

Report to Council

Date of meeting: 25 July 2023

Chairman: Councillor D Wixley

Democratic Services Officer: G Woodhall (01992 564243)



Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That the Overview and Scrutiny progress report for July 2023 be noted.**

Report:

1. Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 20 April 2023

1.1 The Committee received its annual presentation from the Epping Forest Youth Council on its activities and achievements during 2022/23, and its plans for the 2023/24 municipal year. Members were full of admiration for the continued excellent work undertaken by the Youth Council, and thanked the Officers for the support that they gave to the Youth Council. The Committee also received the Corporate Plan Quarter 4 Performance Monitoring report and highlighted that it would be useful if the types of Customer Service complaints were highlighted so that the relevant Scrutiny Committee could ascertain if there were any generic complaints.

1.2 The Committee also considered a draft of its Annual Report and requested that any further comments should be sent in in good time for the Report's final approval at the next meeting on 18 July 2023.

1.3 The Select Committee Chairmen had reported on their separate work programmes from their recent meetings. It was felt that the level of Scrutiny undertaken by Members had improved during the municipal year, and the external training had assisted Members in understanding what Scrutiny entailed. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee also reviewed progress against its work programme. Finally, the Executive's Key Decision List was reviewed, and questions asked of the Cabinet members in attendance.

2. Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 18 July 2023

2.1 The Committee received its annual presentation from the Leader of Council, which outlined the Cabinet's priorities for the forthcoming municipal year. The Committee noted that sound financial management, implementation of the Local Plan, the Council Housebuilding Programme, the Waste Management Service, Customer Service and the continued provision of non-statutory services were the executive priorities for 2023/24.

2.2 The Committee considered three quarterly monitoring reports, namely: 2022/23 Quarter 4 Budget Monitoring; Qualis Quarter 2 Monitoring; and Corporate Performance for Quarter 1. The Committee felt that some of the targets for Corporate Performance were too low; the target for first point resolution of customer queries should be higher than the 45% listed and this would be checked, but the Council's 60% target for recycling was quite high in comparison with regional and national targets. The Committee when considering the Budget Monitoring report also sought reassurance that measures were in hand to reduce the current level of bad debts incurred by the Council. The Committee also received a report on the future management arrangements of the Epping Forest District Museum, in part 2 of the meeting when the public and press had been excluded.

2.3 The Committee noted the updates provided by the Chairmen of the Two Scrutiny Committees and agreed new terms of reference for both Committees. The Committee also

reviewed its own Work Programme and agreed that an all-Member Briefing should be arranged for the Autumn to consider the proposals being discussed by the Joint Health Scrutiny Committee for Whipps Cross Hospital. Responses from interested parties were required to be received by November 2023. The Committee also agreed its Annual Report to the Council, which will be considered at this meeting. As usual, the Committee reviewed the Executive's current Key Decision List.