

Meeting: COUNCIL
Date: 20 JULY 2022

ANNUAL SCRUTINY REPORT 2021/2022

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report on the work undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Select Committees during the 2021/22 Municipal Year and to outline the Work Programme for the three Committees for 2022/23.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the work undertaken by Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the Select Committees during 2021/22 be noted.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Under the provisions of the Local Government Act 2000 Overview and Scrutiny's role is to operate as an independent function of the Council's decision making process, by having overview of the Council's decision making, holding the Executive to account, having the power to "call in" decisions for reconsideration and undertake internal and external scrutiny reviews.
- 3.2 The Council's Constitution requires that there be an annual report to Council on the scrutiny activity over the past Municipal Year (see Article 6.3 of the Constitution).
- 3.3 This report is a retrospective look at the scrutiny review work undertaken by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and the two Select Committees during the 2021-22 Municipal Year.
- 3.4 In accordance with the Constitution the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was also charged with scrutinising the Executive's proposals on Budget & Policy Framework items that go before Council for decision. In addition, the Committees considered updates on Scrutiny studies that had been undertaken previously, examining the progress of recommendations and where appropriate following up on matters raised.
- 3.5 The Committees have also worked with their relevant Executive Portfolio Holders on a number of separate policy development meetings developing

policies and considering reports before their submission to the Executive. This report, however, focuses on the Committees' Scrutiny role.

4. SUMMARY OF SELECT COMMITTEE REVIEWS FOR 2021/2022

4.1 Each Select Committee review made formal recommendations to the relevant Executive Member, officers and external partners. The following is a summary of the outcomes of each scrutiny review.

4.2 Community Select Committee

4.2.1 Pre-scrutiny of a New Towns Heritage Centre

In conducting this review the Community Select Committee met on 6 occasions (including 2 site visits) and were supported by the following officers Rob Gregory, Assistant Director, Communities and Neighbourhoods Nick Mallinger, Arts & Cultural Development Officer, Jo Ward, Museum Manager/Curator and received written and oral evidence from the following people:

- Bill Griffiths, Milton Keynes Museum Director
- Liz McCaffery-Payne MK Director of Development
- Shan Downer, MK Heritage and International Partnerships
- Councillor Robin Bradburn, Executive Member for Culture and Deputy Leader of Milton Keynes
- Anthony Spira, Director of Milton Keynes Gallery
- Sally Shaw MBE, Director of the Colchester Firstsite Museum & other Firstsite Museum staff

The review looked in detail and made recommendations on the following 7 areas:

- 1 Curation** – Led by the Museum Curator who will engage with local residents through co-curation projects to provide a mix of: aspirational, informative, inclusive, accessible and affordable museum and arts offers to Stevenage people.
- 2 Community Engagement** – The principle of meaningful engagement with the whole of the diverse community is important and should happen, to see what the Community would like to have included in their Museum and that the offer is accessible to all.
- 3 Management/Governance Structures** – recommended that an independent culture body be set up to provide autonomy for the Heritage Centre made up of a mix of stakeholders, similar to the model with the Regeneration Town Centre Board, supported by a panel of people who are outside of the Council and have a specialist arts and heritage expertise from Stevenage, Herts and/or the Eastern Region.
- 4 Museum without walls** – The concept of “Museums without walls” should be pursued. This would incorporate the use of technology, having a virtual museum and utilising QR codes around the town. This should be undertaken in conjunction with a physical New Towns

Heritage Centre building as part of the new Civic Hub in the regenerated Town Centre.

5 Building design features and use of technology in the building -

The building should have the highest possible environmental credentials and be a carbon neutral building and incorporate the use of technology in the building including:

- mixed use/flexible building with wall dividers that can make the room smaller or bigger
- Provide touch screen information points
- Provide digital images as visitors walk through different spaces – (example provided of Mars Rover space vehicle)
- The Museum space within the hub should be agreed in advance with the permanent exhibit areas well thought through so that the Museum doesn't get crowded out by other uses
- A small-seated cinema would be a desirable feature as a draw for visitors as well as an income stream
- Lessons from the sites visited showed the value of having an on-site Café as a place for people to visit and provide a positive user experience

6 Commercial activity/funding/cost point for entry - During the site visits Members were taken with the crucial role that various commercial activities can do to support the users of the building: This could include:

