

# COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

23 JUNE 2026

## REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (CORPORATE POLICY AND SUPPORT)

### A.1 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, including progress with enquiries set out in its Work Programme, feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations from the Committee in respects of enquiries undertaken and a list of forthcoming decisions for which public notice has been given.

This report will also enable the Committee to approve its proposed Work Programme for 2026/27 for submission to Full Council and the approval of the Annual Report for 2025/26.

#### 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 2026/27 scrutiny 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 provides for the two overview and scrutiny committees to submit a work programme to full Council for approval. Rule 7 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules sets out the position as follows:

*“Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee will submit a work programme for the year ahead and a review of the previous year’s activities to the full Council for approval. In addition it will be responsible for co-ordinating and prioritising its work programme on an ongoing basis.*

*In preparing, co-ordinating and prioritising its programme, each Overview and Scrutiny Committee will take into account:-*

- *The General Role and Principles of undertaking its functions, as set out in Part 2 Article 6;*
- *The planned work on the preparation of elements of the Budget and Policy Framework, as set out in the Council's Business Plan;*
- *The need for statutory timetables to be met;*
- *The wishes of all members of the committee;*
- *Requests from the Cabinet to carry out reviews; and*
- *Requests from Group Leaders in accordance with Rule 8.”*

A review of the Committee’s Work Programme, in the context of the anticipated Ministerial announcement regarding the next steps for Local Government Re-organisation, will continue to be monitored as an ongoing item of business.

### **Work Programme – 2026/27**

As part of the preparation for the 2026/27 Work Programme, a consultation was conducted to invite Councillors, partner agencies and members of the public to suggest topics for the Scrutiny Committees’ consideration.

A joint informal meeting of the Council’s two Scrutiny Committees was held on Thursday 4 June 2026 whereby consultation feedback was considered.

The Democratic Services Team have also started talks with both Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees into the creation of the Scrutiny Annual Report for the year 2025/26. This report is to follow as Appendix E.

In relation to the Water Quality Enquiry scoped in the 2025/26 Work Programme, the Committee are yet to undertake a sit visit to Brightlingsea Harbour to examine the application of specialist paint on vessel hulls to prevent barnacle growth without harming the water quality and eco-system.

### **RECOMMENDATION(S)**

**That the Committee:-**

- a) considers its updated Work Programme 2025/26 (Appendix A), feedback to the Committee on the decisions in respect of previous recommendations (Appendix C) and the list of relevant forthcoming decisions (Appendix D);**

- b) endorses the membership appointment of the Youth Mental Health Task and Finish Group as set out in the Committee's Work Programme 2026/27 (Appendix B);**
- c) approves its proposed work programme for 2026/27 for its submission to Full Council; and**
- d) 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 – Work Programme 2026/27

Appendix C – Recommendations Monitoring

Appendix D – Forthcoming Decisions

Appendix E – Annual Report 2025/26

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