

AGENDA ITEM 6**REPORT TO THE TEES VALLEY
COMBINED AUTHORITY CABINET****28 JUNE 2019****REPORT OF THE 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 2018 to April 2019.

The report will be presented to Cabinet by the Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet note the report.

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 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.
3. 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.
4. The Committee has the power to “call-in” for review or scrutiny decisions made by the Combined Authority before they are implemented.
5. The Chair of the Committee for the period of 2018-2019 has been Councillor Norma Stephenson OBE, Stockton Borough Council. The Vice-Chair has been Councillor Ian Haszeldine, Darlington Borough Council.

6. For the period of May 2018- April 2019 the Committee have had 8 scheduled meetings. They usually meet every 6 weeks where possible to do so.
7. In addition to the ordinary meetings the Committee have also met for one additional special meeting to discuss Durham Tees Valley Airport.
8. The Committee have also established a smaller task & finish group who meet to focus on financial aspects of the Combined Authority. The group have held regular meetings throughout the year to scrutinise both the budget and the Tees Valley Investment Plan.
9. The Chief Executive provides a written update of key activities undertaken by the Combined Authority in advance of each meeting and also 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.
10. The Tees Valley Mayor has attended 4 of the 8 scheduled meetings and the additional special meeting to present information and answers questions from the Committee.
11. The Committee has not felt it necessary to utilise their power of “call-in” throughout the period of May 2018-April 2019.
12. Of the 10 meetings held to date 2 of these have not been quorate and therefore no decisions could be made. Attendance has continued to be an issue at a number of meetings with some of the Constituent Authorities being continually better represented than others. This issue will continue to be fed back to the authorities via Chief Executives and Leaders in the hope that attendance at the meetings will improve in future.

2018-2019 WORK PROGRAMME

13. 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:

- Culture, Tourism & Innovation – Mayor David Budd
- Transport – Cllr Stephen Harker
- Investment & Business Growth - Cllr Sue Jeffrey
- Education, Employment & Skills – Cllr Christopher Akers-Belcher
- Local Enterprise Partnership – Paul Booth

For each briefing the Committee were presented with a paper giving a full overview of the work ongoing and priorities in each specific Portfolio area. The Portfolio holder for each area then attended the meeting of the Committee to answer questions and provide any further information where requested.

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. They have had the opportunity to ask questions regarding the Corporation and request further information where required. The Governance relationship between the Tees Valley Combined Authority and South Tees Development Corporation has been explained and the Committee are aware that any decisions which may result in a financial, environmental or statutory liability to the Combined Authority must be referred to Cabinet for ratification. In this scenario it would then be permissible for the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise such decisions.

iii. Budget

The Committee agreed to continue to utilise the smaller task and finish group previously assigned to look specifically at the budget and this group was subsequently named as "Finance and Resources Sub Committee". Membership of this Committee consists of 5 councillors representing 4 of the 5 Constituent Authorities. The Chair of the Committee is Cllr Ian Haszeldine of Darlington Borough Council.

Questions from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee members regarding the budget for 2019-2020 were collated by Cllr Ian Haszeldine and these were put forward to the Head of Finance and Finance Manager at two meetings designated specifically for budget scrutiny. The sessions allowed the questions to be answered in detail and further information to be provided where necessary.

A full report from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee was provided to Cabinet as part of the budget consultation process, this details all of the questions submitted from the Committee and the full responses to these.

iv. Tees Valley Investment Plan

As part of the final budget report presented to Cabinet disappointment was expressed that the Committee had not been given the opportunity to scrutinise the Tees Valley Investment Plan alongside the budget. The Committee received assurances that in future this would be made possible. Subsequently the Finance and Resources Sub-committee have convened for a meeting to allow them to scrutinise the newly published ten year Investment Plan. In the same format as the budget the questions and answers and outcomes of the meeting were fed back to the full Committee.

v. Durham Tees Valley Airport

A special meeting of the Committee was held on 20th December 2018 for discussion around the purchase of the airport. Members of Audit &

Governance Committee and Transport Committee were also invited to attend this meeting. The meeting allowed members to understand the proposals for acquisition of the airport and ask any questions in light of these proposals. Proposals were discussed further at the next scheduled meeting of the Committee with Mayor Houchen outlining the economic and financial case for the proposed acquisition and associated Business Plan. The Committee members were once again able to ask any questions to allow them to gain full understanding and insight into the process undertaken by the Combined Authority.

vi. Scrutiny Study: Diversity in the Tees Valley Combined Authority membership

At its 7th June 2018 meeting the Committee agreed to the Combined Authority Cabinet's request that an Overview & Scrutiny Study be carried out into the diversity of the membership of the Cabinet and Statutory Committees of the Tees Valley Combined Authority. A working group, consisting of the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee and Cllr Matthew Storey, supported by the Combined Authority Strategy Director and Governance & Scrutiny Officer, was established to carry out this study. Extensive research and evidence gathering has been carried out by the working group and a draft report has been compiled. The report is submitted to Cabinet today (separate agenda item) and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee are asking for the Combined Authority or the Mayor to consider the report and any recommendations and respond to the committee, within 2 months of submission, indicating what (if any) action the Combined Authority proposes to take.

vii. Briefings and updates

During this civic year members have requested, and been provided with, briefing notes from the Combined Authority relating to Hydraulic Fracturing, regional teacher numbers, efforts being made to reduce the Carbon Footprint of the Tees Valley and the devolution of the Adult Education Budget.

2019 - 2020 WORK PROGRAMME

14. The Committee has 7 proposed meetings scheduled from July 2019 – April 2020. 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

15. None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

16. None

RISK ASSESSMENT

17. Not Applicable

CONSULTATION

18. Not Applicable

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