



**Report to:** Cabinet 12 September 2022

**Lead Cabinet Members:** All

**From:** Councillor Stephen Drew, Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee  
Councillor Graham Cone, Vice-Chair of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

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## Update from Scrutiny and Overview Committee

### Purpose

1. This report is to inform Cabinet about relevant discussion among members of the Scrutiny and Overview Committee at their meeting on 26 July 2022 and to make the recommendation at paragraph 2.

### 2022-23 Quarter One Performance Report

### Recommendation from the Scrutiny and Overview Committee

2. Having reviewed the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) results and narrative at Appendix A to the report from the Head of Transformation, Human Resources and Corporate Services and progress against Business Plan actions at Appendix B to that report, and subject to the comments below, the Scrutiny and Overview Committee endorses the report, noting
  - a. the addition of new KPIs (PN519, AH230 and CC314) and the rationale for each of these, as detailed within the comments section of Appendix A; and
  - b. the addition of the new 'Outlook RAG' column in the KPI report at Appendix A (as detailed at paragraph 8 of the aforementioned report).

### Comments

3. Committee members made the following comments
  - It must be clear how KPIs such as CC314 (Percentage of public hybrid meetings run without issues causing downtime exceeding five minutes) are going to be monitored.

- It must also be clear how data such as that gathered in CC307 (Average call answer time in seconds) will be used to achieve an improved outcome in future.
- Cabinet must address the reasons for past under performance in order to achieve improved performance in future. Particular reference was made to CC305 (Percentage of formal complaints resolved within timescale). The Committee welcomed the extra resource put in place to eliminate the planning complaints backlog as at the end of June 2022.
- The Committee recognised that South Cambridgeshire is a growth area, and that Extension of Time Agreements had an important part to play in providing an effective planning service. Members encouraged Cabinet to pay particular attention to strengthening performance under PN511 (Percentage of non-major planning applications determined within eight weeks or agreed timescale).
- With regard to C2(iv) of the Business Plan Progress Report (Six free trees initiative), and if not already carried out, Cabinet should consider an audit of previously offered trees to assess success of the scheme to date. Moving forward, Cabinet should insist on the use of irrigation rings to ensure effective management of newly planted trees.
- Referring to B4 (Improve the energy efficiency of existing Council housing), the Cabinet might want to consider extending the issue of Energy Performance Certificates to the private sector. Committee members recognised though that this was not viable at the moment and might not be feasible at all.
- With regard to A2 (Skills and training) Cabinet should continue to work closely with the Greater Cambridge Partnership and Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority to develop a formal engagement programme with local schools and employers but avoid any duplication of effort.
- With regard to C3(i) (Complete retrofit of South Cambridgeshire Hall), the Committee welcomed the fact that energy generation data would clearly be visible to Members and staff in, and visitors to, the Council offices. Members were pleased to note that battery storage would be investigated at some point in the future.
- With regard to D6 (working with communities), the Cabinet must seek as much integration as possible between Lifelines and the Integrated Care System.

### **Scrutiny at South Cambridgeshire District Council – a new approach**

4. This report was made to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee and its decision is reported here for Cabinet's information.

5. The Scrutiny and Overview Committee Chair and Vice-Chair are keen to enhance the role of the Committee and of its members in such a way as to give non-Executive Councillors and, through them, residents a more prominent voice in influencing and helping to shape future decisions affecting both the Council and district.
6. While there is no intention of moving away from pre-scrutiny, there is a desire to supplement this with the scrutiny of topics not on the Cabinet's Forward Plan of Key and Non-Key decisions. Suggestions for scrutiny topics are being invited from all Members in accordance with the scrutiny procedure rules.
7. Committee members endorsed the idea of considering for scrutiny topics not on the Forward Plan. They would consider in each case whether to
  - review by the full Committee, or
  - review by a sub-Committee / working group, or
  - engage in some form of community outreach, or
  - establish a Task and Finish Group, or
  - decline to review
8. So long as topics were not already being looked at by another Council body, or had not recently been analysed, would then be added to the scrutiny work programme for the year as appropriate, considering the amount of preparatory work required to bring a full report to Committee.

### **Comments**

9. The Chair and Vice-Chair commended the new approach as open and transparent, extending to all non-executive Members the opportunity to contribute to the scrutiny process.
10. The Chief Executive emphasised the importance of Questions 6 and 7 on the topic suggestion form. These asked whether the Member submitting the suggestion had previously contacted the relevant Head of Service and Lead Cabinet Member about the topic and, if so, what the outcome had been, in order to avoid duplication.
11. By affirmation, the Scrutiny and Overview Committee approved the proposal for a formal procedure for the scrutiny of items not on the Forward Plan of Cabinet decisions alongside pre-scrutiny.

### **Report Author:**

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