- Irrespective of the whether free or not for entry, contactless payment/donation points for bank card use should be provided at various points around the building
- events, theatre (livestream) and other activities that raised money for other non –commercial activities in the Heritage Centre
- There should be places in the building for commercial activity with a profit share with the Council. This could include small start-up linked businesses to provide spaces to sell their services such as on-site catering etc. and spaces for new/young artists to display their work and sell it
- Hiring out of the building at specific times could be an option for extra income
- Officers supported by Members should go directly to the big companies, and major developers, under their corporate social responsibility agendas for grants and sponsorship
- There should definitely be a Café that is either run in-house to provide income for the building or is run under a profit share by a tenant to bring in income
- Having a unique selling point/exhibition (outside of the New Towns story) could be worth considering – e.g. Mars Rover Space Exploration (linked to recommendation 5)

7 Developing a hub and spoke approach for arts & historical heritage across the town - consider continuing a hub and spoke model which makes best use of our CNM and Play Services

infrastructure, i.e. in our neighbourhoods which would support the main hub core offer at the New Towns Heritage Centre.

The details of the review report but can be found by following the link to the meeting that they were agreed 16 March 2022 – [Report & Recommendation CSC - New Towns Heritage Centre](#)

4.2.2 Neighbourhood Wardens

The Community Select Committee received a presentation from the Neighbourhood Wardens Team regarding their work through the pandemic. The presentation covered a range of areas and issues including Covid marshalling, food hub, vaccination centres, litter picking and hedge pruning, stewarding and anti-social behaviour. Members were very impressed with the quality of the work that the Neighbourhood Wardens were providing and also with the range and complexity of this work. Members agreed to keep a watching brief on the work of the wardens.

4.2.3 Update on Damp & Mould

The Investment Programme Manager provided the Community Select Committee with a report in relation to damp, condensation and mould in Council properties. The Council continued to deal with the damp and mould cases during the Covid 19 pandemic. Members heard that the tools that the Council had previously used for dealing with the damp and mould had been too simplistic. Better and improved ventilations were needed, and fans alone were not enough and that there was a need to have specialist contractors in place to carry out required works. The Committee resolved:

- That the Committee supported the current approach which was in line with the Housing Ombudsman Service Report.
- That the Committee continued to support the Team to deliver on its promise to tackle damp and mould issues by ensuring that sufficient funding was available.
- That the Committee would provide feedback on the draft Mould Leaflet for the final version.

4.3 Community Select Committee sitting as the Council Statutory Crime & Disorder Committee

4.3.1 The Community Safety Manager provided a presentation to the Community Select Committee who were sitting as the Council's Statutory Crime & Disorder Committee, in relation to Crime and Disorder matters including detailed information on the work of the No More Service (NMS) and the Survivors Against Domestic Abuse (SADA).

4.3.2 Members welcomed the work that the No More Service and the Survivors Against Domestic Abuse were providing to Stevenage and Hertfordshire residents and now further afield into other local authority areas, but expressed some concern regarding the way the service is funded via bids to Government

funding streams as and when they become available, and queried how long this model could be sustainable.

- 4.3.3 The Executive Portfolio Holder responsible for Community Safety shared the CSC's concern around the funding for these projects and suggested that they should be recognised, and resourced by the Government. Members recognised that the core funding had been reduced in the last decade and was the reason that the Team was constantly looking to fund these projects. The Portfolio Holder said the success of the service was largely down to the dedication of the team that has been built up over the years. Furthermore, on the issue of funding, the Chief Executive as Chair of the Responsible Authority Group, stated that the reason for the funding position was that the core spending power of the Council had been reduced by £12.5m over the past decade and is the reason why the Council had to search for pots of money to bid for to run these services. The Government were beginning to recognise that this was not a good way to operate and not good use of resources, making authorities compete with one another for the same funds. Unlike many other local authorities, because of the need, the Council have chosen to extend services that were non-statutory. The Chief Executive and Members congratulated Sarah Pateman and the whole team as an exemplar in this area of work at a district level.

4.4 Public Health meeting with the HCC Director of Public Health

- 4.4.1 The focus of the meeting with the Director of Public Health, Professor Jim McManus was once again on the Covid-19 pandemic. Members discussed the measures that HCC Public Health were taking in relation to the Covid-19 pandemic and the Director of Public Health answered Members questions regarding the pandemic. Professor McManus provided Members with a detailed overview of the current challenges that the pandemic was bringing to public health. Members raised concerns they had on the mental health challenges that the Covid pandemic had brought to young people. Children had been put into difficult situations where and when rules changes and restrictions in school were different to restrictions out of school. Children were confused and afraid when restrictions were lifted as there was no explanation for this. The Chair asked Director of Public Health to consider the ongoing effect on children's mental health and do whatever he could to help them. The Director of Public Health shared an example of a mental health online service for children and invited Stevenage to bid for funding should they wish to put together a similar project.

