

Overview & Scrutiny Committee Tuesday 9 April 2024

A meeting of the above Committee will be held in Shire Hall, Market Place, Warwick on Tuesday 9 April 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. **Work Programme, Forward Plan & Comments from Cabinet**

To consider a report from Governance.

(Pages 1 to 12)

4. **End of Term Report**

To consider a report from Governance Services.

**(Pages 1 to 14)
(Appendix 2 to follow)**

5. **Cabinet Agenda (Non-Confidential Items and Reports) – Wednesday 10 April 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 10 April 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)**

8. **Confidential Appendix B to Item 4 – End of Term Report**

To note the confidential appendix.

**(Page 1)
(Not for publication)**

Published Thursday 28 March 2024

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 bandscommittee@warwickdc.gov.uk

Details of all the Council's committees, councillors and agenda papers are available via our website on the [Committees page](#)

We endeavour to make all of our agendas and reports fully accessible. Please see our [accessibility statement](#) for details.

The agenda is available in large print on request, prior to the meeting, by emailing committee@warwickdc.gov.uk or telephoning (01926) 456114

Overview & Scrutiny Committee
9 April 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 2024 (Appendix 1);
- (2) responses that Cabinet gave to comments and recommendations made by the Budget Review Group regarding the reports to Cabinet 6 March 2024 were reported to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting 26 March 2024; and
- (3) of the Corporate Projects List (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 the Committee reviews the Projects List in appendix 2 to the report.
-

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.

Agenda Item 3

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

Agenda Item 3

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).
- 1.14 Appendix 2 to the report sets out the Corporate Projects List for the Committee to determine what it is they would like to scrutinise.

| 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>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 3
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 |
| Review of the Significant Business Risk Register | Chris Elliott Councillor Davison | 4/6/2024 & Cabinet 10/5/2024 | Forward Plan ref 1374 | | Yes to identify themes and risks |
| 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 |
| 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 Municipal Year | 5 |
| Appoint Children's and Adults' Safeguarding Champion | | 4/6/2024 | Standing Annual Item. | On-going at the first meeting of each | 5 |

Agenda Item 3
Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

| Title | Lead Officer / Councillor | Meeting Date | Where did item originate from | Notes | Continue? |
|---|--|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|------------------|
| | | | | Municipal Year | |
| <p>Summary of the role, responsibilities and performance of the SWCSP.</p> <p>Invite Councillor Falp (non-Exec rep) and the PH Safer Communities to O&S (This report was originally scheduled 2023/24 so the reps for that year were Councillors Sinnott and Falp)</p> <p>See minute 76, 6 February 2024 for details requested in the report.</p> | Liz Young / Marianne Rolfe. | 4/6/2024 | This is a Statutory requirement | Annual report next due March 2025 (It should have been given in March 2024 which makes next report March 2025) | 5 |
| Future High Streets Fund update – the Committee asked for amendments to the Risk Register see confidential minutes 4 July 2023. | Martin O’Neill | 4/6/2024 & Cabinet 5/6/2024 | O&S February 2023 | Every 3 months until further notice | 1, 2, and 3 |
| 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 | | | |
| General housing repairs & voids Contract ref WDC0007 | Steve Partner | 30/7/2024 | O&S Feb 2024 | List of points that should | |

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

| Title | Lead Officer / Councillor | Meeting Date | Where did item originate from | Notes | Continue? |
|---|-----------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|--|-----------|
| | Councillor Wightman | | | be covered in the report are in the minutes of 6 Feb meeting. On 12 March 2024, the CSO advised the two Heads of Service (SP and LB) that the report was required for July meeting. A reminder will be sent nearer the time. | |
| Climate Change Action Programme Update (and discussion paper on how best to focus and scrutinise the five themes below) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Offsetting and any potential for getting involved in early policy development; 2. Issue of adaptation; 3. Data tracking (including carbon emissions) and how this can be most efficient. 4. Biodiversity Action Plan 5. Residents Engagement & Communication | Dave Barber Councillor Davison | 30/7/2024 | O&S Jan 2024 | | 2&3 |
| Homelessness | Lisa Barker/Marianne | 30/7/2024 | | | |

