

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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| Held at: | Remote meeting |
| Date | Tuesday, 30 March 2021 |
| Present | Councillors Miss Susan Carey, Gary Fuller, Peter Gane, Michelle Keutenius (Vice-Chair), Connor McConville, Terence Mullard, Rebecca Shoob (Chairman) and John Wing |
| Apologies for Absence | None |
| Officers Present: | Andy Blaszkowicz (Director of Housing and Operations), Kate Clark (Case Officer - Committee Services), Holly Godwin (Case Officer - Corporate Services), Ewan Green (Director of Place), Amandeep Khroud (Assistant Director), Loren Paine (Tenant Liaison Specialist), Andrew Rush (Regulatory Services & Corporate Contracts Lead Specialist), Charlotte Spendley (Director of Corporate Services), Helen Sudbury (Housing Operations Lead Specialist), Jemma West (Committee Service Specialist) and Briony Williamson (Licensing Specialist) |
| Others Present: | Gillian Jenkins (Shepway Tenants and Leaseholders Board) |

39. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor Gary Fuller made a voluntary announcement with regard to Agenda Item 7 (Tenant Engagement Strategy and Action Plan) as he is a housing tenant. Councillor Fuller did not take part in discussions on this item.

40. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 February 2021 were submitted and agreed. The Chairman asked that her signature is added to the minutes showing approval.

41. **Annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2020/21 and proposed amendment to the Committee's terms of reference**

Report OS/20/12 set out the work that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee had completed during 2020/21. The report also sought approval to review the terms of reference of the Committee, to bring these up to date and reflect the new way of working.

The Chairman presented this report and invited comments from members.

It was noted that the following point had been removed from the terms of reference; 'To contribute to, and review, the Council's performance plan and performance management system'. The Assistant Director – Governance and Law advised a response will be provided with reasons for its removal.

Proposed by Councillor Rebecca Shoob
Seconded by Councillor Michelle Keutenius; and

RESOLVED:

- 1. That report OS/20/12 is received and noted.**
- 2. That recommendation is given to Full Council to adopt the revised Overview & Scrutiny terms of reference.**

All in favour

42. **Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2021/22**

Report OS/20/14 set out the proposed work programme for Overview and Scrutiny work for the municipal year 2021/22.

The Chairman presented the report and invited comments from members.

It was noted that relatively few members had responded to the request to score each item suggested, however they agreed it did reflect their views of the importance of topics and the subsequent list produced in the report.

The Chairman pointed out that the methodology used creates a wide range of topics for consideration with clear criteria. Topics that were not deemed a priority for this committee were still pertinent and could possibly be dealt with by speaking to officers directly.

Councillor Fuller suggested that a future topic for consideration could be cyber security, with a hope that this could become a regular item. As this potential item is possibly covered under Audit & Governance, the Assistant Director will check and come back to members with clarification.

Proposed by Councillor Rebecca Shoob
Seconded by Councillor Michelle Keutenius; and

RESOLVED:

- 1. That report OS/20/14 is received and noted.**
- 2. That the Scrutiny Work Programme, as set out in paragraph 1.3 of the report, is adopted and implemented for the municipal year 2021/22.**

All in favour.

43. Licensing Policy Review

Report OS/20/15 presented an outline of the review of the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy. The report set out the context for this, the timetable for review and consultation and an overview of the key issues to be considered in the review.

Councillor David Monk introduced this item saying that there are many factors to consider when shaping this challenging policy.

The Director of Place pointed out key aspects of the report including timelines culminating in adoption of the policy by Full Council.

(Councillor Keutenius left the meeting and did not return, Councillor Mullard joined for the remainder of the meeting).

Members' comments included:

- Town centre must become vibrant and sustainable, however anti-social behaviour can cause problems for residents.
- Look to the future with the possibility of digital based entertainment; café culture.
- Consideration of a late night levy – the Licensing Specialist advised this is an additional charge to premises which are open later. The funds generated are then used to help with enforcement costs within the late night economy. Helpful to look to other Councils for comparisons.
- Use of security staff/doormen during late night opening.
- Town zoning plan to protect residential areas and encourage late night economy in non-residential areas.
- Licenced premises – landlords to be encouraged to maintain standards.
- In answer to a question regarding the number of licensed premises in the district, the Licensing Specialist estimated 500, however this figure would be checked.
- Councillor McConville made reference to the possibility of the council adopting a selective licence policy as part of the review. This policy would be aimed at private landlords in the private housing sector.

Members were concerned that business failures could be through poor management or viability within an area, however they understood that competition is important, businesses need to survive and thrive especially as lockdown restrictions are eased.

Proposed by Councillor Rebecca Shoob
Seconded by Councillor John Wing; and

RESOLVED:

That report OS/20/15 is received and noted.

All in favour.

44. Tenant Engagement Strategy and Action Plan

Report OS/20/13 brought the draft Tenant Engagement Strategy for the Housing Service back to members, following a period of consultation with our tenants.

The Housing Operations Lead Specialist introduced this report and also mentioned a welcome to a representative of the Shepway Tenants and Leaseholders Board and the Neighbourhood Management Senior Specialist.

Members noted that just nine responses to the consultation had been received, however, all responses showed positive feedback. Members were also aware that people tend to only make contact if there is a problem. It was agreed that this is a very important strategy and for the benefit of tenants, who understandably need to be kept informed of current and proposed works.

The Neighbourhood Management Senior Specialist had been in touch with many residents with regard to the consultation on the stock condition survey. Residents indicated they would like more involvement with this and a core number of residents would like a higher level of involvement.

Proposed by Councillor Rebecca Shoob
Seconded by Councillor Peter Gane; and

RESOLVED:

That Report OS/20/13 is received and noted.

All in favour.