



Overview and Scrutiny Business Panel

Scrutiny Update

Date: 16 November 2021

Key decision: No

Class: Part 1

Ward(s) affected: All

Contributors: Assistant Chief Executive (Head of Overview and Scrutiny)

Outline and recommendations

The purpose of this item is for Members to receive an update from Select Committee Chairs on any scrutiny activity related to their Committee that they wish to bring to the Panel's attention. The Head of Overview and Scrutiny may also provide an update if the Select Committees have met since the last Business Panel meeting.

1. Summary

- 1.1. The intention of this item is to provide Members with an update on current scrutiny activity.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1. Members are asked to discuss and note any information provided.

3. Scrutiny Update

- 3.1 The third round of Select Committee meetings is currently taking place:
 - Healthier Communities – 2 November
 - Safer Stronger Communities – 4 November
 - Housing – 18 November (may be moved to 9 December)
 - Sustainable Development – 23 November
 - Children and Young People – 25 November
 - Public Accounts – 1 December
- 3.2 Select Committee Chairs are invited to provide an update on any scrutiny activity related to their committee that they wish to bring to the Panel's attention.

- 3.3 The work programmes for each Select Committee are attached at Appendix A.
- 3.4 The next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will take place on 30 November. The main item of business will be a report on the climate emergency and the Future Lewisham theme “A Greener Future”. This work is being led by Councillors Krupski and Penfold. There will also be an update on the implementation of the recommendations made at the last meeting, concerning the resident experience programme.
- 3.5 At the meeting of the full Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the rising of the Council AGM on 26 May 2021, three time limited task and finish groups (TFGs) were established to look at:
- Improving digital inclusion for Lewisham residents with a learning disability to improve quality of life
 - Improving Wi-Fi access and connectivity to improve educational outcomes for Lewisham’s pupils, particularly those most in need
 - Retrofitting and insulating homes in Lewisham to achieve climate change targets.
- 3.6 The TFGs have all held their first formal meetings and are now actively undertaking their investigations. This way of carrying out in-depth scrutiny is significantly different to doing in-depth reviews at committee. It is more collaborative and more intensive with a large number of different evidence sessions taking place, including some during the day. However, all the informal sessions that take place in relation to each investigation are optional for Members to attend and the scrutiny managers supporting each group produce summaries of all the evidence taken for those unable to attend. Each group will also have a mid-way meeting where all Members can catch up on the work that has been completed so far and feed into plans for the solutions stage. It is envisaged that the TFGs will complete their work by no later than the end of February 2022. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider the response to any recommendations made by the groups and consider whether any follow up work / progress updates on recommendation implementation are required.

4 Financial implications

- 4.1 Scrutiny work is managed within existing budgets. Formal recommendations to the Mayor arising out of any specific work items within select committee work programmes or considered by TFGs are evaluated in the usual way through the process of formal reports. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5 Legal implications

- 5.1 There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

6 Equalities implications

- 6.1 The [Equality Act 2010](#) (The Act) legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society. It replaced the previous anti-discrimination laws with a single act, making the law easier to understand and strengthen protection in certain situations. It covers the following nine protected characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.
- 6.2 The Act also imposes a public sector equality duty. This means that in public bodies, of which this Council is designated, they must consider all individuals in carrying out their day-to-day work when shaping policy, in delivering services and in relation to their own employees. It also requires public bodies to:

- Have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

6.3 The Council recognises diversity is one of its strengths and is committed to creating a more inclusive community. Therefore, having due regard to the Act, is confirmation of the Council’s commitment to eliminating all forms of discrimination against any group within the community and to actively promote an equality of opportunity and positive community partnership.

6.4 The delivery of the Council’s equalities objectives is to be achieved through the delivery of all of the Council’s strategies, plans and procedures. As such, all select committees and other scrutiny bodies, when planning their work and scrutinising items, bear in mind the delivery of the Council’s equality objectives.

6.5 Scrutiny tries to make sure that its work reflects the diversity of Lewisham’s communities and that the views of residents are fairly represented in scrutiny processes. Any recommendations arising from scrutiny work support the Council’s corporate strategy and reflect the needs of local residents.

7 Climate change and environmental implications

7.1 There are no direct climate change or environmental implications arising from this report.

8 Crime and disorder implications

8.1 There are no direct crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

9 Health and wellbeing implications

9.1 There are no direct health and wellbeing implications arising from this report.

10 Glossary

Term	Definition
Overview & Scrutiny	Overview and scrutiny is the way in which Mayor and Cabinet (the ‘Executive’), officers and external organisations are held to account for the decisions that they make. It is led by councillors who are not members of the Executive. They also influence policy development and investigate issues of local concern, making recommendations for improvement.
Overview and Scrutiny Committee	A committee made up of all non-executive councillors which carries out scrutiny focussing on strategic and cross cutting issues.
Overview & Scrutiny Business Panel (OSBP) and Education OSBP	Lewisham has two Business Panels (sub-committees of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee). OS Business Panel is made up of the chair and vice-chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the chair of each of the Select Committees, and two other non-Executive councillors. The main functions of Business Panel are reviewing key decisions once they have been taken (potentially “calling in” key decisions that have been made but not yet implemented);

	<p>coordinating and approving the overall scrutiny work programme; and allocating scrutiny work in the event that it crosses the remit of more than one scrutiny body.</p> <p>Three parent governors and two diocesan representatives sit on the Education Business Panel, alongside the councillors that make up the regular Business Panel. The Education Business Panel reviews (and can call-in) key decisions that are education matters.</p>
Select Committee	Lewisham has six Select Committees (sub-committees of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee), each made up of non-Executive councillors and responsible for scrutinising a specific service area. Select Committees gather evidence to help them review policies and performance and make recommendations to improve outcomes for residents.
Select Committee Work Programmes	The annual programme of work setting out the matters which each select committee will scrutinise over the year.
Task and Finish Group (TFG)	A time limited scrutiny body which gathers evidence in relation to a topical issue of concern in order to make recommendations to improve outcomes for residents.

11 Report author and contact

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