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

| Title | Lead Officer / Councillor | Meeting Date | Where did item originate from | Notes | Continue? |
|--|---|-------------------------|-------------------------------|-------|-----------|
| | Rolfe/ Councillors Sinnott & Wightman | | | | |
| 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 |
| 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 <i>"In response to the request from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to provide</i> | Chris Elliott Councillor Davison | 13/11/2024 (NC) | O&S 3 October 2023 | | 3 |

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

| Title | Lead Officer / Councillor | Meeting Date | Where did item originate from | Notes | Continue? |
|---|--|--|-------------------------------------|---|-----------|
| <i>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> | | | | | |
| Council's Performance Data – to help shape the data in a positive and constructive way | Graham Leach Councillor Davison | 13/11/2024 – subject to Review with Chair & Vice Chair of Committee, in early July, of SAP performance and new Policy, Performance & Complaints Manager in post. | | | 3 & 4 |
| Leisure Services Provider 2017 – contract ref WDC0108 | Marianne Rolfe Councillor Sinnott | 13/11/2024 | O&S Feb 2024 and also 26 March 2024 | See minutes of 26 March 2024 meeting for content the Committee wish to see covered in the report. | 2 |
| Quarterly Budget Updates | Steven Leathley Councillor Chilvers | 4/2/2024 (Cab Report) | | | 1 & 2 |

Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

| Title | Lead Officer / Councillor | Meeting Date | Where did item originate from | Notes | Continue? |
|-------|---------------------------|--------------|-------------------------------|-------|-----------|
| | | | | | |

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 every year |
| Members' Annual Feedback on Outside Appointments / Annual review of membership/participation of Outside Bodies (Includes a short synopsis on Champions) | Graham Leach | April every year |
| 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 made | 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 |

Agenda Item 3
Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme

| 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 |

Title: End of Term Report

Lead Officer: Lesley Dury, Principal Committee Services Officer

Portfolio Holder: Not applicable

Wards of the District directly affected: Not applicable

| Approvals required | Date | Name |
|---|--|----------------|
| Portfolio Holder | | Not applicable |
| Finance | | Not applicable |
| Legal Services | | Not applicable |
| Chief Executive | 25/03/2024 | Darren Knight |
| Director of Climate Change | | Not applicable |
| Head of Service(s) | 22/03/2024 | Graham Leach |
| Section 151 Officer | | Not applicable |
| Monitoring Officer | 22/03/2024 | Graham Leach |
| Leadership Co-ordination Group | | Not applicable |
| Final decision by this Committee or rec to another Cttee / Council? | This report will go to Council for noting. | |
| Contrary to Policy / Budget framework? | No | |
| Does this report contain exempt info/Confidential? If so, which paragraph(s)? | Appendix B – Paragraph 3 | |
| Does this report relate to a key decision (referred to in the Cabinet Forward Plan)? | No | |
| Accessibility Checked? | Yes | |

Summary

This report is the annual end of term report to the Council on the work the Overview & Scrutiny Committee has undertaken during the municipal year 2023/24. Article 6 in the Council's Constitution mandates that the Committee must report annually to the Council on the work it has covered.

The Committee met 14 times during the municipal year. Some members from this Committee also formed part of the membership of the Budget Review Group which met twice to discuss certain financial reports.

Recommendation(s)

- (1) That it be recommended to Council that the list of matters considered by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee during the municipal year 2023/24, as detailed in Appendices A and B to the report, be noted.
 - (2) That prior to the submission to Council, the report be updated to include the meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee that took place in April 2024.
-

1 Reasons for the Recommendation

- 1.1 Under Article 6 of the Council's Constitution, Overview & Scrutiny Committees and Policy Committees are required to provide an end of term report to the Council on the work they have undertaken during the year.
- 1.2 The matters considered during the year are attached at Appendices A and B to the report. This will be updated to include matters considered at this meeting before it is submitted to Council.

2 Alternative Options

- 2.1 There are no alternative options because this report complies with the requirements of Article 6 of the Council's Constitution.