4.5 Environment & Economy Select Committee

- 4.5.1 **Economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Stevenage and the local economy and the Council's response**
- 4.5.3 The review started in September 2020 and was completed in October 2022 and held 6 formal committee meetings, and the member sub-group met on a further 6 occasions.

4.5.4 The Committee interviewed the following people:

- Adam Wood, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Helen Spencer, STEMPOINT East CE
- Judith Sutton, Area Team Manager for North Herts & Stevenage HCC YCH Services for Young People
- Kit Davies Principal and Chief Executive North Herts College
- Sean Trimble Head Teacher Larwood School Stevenage
- David Pearce Head Teacher Brandles School Baldock
- Mark Lewis Head Teacher Alleyne's Academy
- External Business witnesses from the following witnesses (Fin Divers Ltd, Westend Wi-Fi Ltd and Relton Associates Ltd)
- The Leader, Cllr Sharon Taylor
- Executive Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise and Transport, Cllr Lloyd Biscoe

4.5.5 The Committee were supported by the following officers:

- Mena Caldbeck, SBC Business Relationship Manager
- Steve Dupoy, Assistant Director, Stevenage Direct Services
- Tom Pike, Strategic Director
- Gareth Wall, Corporate Policy & Research Officer
- Chris Barnes Assistant Director Regeneration
- Paul Cheeseman, Community Development Officer
- James Chettleburgh, Development Manager

4.5.6 The review looked in detail at the following areas, and were helped by a member sub-group who held 6 informal meetings via zoom when the main Committee was suspended due to the corporate focus on the Covid-19 pandemic:

- Impact on Young People – extensive review work undertaken by a Member sub-group of the Environment & Economy Select Committee
- Impact on self employed
- Impact on Small to Medium sized Enterprises (up to 250 employees)
- Impact on large sized companies (over 250 employees)
- Impact on various protected characteristic groups including Women, BAME, Disability Groups and in addition the low income
- Impact on private investment (planning and development activity)
- Impact on Town Investment Plan
- On the ground support – Hertfordshire Opportunities Portal (HOP)
- Grants provided to local business administered by the Council
- CITB (Construction Industry Training Board) / Stevenage Works
- Evidence from the sessions with the Leader, Cllr Sharon Taylor and Executive Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise and Transport, Cllr Lloyd Biscoe

4.5.7 The review made a total of 7 recommendations that were designated as short, medium and long term:

Support for Young People – Recommendation 1. Medium term recommendation regarding Young People (Spring/Summer 2022) – Supporting third sector response to provide training opportunities for young people.

That the Executive support, with whatever means are at its disposal the efforts of STEMPOINT East to provide some hands-on events in 2022. This would support STEMPOINT to promote and build science capital in young people, particularly those who may not naturally choose STEM learning routes. Possible venues to support this could be the STEM Centre, NH College, Canyon's Scout building and the environmental charity Waste Not Want Not.

Support for Young People – Recommendation 2. Long term recommendation regarding Young People (Starting Spring 2022 and for remainder of the year) – Supporting partners outreach to local young people and their families.

That the Executive be asked to consider the work of the sub-group focussing on the impact of Covid-19 on Young People. This work identified a successful project led by HCC, YCH (Services for Young People, Children's Services) at the Oval with a small group of young people who would be in danger of becoming NEET (Not in Employment, Education or Training). It is recommended that Officers engage with the interested partners (HCC YCH, STEMPOINT and NH College) to explore what role SBC could play to roll out to other outreach opportunities as identify young people/families to help those families with encouragement towards careers and employment in general. Potential locations to focus as sub-ward levels include Bedwell, Shephall and Martins Wood. HCC and SBC Local Community Budget funding could be targeted at a short-term project to extend this initiative.

Support for Young People – Recommendation 3. Long term recommendation regarding Young People & Vulnerable Families (Starting Spring 2022) – Using social outreach models / events to identify and help vulnerable local young people and their families.

