



REPORT of OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP

to
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
26 OCTOBER 2022

REVIEW OF SCRUTINY WORKPLAN ITEMS AND RECENT SCRUTINY REQUEST BY A MEMBER

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To update the Committee on recent meetings of the Working Group meeting and recommend responses and courses of action on a Workplan item and a further Member request for a scrutiny item.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That the Committee considers the proposed outline response to the Notice of Motion Workplan Item as a basis for either providing assurance and making recommendations to the Council or other Committees, or defining the scope for actual scrutiny and engaging the Working Group if any further preparatory work is required;
- (ii) That in the light of the scrutiny request from Councillor C Swain the Committee endorses the view of the Working Group that a watching brief is kept to monitor Planning Enforcement performance data and to gain a better understanding of certain enforcement processes.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

3.1 Workplan Item – Notice of Motion by Councillor A S Fluker

3.1.1 At the last meeting of the Committee, the Notice of Motion referred by Council to the Committee in July for resolution was received and added to the Scrutiny Workplan. It was further agreed that the item be referred to the Working Group for consideration and report back.

3.1.2 The Working Group met on 25 August and 26 September 2022 to consider the issues raised by this motion and a report summarising these and some conclusions for consideration by the Committee is at **APPENDIX A**. The Committee in considering the proposed outline scope for scrutiny may seek to explore certain issues in greater detail before finalising its conclusions, particularly given the associated and wider issue of Planning decision-making and seek to engage the Working Group further.

3.2 Scrutiny request by Councillor C Swain – Planning Enforcement

3.2.1 A pro-forma for the new requested item together with brief Officer comments by way of background explanation and context is set out in **APPENDIX B** to this report, and the Committee is asked to adopt the approach recommended, which is that a

watching brief is kept. Should this be agreed by the Committee, the Working Group can not only monitor performance statistics but also gather information to promote a better understanding of some of the enforcement processes.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 In line with the agreed process for review of possible Overview and Scrutiny workplan items, the feedback and recommendations from the recent Working Group meeting are presented for the Committee's consideration at **APPENDICES A & B**.

5. IMPACT ON STRATEGIC THEMES

- 5.1 Robust overview and scrutiny work and learning from what comes out of it contributes to the performance and value theme of the Corporate Plan.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Seeking to strike a better balance between the speed of decision making and the quality of decisions will have a positive impact on applicants for planning permission as users of the service, and also Council tax payers in general in contributing to the overall costs of the service.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – A move towards improved quality through more objective and evidence-based decision making will potentially reduce the risk of the award of costs against the Authority.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – None.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None.
- (vii) **Impact on Strengthening Communities** – None.

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