3 Legal Implications

- 3.1 There are no legal implications in this report.

4 Financial Services

- 4.1 There are no financial or budgetary considerations in this report.

5 Corporate Strategy

- 5.1 Warwick District Council has adopted a Corporate Strategy which sets three strategic aims for the organisation:
 - delivering valued, sustainable services;
 - low cost, low carbon energy across the district; and
 - creating vibrant, safe and healthy communities of the future.
- 5.2 Overview & Scrutiny Committee is the Cabinet's "critical friend". Councillors choose the reports on the Cabinet agenda to be called-in for scrutiny at Overview & Scrutiny Committee in on the Cabinet agenda. These must meet certain pre-set parameters detailed in Part 4, Overview and Scrutiny Committee Procedure Rules, paragraph 19 in the Constitution. These reports are then "tested" at the Committee meeting to ensure that they are in line with the

Corporate Strategy's aims and objectives and the Committee will make comments and recommendations to Cabinet where it feels improvements can be made.

6 Environmental/Climate Change Implications

6.1 There are no environmental/climate change implications in this report.

7 Analysis of the effects on Equality

7.1 There are no effects on Equality in this report.

8 Data Protection

8.1 There are no Data Protection implications in this report.

9 Health and Wellbeing

9.1 There are no Health & Wellbeing considerations in this report.

10 Risk Assessment

10.1 There are no risks associated with this report which is purely provided as a matter of good practice and Council policy concerning Scrutiny Committees.

Background papers:

Minutes of both Overview & Scrutiny Committee and of Cabinet have been referred to in the preparation of this report. These are published on the Council's website.

Supporting documents:

Not applicable.

Chair's Introduction

I'd like to start by thanking members of the committee for their work this year. It has been in many ways a year of transition for the committee as a new administration, new members and new officers brought their different perspectives to bear. It has been good to see how quickly new members have been able to make an effective contribution to the whole scrutiny process. I am also particularly pleased to hear feedback from new and long serving members of the committee about the value they place on our non-partisan approach. As Chair I firmly believe that every member of the committee has something to contribute and that by working together, we have the best chance of achieving the right outcome for our residents.

Key concerns for the committee over the last two years have been our workload and our ability to effectively scrutinise the finance agenda.

With the support and guidance of officers we have been able to adopt some different ways of working which have helped us to keep the agendas tight and the meetings focussed. We have also taken a more proactive approach to setting our agenda by starting to focus on key areas like significant contracts and key council projects. This will help us to get ahead of the curve and add more value to cabinet and officers in future policy making. We also hope that it will bring a greater focus on our residents' voices.

In terms of finance, we have begun to receive some of the training that we have been asking for. In particular, the recent training on Treasury Management was well received (if poorly attended) and being conducted shortly prior to the report being reviewed ensured that the level of debate and scrutiny was enhanced. This has also meant delaying certain items, like the HRA report, until I am satisfied that we have the tools to scrutinise it effectively.

Of ongoing concern is absenteeism from some members of the committee. We have an important job to do, and it is therefore disappointing that there have been many occasions when we haven't had a full complement of members. It is worth reminding all councillors that their duties go beyond simply attending council meetings and that there is an important role to be played in committees and the preparation involved in them.

Finally, I would think like to thank officers for their support throughout the year. Without their hard work, occasional prompting and guidance the committee wouldn't be able to run as effectively as it does. In particular, I'd like to thank Lesley Dury who will be retiring from Warwick District Council this year. She has been an ever present over my time as chair of the committee and her support has been invaluable in keeping us organised and on-track. We wish her all the best for her retirement.