That the Executive Portfolio Holders for Neighbourhoods & Co-operative Council, Children, Young People, Leisure and Culture and Communities, Community Safety and Equalities be asked to consider the case study of Brandles School, using foodbank outreach to vulnerable families. To ask these Executive Portfolio Holders to provide examples how this type of outreach is used or consider how this could be used through the Co-operative Neighbourhood Management or other programmes or other ways where the Council could reach out to vulnerable families to help their young people access services and opportunities.

Support for Young People – Recommendation 4. Medium to long term recommendation regarding Young People (Starting Spring/Summer 2022 and for remainder of the year) – Working with partners together to identify a project lead and sources of funding for a local work experience project.

That the Executive Portfolio Holders for Economy, Enterprise and Transport and Children, Young People, Leisure and Culture should work with partners, including schools, the third/voluntary sector and employers, both large and small, who identify their social responsibility, to seek funding sources and a project lead/project manager to establish a local work experience project for Stevenage school leavers in 2022 to enable them to find local employers who can offer work experience. This is proposed as a recommendation for the Executive to consider for 2022, and may require initial Council pump priming and resource to support project management.

Support for Young People – Recommendation 5. Long term recommendation regarding support for Young People (Starting in 2022) – Supporting HCC Education and partners re longterm funding to support the STEM Centre.

That the Executive Portfolio Holders for Economy, Enterprise and Transport and Children, Young People, Leisure and Culture be asked to consider the case study of the Herts Careers School Hub, that all partners work together to establish how funding can be found to assist the STEM Centre to secure its future funding.

Impact on vulnerable groups – Recommendation 6. Short to Medium term recommendation regarding various vulnerable groups impacted by the pandemic (Starting Spring 2022 and for remainder of the year) – monitoring the progress of the CV-19 Community Reassurance Cell's impact assessments.

That the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Communities, Community Safety and Equalities be asked to engage HCC and partners via the Covid-19 Community Reassurance Cell to check that they carry out a revised impact assessment on the impact on BAME, Disabled and Young People, looking at all ten local areas. This notes that Stevenage had particular challenges with disabled, BAME and young people, who in many cases started the pandemic in a deficit position and were in danger of this being further compounded, and that the impact assessment leads to direct initiatives to seek to address any gaps in provision for these groups.

Impact on the Council's financial position and wider economy impact - Recommendation 7. Medium to long term recommendation regarding the monitoring of progress of the Council's financial position and the local economy and the position of various vulnerable groups impacted by the pandemic

That the Environment and Economy Select Committee will bring back two snapshot update reports one six months from receiving the formal Executive

Member response to the review (this is two months on February 2022) from the date of the final report being circulated to the Executive (December 2021) and one year on from this date (January 2023). These reports will check on the economic position of the Council and of the local economy and see how the vulnerable groups identified in the review are, post pandemic.

4.5.8 A copy of the full report can be accessed via the [link](#) and a copy of the [E&E Minutes 21 October 2021](#) (where the report was considered at the E&E).

4.6 **Interim report and recommendations of the E&E Select Committee Climate Emergency Scrutiny Review**

4.6.1 The Environment & Select Committee started a review in October 2021 and an interim report and recommendations were prepared in March 2022. The Committee held 5 formal committee meetings, and the member sub-group met once in January 2022.

4.6.2 The Committee interviewed the following people:

- Executive Portfolio Holder for Environment & Regeneration, Cllr John Gardner
- Executive Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise and Transport, Cllr Lloyd Biscoe
- Executive Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Older People, Cllr Jeannette Thomas
- HEART – Hertfordshire for Enabling and Adapting for Resilience Together (Various members of this Environmental Campaigning Community Group)
- Professor Lubo Jankovic, University of Hertfordshire, Professor of Advanced Building Design/Director of Zero Carbon Lab
- David Thorogood, Environmental Sustainability Co-ordinator at EHDC & SBC Councils
- Jonathan Sayers, SBC Interim Communications Campaigns Manager
- Mena Caldbeck, SBC Business Relationship Manager

4.6.3 As part of its interim report made on 23 March 2022, the Committee made the following 13 recommendations:

1. **Links to the 8 key themed areas within the Council's Climate Change Strategy** - Recommendations: (i) That Officers provide Members with the plans to decarbonise its housing stock over the coming decade. (ii) That the plans for working alongside and influencing local people be provided to Members.
2. **Resident engagement:** Recommendation: With regards to the Citizen Panel, the handling of future iterations needs to be improved regarding the feedback with the group and ongoing engagement.
3. **Baseline figures** - measuring how we are doing with regards to our Net Zero targets for 2030 linked to a shared study with the University of

Hertfordshire Zero Carbon Lab: **Recommendation:** Officers continue to work with the University of Hertfordshire towards its zero carbon ambitions.

