

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30 MARCH 2026

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (CORPORATE POLICY AND SUPPORT)

A.3 WORK PROGRAMME – INCLUDING MONITORING OF PREVIOUS RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY OF FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

The report provides the Committee with its approved Work Programme for 2025/26, feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations from the Committee in respect of enquiries undertaken and a list of forthcoming decisions for which public notice has been given.

SCOPE - THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE REPORT

To support the overview and scrutiny function of the Council, this report seeks to confirm the Committee's focus, through its work programme, for 2025/26 and related information to ensure the Committee can actively address issues within its terms of reference.

INVITEES

None.

BACKGROUND

The then Government Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) issued updated Overview and Scrutiny Statutory Guidance on 22 April 2024, replacing the previous 2019 guidance. The revised document reinforces the central role of scrutiny in ensuring that Local Authorities operate transparently, make evidence-based decisions, and remain accountable to their communities. It emphasises that effective scrutiny is a cornerstone of good governance and should be embedded as a core function rather than treated as an adjunct to executive decision-making.

The 2024 guidance places renewed focus on the culture and behaviours that enable scrutiny to thrive. It highlights the importance of constructive relationships between Senior Officers and Scrutiny Members, underpinned by mutual respect and a shared commitment to democratic accountability. The guidance stresses that scrutiny must be independent, Member-led, and adequately resourced, with councils expected to ensure that committees have access to the information, officer support, and specialist advice necessary to carry out their functions effectively.

A key theme in the updated guidance is the need for scrutiny work programmes to be strategically focused and aligned with the authority's priorities, risks, and performance challenges. Committees are encouraged to adopt a forward-looking, outcome-driven approach, selecting topics that will add demonstrable value for residents. The guidance also reiterates the importance of public engagement, transparency, and clear reporting, ensuring that scrutiny activity is visible and accessible to local communities.

The 2024 update further clarifies expectations around the scrutiny of external partners, including those delivering commissioned or shared services. It reinforces the principle that scrutiny has a legitimate role in examining the effectiveness, value for money, and governance of partnership arrangements, while maintaining a proportionate and collaborative approach. Overall, the revised guidance aims to strengthen the impact of scrutiny across the sector by promoting good practice, improving consistency, and supporting councils to deliver high-quality, accountable public services.

The inclusion of the matters set out in the “purpose of this report” section above seeks to further re-enforce the inter-relationship of the matters referred to. As such, it is designed to support consideration of work programming of the Committee and contribute to addressing progress with the Corporate Plan.

RELEVANT CORPORATE PLAN THEME/ANNUAL CABINET PRIORITY

In considering the Work Programme of enquiries, the Committee must have regard to the Corporate Plan 2024-28 and the themes of that Corporate Plan are:

- Pride in our area and services to residents
- Raising aspirations and creating opportunities
- Championing our local environment
- Working with partners to improve quality of life
- Promoting our heritage offer, attracting visitors and encouraging them to stay longer
- Financial Sustainability and openness

DESIRED OUTCOME OF THE CONSIDERATION OF THIS ITEM

To enable the Committee to effectively plan and prioritise its scrutiny matters for the 2025/26 municipal year, ensuring alignment with the Corporate Plan and maximising impact through focused enquiries. The Committee should confirm the membership of its Task and Finish Groups, consider feedback on previous recommendations, and review forthcoming decisions to inform its strategic direction and oversight responsibilities.

DETAILED INFORMATION

WORK PROGRAMME 2025/26

The details relating to the following matters are set out in the relevant Appendix identified:

- (1) Work Programme for 2025/26 as approved by Full Council on 14 August 2025 – See Appendix A;
- (2) feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations from the Committee in respect of enquiries undertaken – See Appendix B; and
- (3) a list of forthcoming decisions for which notice has been given since publication of the agenda for the Committee’s last meeting – See Appendix C

The Community Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee is one of two overview and scrutiny committees established by the Council to specifically focus on the following areas of Council work (as detailed in Article 6.02(i) of the Council’s Constitution):

“To perform the role of Overview and Scrutiny and its functions in relation to

- *Community Leadership developing the external focus of overview and scrutiny on “district-wide” issues’ (and where appropriate sub regional, regional and national*

issues), in particular through collaborative work with local partner authorities, providers, stakeholders and members of the public.