Councillor Andrew Milton
Chair, Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Items considered by Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2023/24

Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme Items

2023:

- Appointment of Chair
- Future High Streets Fund Update
- Appointments to the Budget Review Group
- Appointment of the Children's and Adults' Safeguarding Champion#
- Learning and Action Plan – Procurement
- Climate Change Action Programme Update
- Scrutiny Arrangements
- Planning Enforcement Update
- Carbon Emissions Data and Climate Change Measures
- Corporate Strategy
- Waste Contract Review
- "No Mow May" Review
- Appointment of Vice Chair
- HEART

2024:

- Waste Enforcement Update
- Waste Contract Update
- Setting out what the Committee wishes to see in future reports to it on:
 - Homelessness
 - Leisure Services Contract
 - General housing repairs & voids
- Development of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Work Programme
- Reports scheduled to be sent to all District Councillors for comment during April:
 - Children's and Adults Safeguarding Champions: End of Term Briefing Note
 - Annual Outside Bodies and Champions' Statements and Review
 - Review on the Identification and Remediation of Damp and Mould in Council Homes
 - Noise Nuisance Investigations

Routine Items:

Review of the Work Programme, Forward Plan and Comments from Cabinet

Cabinet / Joint Cabinet reports scrutinised by the Committee and the Budget Review Group:

(Where Overview & Scrutiny Committee (O&S) has made a recommendation(s) to Cabinet on reports being considered at Cabinet, Cabinet's decision to approve or refuse that recommendation is detailed below.)

O&S meeting 4 July 2023:

Use of Delegated Powers for Urgent Decisions

This report was not called-in for scrutiny because the report referred to decisions that had already been made. However, it was felt that the process and timing in the use of these powers should be examined; it was noted that these decisions referred to in the report had been made during the pre-election period and some had involved sizeable sums of money.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

As part of the review of scrutiny arrangements that had already been agreed, a review should be carried out on the use of delegated powers and whether there is a way to provide more scrutiny of these decisions.

Cabinet response:

The recommendation from Overview & Scrutiny Committee was approved.

Milverton Homes Limited Governance Audit:

The Committee noted the comments from the Portfolio Holder for Housing which clarified that Recommendation 3 in the report was a recommendation to Council, and the following amendment to recommendation 4:

"Approves the Terms of Reference for the Shareholder Representative Board at the Appendix 1 **and asks Council to annex it to the Constitution**".

The Committee also noted comments that the Terms of Reference should be less specific and refer instead to any relevant risks or issues linked with any Joint Venture project referred to the Board by the Cabinet.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

Officers should review the effectiveness on governance arrangements with the Monitoring Officer chairing Board meetings and also being the Shareholder Representative. It asked for the review to examine whether alternative options should be pursued.

Cabinet response:

The recommendation from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee as revised by the addendum were approved.

Milverton Homes Business Plan Revision: (Confidential Report)

See Appendix B

Customer Service Relocation Options

The Committee expressed concerns about the increase in costs from those that were initially stated. The Committee requested that costs were kept closely under control for the duration of the project and reduced if possible and provided value for money. The Committee requested that further effort should be made in respect of the plans for the Pump Rooms Shop to ensure that the service provided to residents continued.

O&S meeting 20 July 2023:

Call-in of Cabinet Decision 5 July 2023 – Customer Services Relocation Options

Resolved that:

- (1) the item be referred to Council for further debate so that all Members can be given the opportunity to ask questions and fully understand the implications, and to provide the Council with assurance that it is providing a viable option.

The Committee asks for pertinent information, such as a breakdown of customer attendance at Riverside House reception, plans for rooms at the Town Hall, an update on shop location (confidentially if needed), timescales for the overall project to be circulated ahead of Council by way of an addendum.

The Committee notes that the move of the Customers Services team is not done in isolation, but it is part of a wider picture, with the plan to move the Council offices out of Riverside House and the developments planned for the Town Hall. As such, the Committee asks that the relevant information from these different projects is brought forward ahead of the Council meeting.

The Committee also requested further details on what other options were considered as potential for relocating the Customer Services and reasons why these were discounted.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee asks that the issue of relocating the Pump Rooms shop should be considered by Council, asking that any confidential information be sent in advance to all Members, to inform the debate at Council, which should be carried in public session as much as possible, for the purpose of transparency and accountability; and

- (2) a briefing be arranged for Members advising what Council services are moving where and when.

Council response:

That in respect of the resolutions made by Cabinet on the Customer Services Relocations Options, the Council resolved to take no action. (This meant that the decision could be implemented the next working day.)

