

Report to:

COUNCIL

Relevant Officer:

Sharon Davis, Scrutiny Manager

Relevant Member:

Councillor Maxine Callow, Scrutiny Lead Member

Date of Meeting:

30 November 2022

SCRUTINY UPDATE REPORT

1.0 Purpose of the report:

1.1 To update Council on the scrutiny activity undertaken in the 2022/2023 Municipal Year to date.

2.0 Recommendation(s):

2.1 That Council considers the work carried out by scrutiny, seeking further information from the Scrutiny Lead Member as appropriate.

3.0 Reasons for recommendation(s):

3.1 To ensure Council has an overview of the work of the Scrutiny Leadership Board and Scrutiny Committees at the Council.

3.2 Is the recommendation contrary to a plan or strategy adopted or approved by the Council? No

3.3 Is the recommendation in accordance with the Council's approved budget? Yes

4.0 Other alternative options to be considered:

4.1 None.

5.0 Council priority:

5.1 The relevant Council priorities are:

- The economy: Maximising growth and opportunity across Blackpool
- Communities: Creating stronger communities and increasing resilience.

6.0 Background information

6.1 As part of the North West Employer's scrutiny review it was recommended that the Scrutiny function reported to Council on a regular basis in order to raise the profile of Scrutiny and ensure Council was fully informed of activity. This report summaries the work carried out to date in the 2022/2023 Municipal Year.

6.2 Scrutiny Leadership Board (SLB)

The SLB concluded its review into Channel Shift in the earlier part of the Municipal Year. The review made a series of recommendations all of which were supported by the Executive. The next step for the Board will be to monitor the implementation of the recommendations and regular updates will be requested in order to achieve this.

The Board itself turns its focus now to the scrutiny of the budget for 2023/2024 and is undertaking regular financial and key performance indicator scrutiny through its regular meetings. It is also maintaining a watching brief on the implementation of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy.

6.3 Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee (CYP)

The CYP Scrutiny Committee has had a very busy six months since the start of the Municipal Year carrying out short reviews into Young People Classed as Not in Education, Employment or Training and the Special Educational Needs Written Statement of Actions. It has also received briefings on the Safety Valve Programme and tours of The Platform and the Oracle.

The Committee has two ongoing reviews, one into the Recovery Spend Premium during which Members are scheduled to meet with a number of primary school headteachers to discuss with them how additional resources allocated during Covid had been spent and also jointly with the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee on the mental health of young men aged 18-25. Both reviews are scheduled to conclude prior to the start of the pre-election period.

6.4 Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee

The Committee's current focus is on the development of the new Integrated Care Board and ensuring that the relationships with the NHS are renewed and strengthened. Other key areas of focus for the Committee have included Maternity Services at Blackpool Teaching Hospitals Trust with whom a frank and emotional meeting was held in order to discuss the outcomes of the recent Care Quality Commission inspection and the continued work on mental health services improvement with Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust.

The Committee has recently concluded a review into dentistry and oral health and will be contributing to the Council's Oral Health Strategy in January 2023. The review into dentistry considered large amounts of data and information from NHS England who commissions dentistry in Blackpool as well as feedback and input from Healthwatch Blackpool and local residents and during the course of the review learnt about the changes that would be made to services over the coming months. The review therefore recommended that the subject be reviewed further in September 2023 once it was clear of the impact of the changes being implemented.

Briefings have also been received on the Pathology Collaboration and the Committee is keeping a close eye on developments in that area.

6.5 Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee (TEC)

The Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee has recently concluded its review on Short Term Lettings, the recommendations of which will be considered by the Executive in January 2023. It will be conducting its annual review of the Community Safety Partnership in January 2023 as well as taking a look at the changes proposed to CCTV in the town.

As part of its regular review of previous review recommendations, the Committee has focussed on the recommendations made by the housing and homelessness review and how these have been implemented with regular reporting back to the Committee. Also considered by the Committee, the Health of the Ocean recommendation on the Council agenda and the development of the Council's Cultural Plan.

In addition, Members have been regularly reviewing the progress made against the Climate Change Action Plan.

6.6 Conclusions of Scrutiny Lead Member

The past few months have been particularly busy for Scrutiny Members and I would like to thank my colleagues for their time and dedication. The reviews we have carried out are all of importance with some complex subjects dealt with. I continue to meet regularly with the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members are regularly engaged with all types of scrutiny meetings ensuring the relationship between the Executive and Scrutiny continues to build.

We are in the process of concluding all ongoing scrutiny work to ensure it is completed before the start of the pre-election period ready for the new Committees to develop their workplans in the next Municipal Year. I would like to highlight a few particular pieces of work which I feel have really set the bar high for scrutiny in Blackpool so far this year. The Channel Shift review was an incredibly lengthy and detailed look at what channel shift truly means and the recommendations identified, in my view, will have a positive impact on many isolated residents once they have been implemented.

I would like to highlight the work of the Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny Committee and their efforts to continue to challenge the leaders of the NHS Trusts operating in Blackpool, something which can be particularly difficult for a Scrutiny Committee. Their work to consider the key issue of dentistry in the town was also of significant importance given the difficulties many of residents have in accessing a dentist.

The Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee has worked hard to build relationships with Children's Services and the positive outcomes of this can be evidenced by the increasing involvement of Committee Members in the development of new strategies and programmes such as the SEND Written Statement and the Safety Valve Programme.

The Tourism, Economy and Communities Scrutiny Committee must also be highlighted for its ongoing work in monitoring the recommendations made in relation to housing and homelessness. As part of the drive to ensure recommendations are implemented properly and assess any impact made by those recommendations, we are hoping to develop a tool that will allow reviews such as this to demonstrate the impact they have had and hope to use the housing and homelessness review as a pilot for this.

6.7 Does the information submitted include any exempt information? No

7.0 List of Appendices:

7.1 None.

8.0 Financial considerations:

8.1 None associated with this report.

9.0 Legal considerations:

9.1 None.

10.0 Risk management considerations:

10.1 None.

11.0 Equalities considerations:

11.1 None.

12.0 Sustainability, climate change and environmental considerations:

12.1 None.

13.0 Internal/external consultation undertaken:

13.1 None.

14.0 Background papers:

14.1 None.