4. **Establishment of a Climate Change Lead Officer - Recommendation:** that this post be made permanent.
5. **HEART - Recommendation:** that the Council engage further with HEART to provide some Member seminars on the Climate Emergency and that the Council teams up with HEART in support of a social enterprise such as a Climate Resilience Hub, or Climate Emergency Centres (CEC's) Increasingly, these local physical hubs or spaces are popping up over the UK, and they collaborate, network and learn from each other. There are none so far in Hertfordshire
6. **Mainstreaming of Climate Emergency thinking with regards to all Council activities - Recommendation:** look for opportunities where the Council can consider if an activity or an event can be made as low carbon as possible. A helpful on-line tool is available with good ideas about running a reduced carbon sustainable event considering things such as: measuring the current events carbon footprint; making a plan; consulting with contractors; organise essential waste management and start simple.
7. **Tree Canopy - Recommendation:** That the Executive Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Regeneration and Officers establish a plan to meet the 2% gap in Stevenage's Tree Canopy, and that an even more ambitious plan be considered to expand the number of trees in Stevenage or offsetting in other locations as this offers one of the best measures for carbon reduction open to the Council.
8. **Planning & Development - Recommendation:** Within the constraints of the exiting planning legislation and powers for local planning authorities, establish a plan to make Climate change a planning consideration for all applications.
9. **Focus on improved Recycling - Recommendation:** That the Executive Portfolio Holder for the Environment and Regeneration and AD Stevenage Direct Services brings back a report to Scrutiny Members on the actions and strategy it is taking to improve the Council's recycling rates.
10. **Protecting climate emergency targets within the budget setting process - Recommendations:** (i) That Members and Officers involved in the budget setting process, as a minimum, consider the climate change implications of any budget decisions. Nor should there be a cut to services if there is a detrimental climate change implication; and Page 6 (ii) Going further, scrutiny members would like the Executive to consider creating a small, ring-fenced budget in each service delivery area to investigate the long-term budget implications of climate change for that business unit.

11. Session with Executive Portfolio Holder for Economy, Enterprise & Transport – Cllr Lloyd Briscoe - Recommendations: (i) Re EV

Charging in neighbourhood centres – Members recommended that, where possible, officers consider the locations used should be close to the cycle network; (ii) Members suggested that when the Electric Car Club charging equipment was reinstalled in town centre locations that a promotional campaign with residents of town centre accommodation be carried out to promote their use and officers should consider rebranding it, making it clear that it is for public use not just for SBC officers as the original livery made it appear it was just for corporate use.

12. Session with Executive Portfolio Holder for Housing, Health and Older People – Cllr Jeanette Thomas - Recommendations: (i) That new

tenants receive information on climate change in their “welcome packs” when they enter a new property, to include the Council’s ten climate change pledges and the most up to date information on recycling at their property. (ii) In addressing the gap between the Council’s current engagement processes and where it needs to be, can more be done with residents’ groups to, over time, move Page 7 residents away from the day-to-day housing tenant issues to considering wider, more strategic, Climate change matters that in time will affect all residents? (iii) encouraging very local, small scale, grass roots events that can focus residents’ involvement in things such as environmental projects (gardens/trees) or community kitchen/growing or bulk buying schemes as an example, which needs to be joined up with other neighbourhood activities and needs to be a thread through all activities to address climate change, not as an add on or special one off focus.

13. Members met informally and agreed their own short term quick wins and more long term strategic recommendations covering areas such as:

(i) a revised strategy for trees re P&D; (ii) various quick wins re use of plastic cups etc.; (iii) consider how to show delivery of the strategy via Gantt/Fishbone chart; (iv) revised communications plan ; (v) review embedding of carbon reduction practises across the council; (vi) engage with young people; and (vii) promote 20 Minute Neighbourhoods.

4.7 Overview & Scrutiny Committee

- 4.7.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee met on 12 occasions to provide overview of the work of the Executive, specifically looking at all Key Decisions made by the Executive and all Budget and Policy Framework items and in particular monitored progress of the Council and the Executive’s ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition to these meetings the Committee also considered the Towns Fund business cases in detail at their meetings.