O&S meeting 8 August 2023:

Q1 Budget Update 2023/24

The Committee thanked officers for their work on the report.

It requested that in future budget setting, more visibility about the range of inflation rates used on the assumptions made was provided. Movement in the Council's

Reserve funds should also be highlighted and an historical context to this should be provided to show the trend in movement.

The Committee was keen to see the use of more visual or graphical presentation in the report which would make the report aid easier understanding of the figures.

The Committee was concerned about the adverse position in relation to the waste contract. It will be asking that the next report it receives on its Work Programme relating to the waste and recycling contract (in October) included a review of the finance considerations and would be asking that Finance provided support to the officer who would be writing the report. The level of reporting required should also be addressed in the report following on from conversations between the Chair and the Head of Finance.

Review of Significant Business Risk Register

The Committee thanked officers for their work on the report.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

With the evolution of the new Corporate Strategy the Committee recommended to Cabinet that it should take the opportunity to re-examine the whole framework for reviewing and managing risk and assurance. This should include the structure of the Risk Register with a view to ensure that it was focussed on informing actions that the Council could take and risk ratings which were meaningful. Assurance was required to show that the process of management of risk was effective, and this should be reflected in the reporting.

Cabinet response:

The recommendation from Overview & Scrutiny Committee was approved.

Resident Engagement Strategy

The Committee did not scrutinise this report at the meeting, but the Chair had liaised with the Head of Housing on the recommendation to Cabinet he would propose to the Committee.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

To strengthen the Resident Engagement Strategy The Committee recommended to Cabinet that:

- (1) Cabinet asked the Portfolio Holder to define key measures of success and metrics that could be used to determine the impact of the strategy and the effective use of Council resources; and
- (2) Cabinet asked the Head of Housing to agree appropriate measures of success with tenants to understand the level of impact on their needs.

These measures should be made available on the Council's Dashboard.

Cabinet response:

The recommendations in the report were approved, along with the following additional recommendation:

"that Cabinet asks the Portfolio Holder and Head of Housing to agree appropriate measures of success with tenants to understand the level of impact on their needs.

These measures should be reported by way of an annual report to tenants and on the Council's Dashboard".

Identification and Remediation of Damp and Mould in Council Homes

This report to Cabinet had not been called-in for scrutiny. The Chair had considered this report with others and the conclusion that had been reached was that there was nothing that the Committee could usefully add to the recommendations currently. It was agreed that a report would be added to the Committee's Work Programme six months' following implementation. The Committee would require a review on what was happening with the policy, was it being put into action and the impact it had made.

O&S meeting 19 September 2023:

Policy & Budgetary Framework Procedure Rules

The Committee held a good discussion on a draft Corporate Strategy for this Council.

The Committee considered that the Corporate Strategy report (in its draft stage) was difficult to scrutinise as a "Strategy" document because the document did not have either the structure or framework to understand the direction the Council wished to take, and whether the areas of focus listed in the report would help to achieve that. It made the following points that it wished Cabinet to bring more detail to in the Corporate Strategy:

1. The Committee encouraged Cabinet to "be brave" in setting out what it wished to achieve, particularly around climate ambitions.
2. There was a need for "smart objectives" showing what the Council intended to do, building on what it had already achieved in respect to its aims and there should be an indication of a timeframe.
3. The strategy should focus more on people and the different segments of people living or coming into the District such as new communities, visitors to the District, people who work in the District. It should seek to be "People first".
4. A more wholistic view on finances should be taken, not just the profit and loss but also the balance sheet.

The Committee suggested that how the Council intended to support new communities, local enterprise and town centre regeneration should be added to the Strategy.

Parish Councils should be added to the list of consultees.

Kenilworth Wardens

The Committee held a good discussion on the project reflecting on the fact that it had taken a considerable amount of time to reach this stage and noting the complexity of the project.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

The Committee recommended to Cabinet that as well as reviewing the financial case, that a best practice audit of governance of the club including confidence in the continuity of its management be carried out by officers. This should include how it

planned to engage new communities and new members into the club to ensure its continued running.

