

East Herts Council Report

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 23 March 2021

Report by: The Scrutiny Officer

Report title: Annual Scrutiny Report 2019/20

Ward(s) affected: All Wards

Summary

- This report introduces the Overview and Scrutiny Annual report 2019-20 on behalf of the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee for that year and provides an overview of what Overview and Scrutiny scrutinised during this period. Members are asked to comment on the Annual Report prior to its consideration and approval by Council. Although Covid-19 has been an ever present danger since March 2020, legislation introduced by Parliament has allowed scheduled meetings to be held remotely for the first time, allowing the Council's decision-making processes to continue. These meetings have been accessible to the public live via the East Herts District YouTube channel.
- Members are asked to note that many of the actions were concluded in 2020 (or may still be ongoing e.g. Environmental Climate Change) so that there may be a consequent overlap of some actions and reports.

RECOMMENDATION FOR OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- a) **The Annual Report on the work of the East Herts Scrutiny Committee during 2019/20 be received and recommended to Council for publication.**

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 An Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report is prepared each year and presented to Council. Reports from previous years are on the council's website.
- 1.2 The Annual Report for 2019/20 is attached as an appendix to this report and summarises the work of during the past year. Members are reminded that there may be some overlap between work commenced in an earlier year and concluded (or still ongoing) in 2020-21.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 Once agreed by Council, the report will be published on the Council's website and notification of its 'e-location' will be made available.
- 2.2 It is acknowledged that Covid-19 has impacted on both businesses and individuals. It should be recognised that all decision making meetings of the Council have been publically available and live-streamed.
- 2.3 The Annual Report for 2019/20 (attached as **Appendix A**) summarises the work of the Committees during the past year.

3.0 Reason(s)

- 3.1 The Council's Constitution Chapter 7 2g paragraph 7.4. states that Scrutiny Committee "*must report annually to the Council on*

their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate”
action.

3.2 To comply with the requirements of the Council’s Constitution

4.0 Options

4.1 No alternatives have been considered

5.0 Risks

5.1 Publication of an Annual Scrutiny report provides a summary of what issues have been reviewed which can be measured against the council’s priorities. An Annual Scrutiny report may also help to provide a measure of assurance that democratic processes continue to be adhered to despite the impact of Covid-19 and that they are transparent and the decision-making process is “business as usual”.

6.0 Implications/Consultations

6.1 N/A in so far as the production of the Annual Scrutiny summary but individual report authors will have consulted prior to their reports to Committee.

Community Safety

No

Data Protection

No

Equalities

No

Environmental Sustainability

Yes – references are made throughout the report e.g. where Scrutiny has established Task and Finish Groups e.g. in relation to Climate Change, Parking Policies.

Financial

There may be financial implications if the report is published but previous approaches have been to publish the report online. From an equality viewpoint this might necessitate make further adjustments to ensure that this document is made widely available to all groups.

Health and Safety

No

Human Resources

No

Human Rights

No

Legal

Yes - Overview and Scrutiny committees are enshrined in law by virtue of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Localism Act 2011.

Specific Wards

No

7.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

Constitution – Updated December 2020

Appendix A – Annual Scrutiny Report

Appendix B - Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) – Final Report published December 2020

Overview and Scrutiny Committee 18 December 2018 (Climate Change)

Council – 24 July 2019 (Climate Change motion)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 11 June 2019 (Parking Policies : Task and Finish group)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 10 December 2019 (Parking Policies: Task and Finish Group)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 5 November 2019 (Waste Management)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 5 November 2019 (Council Tax empty properties)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 3 December 2019 (Council Tax empty properties)

Executive Agenda – 12 February 2019 – Climate Change

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 4 February 2020 (Cycling Provision in Bishop’s Stortford – Work Programme)

Overview and Security Committee – 4 February 2020 (Website satisfaction- Gov.Metric Performance)

Executive Agenda – 11 February 2020 (Parking Policies – Findings of T&FG)

Development Management Committee – 25 June 2020 (Bircherley Green)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 15 September 2020 (Social housing event review of relationship between the Council and Social Housing providers)

Development Management Committee – 24 September 2020 (Bircherley Green)

Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 5 November 2019 (Social Housing Event: Review of relationship between the Council and Social Housing Providers; T&FG) Minutes of T&FG 19 December 2019, 10 March 2019, 16 March 2020 , 25 June (adjourned) and 30 June 2020)

Executive – (Social housing event review of relationship between the Council and Social Housing providers) – recommendations to be considered in the context of a report to the Executive on 5 January 2021

Executive Agenda – 24 November 2020 (Parking Policies – Recommendations)

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