

AGENDA ITEM 9**REPORT TO THE TEES VALLEY
COMBINED AUTHORITY CABINET****24th JULY 2020****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 2019 to April 2020.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Cabinet note the detail of 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 2019-2020 has been Councillor Norma Stephenson OBE, Stockton Borough Council. The Vice-Chair has been Councillor Denise Rooney, Middlesbrough Borough Council.
6. For the period of May 2019- April 2020 the Committee had 5 meetings scheduled. The exceptional circumstance surrounding the outbreak of Covid 19 in March 2020 meant that both the March and May 2020 meetings were cancelled. The Committee next met on the delayed date of 18th June 2020.

7. In addition to the ordinary meetings Members have also met for one additional meeting, which was scheduled due to a Call in by the Committee.
8. The Committee have therefore met 4 times during the period of May 2019 – April 2020.
9. 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.
10. 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.
11. The Committee has utilised its power of “call-in” once in the period of May 2019-April 2020. This was in relation to changes to the Constitution. The Call in was not upheld as the meeting to agree this was inquorate.
12. Of the 4 meetings held to date 2 of these, this includes the call-in meeting, have not been quorate and therefore no decisions could be made. Attendance has continued to be an issue at meetings.
13. The Chair has expressed her disappointment with regard to quorum issues on a number of occasions and has requested that the issue of substitute members be looked into once again. She has written, and received a response from, Robert Jenrick, MP regarding this matter and it has been agreed that a change to the constitution can be made to allow the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to operate with substitute members.

2019-2020 WORK PROGRAMME

14. 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 – Cllr Shane Moore

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

- Transport – Cllr Heather Scott

The Committee received a presentation from Tom Bryant, Head of Transport & Infrastructure and Cllr Heather Scott, Portfolio Holder for Transport. The presentation gave an overview of the Strategic Transport Plan.

Updates for Education, Employment & Skills and for the LEP were scheduled for the March meeting. Update papers were circulated to the Committee and Cllr Cook and Paul Booth were scheduled to attend to answer any questions. The meeting was subsequently cancelled due to Covid 19.

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 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 Denise Rooney of Middlesbrough Borough Council.

Questions from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee members regarding the budget for 2020-2021 were collated by Cllr Rooney and these were put forward to the 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 full report was provided to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee at their January meeting but as the meeting was not quorate the report was not approved for submission to Cabinet for consideration.

iv. Durham Tees Valley Airport

Kate Willard from Stobart attended a meeting of the Committee to give a verbal update on progress with the Airport. She was able to provide an overview of progress to date, planned future developments and also answer questions from Committee members.

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

In June 2018 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 was carried out by the working group and a draft report was compiled. The draft report was agreed by the former members of the Committee, but membership then changed and when presented to the new Committee questions regarding the detail and recommendations within the study were raised. After discussion a vote was taken as to whether the report is agreed for submission to Cabinet. It was decided by a majority vote not to progress the report at this stage.

2019 - 2020 WORK PROGRAMME

15. The work programme for 2020 – 2021 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

16. None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

17. None

RISK ASSESSMENT

18. Not Applicable

CONSULTATION

19. Not Applicable

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