Cabinet response:

The recommendation from Overview & Scrutiny Committee was approved.

Earmarked Reserves

The Committee remarked on the late publication of the report which did not provide adequate time for proper scrutiny. The Committee would have preferred more time to undertake better scrutiny.

O&S meeting 31 October 2023:

Abbey Fields Swimming Pools Project

Recommendation to Cabinet:

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report with the following caveats and conditions which formed a recommendation to Cabinet:

1. the project undertook a review on the assurance of the environmental energy reduction measures;
2. an independent review of the costs was carried out; and
3. Cabinet should be provided with a full briefing on the previous site analysis that had been done so that they could be properly informed when making their decision.

Cabinet response:

The recommendation from Overview & Scrutiny Committee was approved.

Local Government Association Corporate Challenge Report and Action Plan

The Committee thanked Officers and the Peer Review Team for the work undertaken and welcomed their feedback and recommendations.

The Committee noted the importance of financial awareness for all Members and clarity on the Council's real financial position. It emphasised the importance of data in terms of managing and measuring performance of services to residents.

The Committee, as part of its remit, would be taking a role in shaping the performance data in a positive and constructive way (Appendix 2 to the report – Peer Review Action Plan, recommendation 6).

Corporate Strategy

The Committee had scrutinised the draft Corporate Strategy at length previously, so further scrutiny was not considered necessary. The Chair had liaised with the Leader of the Council and had informed him that he would be asking Members if they had any further comments to pass to Cabinet.

The Committee was pleased to note how performance would be measured was defined in the Strategy but looked forward to receiving the actual targets and key performance indicators (KPI's). The Committee requested more clarity on the review process because the "who, what, when and how" was unclear.

Budget Review Group meeting 1 November 2023

Fees and Charges

The Budget Review Group had concerns about the increase in fees at the crematorium but were satisfied by the rationale behind the decision provided by officers.

The Group wished to draw Cabinet's attention to the following points regarding car parking charges:

1. The connection between car parking fees and other priorities such as the town centre economy and the climate emergency should be recognised. The Council's ambition to encourage net zero carbon methods of transportation should be reflected in the parking charges strategy. To understand the impacts of these connections better and define a way forward in achieving the Council's goals, the Group encourages officers to test hypotheses and pursue different avenues to find potential solutions;
2. the importance of having an aligned strategy with Warwickshire County Council in relation to transportation and car parking charges should be highlighted;
3. in future, the consultation for car parking charges should be widened to include all Town and Parish Councils and interested organisations such as the Chambers of Trade and Commerce for Leamington, Kenilworth, and Warwick; and
4. a review into car parking charges of all car parks linked to leisure facilities would be welcomed to ensure that they are fair and equitable across the District.

The Group welcomed the increase in charges for filming on Council land.

The Group wished to draw Cabinet's attention to the circa £170,000 of opportunity that had not been taken which could have been available had the projections of the last Medium Term Financial Strategy been followed.

O&S meeting 14 November 2023:

Future High Streets Fund Update

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

It stressed the importance of pursuing a balanced eco system and offers that complimented each other through the Future High Streets Fund.

Asset Compliance Committee & Resources

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report and thanked Officers for their hard work.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

The Committee recommended to Cabinet that:

1. an appraisal report explaining how the situation the Council now found itself in and how this arose was prepared before the end of the year and should be presented to the Committee at the first opportunity; and
2. a more detailed Action Plan was progressed as soon as possible.

Members expressed some concern about deliverability of the work required and the potential impact on other services. The Committee had requested that a report was provided to it in the New Year to understand how the work would be effectively resourced and how the impact of this would be managed across the Council and its assets.

Cabinet response:

The recommendations in the report were approved. The recommendation from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee was amended slightly before approval:

- (1) an appraisal report explaining how the situation the Council now finds itself in arose is prepared *at the first reasonable opportunity* and should be presented to Overview & Scrutiny Committee at the *earliest* opportunity; and
- (2) a more detailed Action Plan is progressed as soon as possible.

