC0007	Steve Partner Councillor Wightman	30/7/2024	O&S Feb 2024	List of points that should be covered in the report are in the minutes of 6 Feb meeting.	
Quarterly Budget Updates	Steven Leathley Councillor Chilvers	3/9/2024 (Cab report)			1 & 2
Six-month post opening update on the "Relocation of Office Accommodation and the Provision of Public Facing Access to Council Services, including, financial cost of each aspect, savings, communication and residents feedback	Steve Partner Dave Elkington Tracy Dolphin Councillor J Harrison	15/10/2024			3
Quarterly Budget Updates	Steven Leathley Councillor Chilvers	15/10/2024 (Cab report)			1 & 2

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Lead Officer / Councillor	Meeting Date	Where did item originate from	Notes	Continue?
<p>Corporate Strategy - the Corporate Strategy should be reviewed on a yearly basis, in the same way that the annual governance statement comes through scrutiny to make sure the Council is properly governed. More specifically, the Committee would like to see an annual strategy progress update, looking at the big picture and how the Council is working towards its goals and values</p> <p><i>"In response to the request from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to provide clarity on the review process on the "who, what, when and how", this would be set out in the first annual report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee in November 2024".</i></p>	<p>Chris Elliott Councillor Davison</p>	<p>13/11/2024 (NC)</p>	<p>O&S 3 October 2023</p>		<p>3</p>
<p>Council's Performance Data – to help shape the data in a positive and constructive way</p>	<p>Graham Leach Councillor Davison</p>	<p>13/11/2024 – subject to Review with Chair & Vice Chair of Committee, in early July, of SAP performance and new Policy, Performance &</p>			<p>3 & 4</p>

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

Title	Lead Officer / Councillor	Meeting Date	Where did item originate from	Notes	Continue?
		Complaints Manager in post.			
Leisure Services Provider 2017 – contract ref WDC0108	Marianne Rolfe Councillor Sinnott	13/11/2024	O&S Feb 2024 and also 26 March 2024	O&S will discuss specific points they want covered at the meeting 26 March 2024	2
Quarterly Budget Updates	Steven Leathley Councillor Chilvers	4/2/2024 (Cab Report)			1 & 2

Scheduled Briefing Notes to All Councillors requested by the Committee

Title	Lead Officer	Update Due by (end of Month)
Children's and Adults' Safeguarding Champions: End of Term Report.	Marianne Rolfe.	April 2024
Members' Annual Feedback on Outside Appointments / Annual review of membership/participation of Outside Bodies (Includes a short synopsis on Champions)	Graham Leach	April 2024
Review on the Identification and Remediation of Damp and Mould in Council Homes to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was happening with the policy; • Was it being put into action; and • The impact it has had 	Steve Partner Councillor Wightman	April 2024
Noise Nuisance Investigations: Review of the Policy and the service area's performance in respect of all forms of noise nuisance more generally. – Moved to briefing paper to all Councillors for information setting out performance and append to work plan for comment consideration of further scrutiny	Marianne Rolfe	April 2024
Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards Enforcement Process – Private Sector Housing - Briefing for all Councillors of how this process is working.	Paul Hughes Councillor Wightman	June 2024
Update - plans to improve accessibility to, and the condition / cleanliness of, toilets and play areas for people living with disabilities. - Update to all Councillors from Officers on the work that has taken place following the meeting at Committee.	Zoe Court Councillor Roberts	June 2024

Title	Lead Officer	Update Due by (end of Month)
Review additional Licensing Scheme to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effective it had been. • How many licenses had been issued. • Was there enough resources in place 	Paul Hughes Councillor Wightman	August 2024
<p>Resident Engagement Strategy (report to Cabinet August 2023). The Committee is keen to understand a) how is it going? And b) what are we learning? (include some examples of changes that have been made as a result of the consultation.) - Change to Councillor Briefing session in first instance covering these areas. Also raised by Asset Compliance Committee as an area that needs to be understood</p> <p>The question that sits behind this is as-to whether this is a good use of the Council's resources. There are benefits to us as a Council from getting resident feedback and what we'd like to get is visibility of those. This is 'value for money' in its broadest sense (No need to come with figures and a ROI.)</p> <p>Housing is one of the biggest ways that we impact residents' lives and getting a bit more visibility amongst members of some of the good things we do but also some of the challenges residents face will be valuable"</p>	Sally Kelsall/ Councillor Wightman	September 2024
Revised Arrangements for Destination Management Organisations	Martin O'Neil	Martin please advise

**Responses from the meeting of Cabinet 8 February 2024
on the Budget Review Group's Comments
from its meeting 7 February 2024**

Item 5 - General Fund Revenue and Capital Budget 2024/25

Budget Review Group Comment:

The Group thanked officers for their hard work in putting together the report.

The Group explored the Medium-Term Financial Strategy and the impact on reserves. They were keen to see the upcoming change management strategy and the assumptions underpinning it.

Members requested that communications material be made available detailing all of the grants that the Council had access to, and information be provided so that residents could see what was being delivered with those grant funds.

Cabinet Response:

The recommendations in the report were approved.

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Budget Review Group Comment:

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Cabinet Response:

The recommendations in the report were approved.