5.1 2022/2023 Scrutiny Work Programmes

- 5.1 Following the usual practise, the Scrutiny Officer canvassed scrutiny Members in January and February for their feedback on scrutiny activity and

ideas for future scrutiny reviews. This informed a report to each of the three scrutiny Committees in March 2022. The shape of the three committees work programmes are as follows:

5.2 Community Select Committee:

The Community Select Committee agreed to scrutinise the following issues:

- An officer presentation updating Members into the way the Local Community Budgets scheme is operating
- A Portfolio Holder's Advisory Group (PHAG) meeting on the Community Centres
- The statutory meeting on Crime and Disorder
- Continuation of a standing item on Public Health looking specifically at Health Inequalities for Stevenage
- An update on the Housing Allocations Policy
- A main review item on Housing Repairs and Voids standards, the review to begin with a broad presentation from officers on the service and then Members to agree a more narrow scope for a review

5.3 Environment and Economy Select Committee:

The Environment & Economy Select Committee agreed to scrutinise the following issues:

- Continuation of the Climate Emergency Review (as the Committee's substantive piece of work for the year)
- At the conclusion of the Climate Emergency Review begin a review on the impact of the Cost of Living Crisis
- A one-off single meeting performance review on parking
- An officer information update on fence repairs
- A Portfolio Holder's Advisory Group (PHAG) on Sustainable Travel Towns
- Add to the work programme the issue of access to STEM employment opportunities for local people

The programmes above will be prioritised to ensure the key review activity takes place during the Financial Year. As well as carrying out review work the Committee will also undertake any other pre-scrutiny Policy Development work in Portfolio Holder Advisory Group meetings as directed by the officer Strategic Leadership Team and the Executive Portfolio Holders.

5.3 Overview & Scrutiny Committee Work Programme:

- 5.3.1 In addition to undertaking all scrutiny of Budget & Policy Framework items and decisions of the Executive, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has the capacity to undertake a "Select Committee" style meeting during the year if it

so wishes. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee did not specifically agree to sit as a select Committee but has the capacity to do so if it required. The Committee agreed to add the following items to its work programme:

- Council Constitution review (as a Portfolio Holder Advisory Group)
- Communications review

As well as carrying out review work the Committee will also undertake pre-scrutiny Policy Development work in Portfolio Holder Advisory Group meetings, as directed by officer Strategic Leadership Team and the Executive Portfolio Holders.

- 5.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will review the Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions and also consider all 'Call-in' requests in accordance with the Council's Constitution as well as considering any Councillors Call for Action in relation to matters relating to Resources and any Petition appeals, in accordance with the Councils Petition Scheme, regarding matters relating to Resources or of a Corporate or Council wide nature.

5.5 Scoping reviews

- 5.5.1 A schedule of generic dates for meetings for the two Select Committees has been arranged for the 2021-22 Municipal Year, as and when specific meetings are scheduled from these dates electronic diary invites will be sent to Members on the Committee. These meetings will incorporate the scoping of the review where Members will identify the areas they wish to cover during the review, who to interview, what evidence/background information is required and which Members will lead the questioning on a specific area, as well as undertaking site visits, where appropriate. Meetings will also be arranged to revisit previous reviews to monitor actions.

5.6 **Portfolio Holder Advisory Groups (Policy Development Meetings)**

- 5.6.1 Pre-scrutiny Policy Development meetings will continue to be undertaken as and when requested by Executive Portfolio Holders in consultation with Assistant Strategic Directors and will be referred to as Portfolio Holders Advisory Groups (PHAG). These meetings are chaired by the relevant Executive Portfolio Holder and the relevant O&S or Select Committee Members are invited to attend. Unlike regular Select Committee meetings PHAG's are private meetings and are not open to the public.

6. IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Financial Implications

There are none specific to this report.

6.2 Legal Implications

Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government Statutory Guidance on Overview & Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities was published in May

2019 and Scrutiny Members should have regard to this when undertaking their Scrutiny review work and carrying out the function.

6.3 Equalities and Diversity Implications

Equalities and Diversity issues are considered at the scoping stage of each Scrutiny review with regards to questioning of witnesses and the collection of oral and written evidence. Also E&D issues are addressed in the final report for each review.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Individual agendas and study material for each Scrutiny review undertaken by the Select Committees as described in this report are available for inspection.

The full Executive responses to the Scrutiny Reviews are available for inspection.