Participation in the West Midlands Investment Zone

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report and thanked Officers for their work on the report and also for ensuring that what was a complex matter was explained in understandable terms.

The Committee recognised the potential benefits to the District as a whole and its residents. The necessity of a no detriment provision on an ongoing basis throughout the lifetime of this arrangement was clearly understood and supported.

O&S meeting scheduled for 20 November 2023, but then cancelled:

Revisions to the timetable for preparing the South Warwickshire Local Plan

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee noted the recommendations in the report and thanked officers for their work.

The Committee requested that a briefing on the background for all councillors is provided early next year, explaining the stage the Plan has reached and what future steps were planned.

(The Chair used his discretion to cancel the additional meeting of the Committee 20 November because only one Councillor raised questions on the report and these did not meet the criteria for a call in because they did not relate to the substance of the paper.)

O&S meeting 5 December 2023:

Renewal of Microsoft Enterprise Agreement

The Committee raised concern about the lack of detail provided in the report, particularly around the areas of risk and alternative options, cyber security and protection of residents' personal data. The Committee asked Cabinet that a review should be done, to look at the breakdown in the process leading to the current situation, and lessons to be learnt from it.

Q2 Budget Update 2023/24

The Committee noted the report and thanked officers for their work on it, especially for including the summary of reserves. The Committee asked that in the future, more work should be done on how the Council monitored its budgets on an ongoing basis, so that there was a lesser discrepancy between projections and the actuals.

The Committee asked for an update from the Portfolio Holder in relation to the underspent capital budget for disabled playground facilities, and what the plan for spending this budget was. The Committee asked for future reports to bring forward comments in the situations of underspend.

Associated Costs for the Purchase of 24 Dwellings at the Europa Way, Warwick (Confidential Report)

The Committee noted the report and supported the recommendations within it.

Budget Review Group meeting 7 February 2024:

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.

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 Council's across Warwickshire.

O&S meeting 5 March 2024:

Treasury Management Strategy 2024/24

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee thanked officers for their hard work bringing the detailed and thorough report forward. The Committee was reassured by explanations around sensitivity analysis and the impact on Milverton Homes.

The Committee welcomed the initiative to bring forward more information on Treasury Management and affordability when decisions were being made on capital expenditure. It was pleased that the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Chilvers was keen to explore the initiative to set clear parameters to enable councillors to be confident in future borrowing decisions.

Change Programme – Case for Change

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee was keen to see that Customer Services were baselined and tracked to ensure that these reflected the commitment made in the Corporate Strategy to improve Council services.

The Committee requested a specific update on Change Programme progress following the Programme Board meeting scheduled in June.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

That all Members received regular communications from the Members Advisory Group detailing the outcomes, outputs and actions.

Cabinet response:

The recommendation from Overview & Scrutiny Committee was approved.

Q3 Budget Update 2023/24

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee thanked officers for the detailed and comprehensible report. The Committee supported the Finance Team's strategy to work with budget managers to improve budget management to smooth volatility and reduce peaks. This would result in a more measured view of what was going on.

Housing Revenue Account Business Plan Review 2024

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee did not scrutinise this report at the meeting but made comments to Cabinet.

Members were keen to see maximum attendance at training sessions so asked that these, where possible, avoided holiday periods. However, to mitigate for this, the Committee requested that training sessions should be recorded (whilst also appreciating that external trainers might not be open to this request).

The Committee also requested that when HRA reports were to be considered in future, this should always be accompanied by a briefing to Members in advance.

The committee intends to add this report to the Overview & Scrutiny workplan in line with dates for further training.

Annual Governance Statement 2022/23

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee did not scrutinise this report at the meeting but made comments to Cabinet.

The Committee expressed concern about the lateness in signing off the AGS which the Head of Finance explained was linked to the delay in signing off the Council's Statement of Account and he explained how this would be overcome in the future with a backstop date being agreed.

The Committee requested that the AGS should be produced sooner in order to support a strong focus on governance.

O&S meeting 9 April 2024:

To be added to the report after the meeting.