

Report title: Summary of Committee activity since September 2017	
Report to: Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee	
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Date: September 2018	For: Information
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Remit

As defined in Essex County Council's (ECC) Constitution, the Committee has a scrutiny oversight role for the following:

- The overall strategic direction, policies and priorities of the Cabinet and of Council
- The Council's financial position and management of the council's finances and budgets (revenue and capital)
- Corporate policies
- Internal and external communications
- Customer Contact Centre
- Registrations of births, deaths and marriages
- Coroners
- Matters relating to the activities of support services including:
 - Commercial/Procurement
 - Property and Facilities management
 - Legal Services
 - Performance and Organisational Intelligence
 - Transformation
 - Internal Audit
 - Risk and Insurance
 - Health and Safety
 - I.T
 - Human Resources
 - Business Support
 - Democratic Services
- The Council's role as an employer
- Services which operate via a trading account
- Essex companies and other legal entities (and ECC's shareholder role)
- Democratic engagement and representation.

Leadership

The Chairman has established the following to assist work planning:

- Monthly Chairman and Vice-Chairman meetings

- Committee pre-meet ahead of the full meeting to identify key lines of enquiry/questions for the officers presenting at the meeting.

Scrutiny Format

To date, all scrutiny work has been undertaken in full committee, which has been held at County Hall.

Workload Analysis

Over the last 12 months, the committee has looked at the topics listed in the table below. In summary, the committee has held:

- 10 formal committee meetings
- 1 private committee meeting
- 1 formal call-in meeting
- 1 Task and Finish Group.

The committee has:

- Investigated and derived its own work programme
- Established and completed one Task and Finish Group review
- Considered 18 substantive formal items of business (plus the report back from the Task and Finish Group)
- Considered one call-in at full committee. The majority of the committee supported the Cabinet decision.
- A further call-in was withdrawn at the informal stage following a meeting with the relevant Cabinet Member.

The Task and Finish Group made 6 formal recommendations around the procurement of ECC's resourcing services.

Considerations for future planning

The committee may wish to consider the following:

- Consider the current processes for developing the work programme and what works well and what can be improved?
- Consider if there are areas that need greater attention in the year ahead or which have not been looked at yet which should
- Consider how potential outcomes from a session are created. What actions can arise from an item other than just asking for a future update?

Work undertaken since September 2017

Topic	
Conclusion of the Member Enquiries Task and Finish Group (initially commenced January 2017)	Committee received an update on the recommendations put forward by the Task and Finish Group. Future updates were given at two further meetings
Coroner's Service	Committee received an update on the number of referrals made to the

	service
Commercial Property Fund	Committee received a briefing on the implementation of ECC's Commercial Property Fund, particularly around the criteria
Parking Partnerships	Committee received a briefing from Essex Highways officers
Procurement	Committee received a briefing from officers on the current position of ECC's procurement service. A Task & Finish Group was set up as a result of this briefing
Budget 2019/20: Pre-scrutiny	Committee received information on the budget setting process, how the budget is set, the type of influence the committee can have on this and timescales
2017/18 Financial Provisional Out-turn	This is a standing item on the work programme. The committee received an update on the 2017/18 financial position
Grants Update and Criteria	Committee received an up to date position on the ECC Grants
Borrowing	Information on ECC's borrowing position was presented to the committee
Fees and Charges	Information on the fees and charges ECC receive was presented to the committee
Statutory Consultations	Committee received an update on ECC's process for undertaking public consultations

Scrutiny Survey

Members may wish to note that witnesses attending scrutiny sessions will be invited to complete a Scrutiny Survey on their experience, taking in questions on how they were briefed and general preparation for the item, as well as the scrutiny session itself.

Survey results and feedback are considered by the Scrutiny Board twice a year. Any significant issues about the operation of this committee would be picked up the Corporate Policy and Scrutiny Committee Chairman, who is a member of the Scrutiny Board.