- Approval of discrete researched and evidenced reviews on the effectiveness of partnership operating in the area with particular focus on:
 - o Community Safety
 - o Health and Well-being
 - o Economy, Skills and Educational Attainment
- Community engagement, development and empowerment
- Economic Development, Regeneration and Freeport East
- Leisure and Tourism (except matters relating to budgets)
- Planning & Building Control and Strategic Planning (including the Local Plan)
- Emergency Planning
- To scrutinize/review the outcomes and implications for the Council of its financial support to community organisations and also from its receipt and use of funds received from local partner organisations.

The Community Leadership Overview & Scrutiny Committee will also act as the Council's designated "crime and disorder committee" for the purposes of Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 and will have the power –

- (a) to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities[*] of their crime and disorder function;
- (b) to make reports or recommendations to the local authority with respect to the discharge of those functions.

*- "The responsible authorities" means the bodies and persons who are responsible authorities within the meaning given by section 5 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (c.37) (authorities responsible for crime and disorder strategies) in relation to the local authority's area.

In fulfilling that function the Community Leadership Overview & Scrutiny Committee will have the power (whether by virtue of section 9F(3) or 21(2) of the Local Government Act 2000 or regulations made under section 9JA(2) or 32(3) of that Act or otherwise) to make a report or recommendation to the local authority with respect to any matter which is a local crime and disorder matter in relation to a member of the authority.

The crime and disorder committee shall meet to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder function as the committee considers appropriate but no less than once in every twelve month period."

The Constitution (Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 7) provides for the two overview and scrutiny committees to submit an annual work programme to full Council for approval.

A review of the Committee's Work Programme in relation to the anticipated Ministerial announcement on the next steps toward Local Government Re-organisation will be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee (currently programmed for 16 June 2026). In the interim, the Chairmen of both Scrutiny Committees will meet with the Leader of the Council, the Deputy Leader, and Senior Officers to consider priorities for the forthcoming municipal year's Work Programmes. Members will be therefore invited to submit any proposals or lines of enquiry they wish to be raised to that meeting in June 2026.

Preparatory work on the work programme for 2026/27 is commencing with the aim of submitting a report to Council on 11 August 2026. This will be accompanied by an annual report on the scrutiny and overview function of the Council for 2025/26. Both of these will be considered by this Committee ahead of submission to Council. All proposals for the work programme and for the content of the annual report from Members of the Committee are particularly welcome.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- a) notes its Work Programme for 2025/26 (Appendix A) and considers both the feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations (Appendix B) and the list of forthcoming decisions (Appendix C);**
- b) notes the remaining contents of the report.**

PREVIOUS RELEVANT DECISIONS

Full Council – 14 August 2025 – adoption of the Work Programme for the Committee

BACKGROUND PAPERS AND PUBLISHED REFERENCE MATERIAL

- **Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2024), Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities. Published 22 April 2024.**
- **Local Government Act 2000 (as amended) – Legislative framework establishing Overview and Scrutiny functions.**
- **Localism Act 2011 – Relevant provisions relating to governance, transparency, and local accountability.**
- **Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017 – Statutory requirements for scrutiny in combined authorities.**
- **Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) – Overview & Scrutiny Development Review (2021)**
- **Tendring District Council Constitution – Article 6 and Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules**

- **Corporate Plan 2024–2028**
- **Full Council Minutes – 14 August 2025**

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Work Programme 2025/26

Appendix B – Recommendations Monitoring

Appendix C – Forthcoming Decisions

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