

Southend-on-Sea City Council

Agenda
Item No.

Report of Interim Executive Director
(Strategy, Change & Governance)
to

Place Scrutiny Committee, People Scrutiny Committee
and Policy & Resources Scrutiny Committee

4th, 6th and 7th July 2022

Report prepared by: S. Tautz
(Principal Democratic Services Officer)

Joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project 2021/22 – ‘Enabling Councillors to be Effective’

Part 1 (Public Agenda Item)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To present the draft report of the joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project undertaken on behalf of the three scrutiny committees for 2021/22.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the report and recommendations arising from the joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project, detailed at Section 12 of the attached report, be agreed.
- 2.2 That the Chair of the Project Team for the joint In Depth Scrutiny Project (Councillor J Moyies) present the report and recommendations of the scrutiny project to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

3. Background

- 3.1 At the cycle of meetings in July 2021, the Place Scrutiny Committee (Minute 107), the People Scrutiny Committee (Minute 116) and the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee (Minute 134) each agreed that a single joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project be undertaken on behalf of the three committees during the 2021/22 municipal year on the theme of ‘Enabling Councillors to be Effective’, as part of the respective scrutiny work programmes for the year.
- 3.2 In the context of the Southend 2050 Vision and concerns previously raised by members in regard to the effectiveness of the current ‘Councillor Queries’ process and other arrangements to support councillors, the agreed scope of the in-depth scrutiny project was:
- (a) To identify and review current arrangements for the provision of support that councillors need to carry out their elected role, focusing on the “Councillor role” rather than the specific requirements of members of the Cabinet, the Shadow Cabinet or the chairs of committees.

- (b) To identify any 'quick wins' in terms of aspects of the main areas of focus of the project and to understand other ongoing activity that relates to the aims of the project to ensure joined-up arrangements.
 - (c) Where relevant, to feed into the separate review to be undertaken of the Council's Constitution by the General Purposes Committee, to which all members of the Council will have a separate opportunity to contribute.
 - (d) To complement the work of the design group currently looking at councillor development as part of the leadership programme.
- 3.3 The Project Team for the joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project comprised the following members appointed by the Council on 15 July 2021:
- Councillors B Beggs, K Buck, T Cowdrey, K Evans, A Line, J Moyies, D Nelson, I Shead and A Thompson.
- 3.4 Councillor J Moyies was appointed Chair of the Project Team at its meeting on 19 August 2021. The Project Team was supported by relevant officers including S Meah-Sims (Interim Executive Director (Strategy, Change and Governance)), T Row (Principal Democratic Services Officer) and S Tautz (Principal Democratic Services Officer/Project Co-ordinator). Other officer support was provided in respect of specific elements of the in-depth scrutiny project:
- 3.5 Progress with regard to the joint in-depth scrutiny project was achieved throughout the 2021/22 municipal year, including the development of an action plan, a comprehensive work programme and the receipt of relevant presentations. Although the progress of the project was delayed slightly as a result of the unfortunate local events that occurred in October 2021, efforts were made to ensure that the timescale for the delivery of the project was maintained and that the project was completed by the end of the 2021/22 municipal year.
- 3.6 The report and recommendations arising from the completion of the Joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project will be presented to the Committee by Councillor J Moyies, as Chair of the Project Team.

4. Joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project - Report and Recommendations

- 4.1 The report arising from the Joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project is attached as Appendix 1 and the recommendations of the Project Team are set out in Section 12 of the report. These have been agreed by the Project Team.
- 4.2 A number of the recommendations arising from the in-depth scrutiny project have budget implications that will require consideration as part of current and future years' budget processes prior to implementation.
- 4.3 The Committee is recommended to endorse the recommendations of the joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project, for consideration by the Cabinet.
- 4.4 In accordance with Scrutiny Procedure Rule 10 (Part 4 (e) of the Constitution), the report and recommendations of an In-Depth Scrutiny Project would normally be presented to the Cabinet by the chair of the relevant scrutiny committee. As

the scrutiny project for 2021/22 has been undertaken jointly on behalf of each the three committees, it is suggested that the report and recommendations arising from the project should be presented to the Cabinet by Councillor J Moyies as Chair of the Project Team.

5. Other Options

5.1 Not applicable

6. Reasons for Recommendations

6.1 Not applicable

7. Corporate Implications

7.1 Contribution to the Southend 2050 Road Map

As described in the report of the joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project

7.2 Financial Implications

Any recommendations with financial implications will need to go through the annual budgetary process before implementation.

7.3 Legal Implications

None

7.4 People Implications

As described in the report of the joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project

7.5 Property Implications

As described in the report of the joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project

7.6 Consultation

As described in the report of the joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project

7.7 Equalities and Diversity Implications

None

7.8 Risk Assessment

None

7.9 Value for Money

None

7.10 Community Safety Implications

None

7.11 Environmental Impact

None

8. Background Papers

Notes of meetings of the Project Team for the joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project

9. Appendices

Draft final report of the joint In-Depth Scrutiny Project - 'Enabling Councillors to be Effective.'