

AGENDA ITEM 7**REPORT TO THE TEES VALLEY
COMBINED AUTHORITY CABINET****2nd JULY 2021****REPORT OF CHAIR OF OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE****OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT****SUMMARY**

This report summarises the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee for the period of May 2020 to April 2021.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Tees Valley Combined Authority Cabinet note the detail of the report and the work of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee over the last 12 months.

DETAIL**THE COMMITTEE**

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee consists of 15 members, 3 nominated from each Constituent Authority. The Committee is required, as far as reasonably practical, to reflect the balance of political parties of the Constituent Authorities collectively.
2. The Constitution of the TVCA was amended in July 2020 to allow for substitute members to be appointed to Overview & Scrutiny Committee. There are therefore now also 15 substitute members.
3. The objective of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to scrutinise and support the decision-making of the Combined Authority Cabinet and the Tees Valley Mayor.
4. This includes:
 - monitoring the decisions or other actions taken by the Cabinet and/or Mayor and submitting reports and making recommendations for improvements or change
 - Reviewing the Strategies and policies of the Combined Authority and holding the Mayor, other Cabinet members, and officers, to account for their delivery.
5. The Committee has the power to “call-in” for review or scrutiny decisions made by the Combined Authority before they are implemented.
6. The Chair of the Committee for the period of 2020-2021 has been Councillor Norma Stephenson OBE, Stockton Borough Council. The Vice-Chair has been Councillor John Hobson, Middlesbrough Borough Council.

7. For the period of May 2020-April 2021 the Committee had 5 meetings scheduled.
8. Due to the exceptional circumstance surrounding the outbreak of Covid 19 in March 2020 the March and May 2020 meetings were cancelled. This delayed the meetings for the following municipal year resulting in meetings commencing in August 2020.
9. The Committee have therefore met 4 times during the period of May 2020 – April 2021.
10. The Mayor has not attended any meetings of the Committee during this year.
11. Under the Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 meetings this year have all taken place via video link and have been streamed live to allow public access.
12. The Committee have continued to utilise the smaller task & finish group to focus on financial aspects of the Combined Authority. The group met to scrutinise the proposed budget.
13. The Chief Executive provides a written update of key activities undertaken by the Combined Authority in advance of each meeting and attends the meetings to give a verbal update and answer any questions. There is also the facility for the committee to provide written questions to the Chief Executive in advance of meetings.
14. The Committee has not utilised its power of “call-in” in the period of May 2020-April 2021.
15. All 4 meetings held have been quorate meetings. For the first time since the Committee was created attendance has not been an issue. This is deemed likely to be due to the meetings being held remotely via Microsoft Teams and the provision for Substitute Members.

2019-2020 WORK PROGRAMME

16. The Committee have carried out their Overview and Scrutiny duties in some of the key areas of Combined Authority business.

- i. Portfolio Updates**

The Committee received a full update from the Portfolio holder in each of the following areas of Combined Authority business:

- Education, Employment & Skills – Cllr Bob Cook

The Committee were presented with a report providing an update on the progress made in delivering the Education Employment and Skills Strategy; 'Inspiring Our Future' (2018-21). The Portfolio holder attended the meeting to answer questions and provide any further information where requested.

- Local Enterprise Partnership – Paul Booth.

A report was provided to the Committee on activity relating to the Tees Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) over the past year. The Portfolio holder attended the meeting to answer questions and provide any further information where requested.

- Business Growth – Mayor Andy Preston

A paper was circulated giving an overview of the Business Growth Portfolio. The Portfolio holder attended the meeting to answer questions and provide any further information where requested.

- Culture Task Force – Cllr Shane Moore

Annabel Turpin, as Chair of the Culture Task Force, attended the November 2020 meeting and delivered a presentation giving an update on the work of the Taskforce

ii. South Tees Development Corporation

The Committee have had regular updates from the Chief Executive with regard to the progress of the South Tees Development Corporation. At the November 2020 meeting a report was provided updating the Committee on the acquisition of South Tees Site Company (STSC) by STDC following the successful Compulsory Purchase Order granted in April 2020. Moving forward it is agreed that the Committee will be provided with STDC Quarterly Monitoring reports which are submitted to Government.

iii. Budget

The committee continue to utilise the smaller “Finance and Resources Sub-Committee” task and finish group to look at matters relating to the Budget and Financial aspects of TVCA.

Membership of this Committee consists of 5 councillors representing 3 of the 5 Constituent Authorities. The Chair of the Committee is Cllr John Hobson of Middlesbrough Borough Council.

Questions from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee members regarding the budget for 2021-2022 were put forward to the Group Director of Finance and Resources at a meeting designated specifically for budget scrutiny. The sessions allowed the questions to be answered in detail and further information to be provided where necessary.

A final report was provided to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at their January meeting and was subsequently submitted to Cabinet for consideration.

iv. Teesside International Airport

Members were provided with an update on Teesside Airport in the August 2020 meeting but expressed disappointment with the lack of detail made available to them. Members felt that scrutiny was not able to be fully carried out due to lack of available information. A further update was therefore scheduled for January 2021 meeting where Members were provided with a further update and the Airport Business Plan.

v. Freeport Bid

A presentation was delivered to Members explaining the detail of the Freeport bid. A paper and supporting documents were also circulated to give a full background to the submitted bid and an overview of the benefits of securing a Freeport for the Tees Valley.

vi. SQW Gateway Review

A report was provided detailing the findings of SQW at their 5 year Gateway Review. A presentation was delivered to the committee giving an overview of the detail of the report.

2019 - 2020 WORK PROGRAMME

17. The work programme for 2021 – 2022 is to be agreed. A discussion on the priorities and work programme for these meetings will be taking place at the first meeting of the Committee following the AGM. A work programme for the year ahead will be drafted following this meeting.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

18. None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

19. None

RISK ASSESSMENT

20. Not Applicable

CONSULTATION

21. Not Applicable

Name of Contact Officer: Sharon Jones
Post Title: Governance & Scrutiny Officer
Telephone Number: 01642 524 580
Email Address: sharon.jones@teesvalley-ca.gov.uk