



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Notice of a Meeting, to be held in the Council Chamber - Ashford Borough Council on Tuesday, 12th December, 2023 at 7.00 pm.

The Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are:-

Councillor Bell (Chair)
Councillor Chilton (Vice-Chair)

Cllrs. Arnold, Bartlett, Buchanan, Feacey, Joseph, Ledger, Meaden, Michael, Shilton, Suddards.

Agenda

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1. **Apologies/Substitutes**
To receive Notification of Substitutes in accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2 (c)
 2. **Declarations of Interest** 3 - 4
To declare any interests, which fall under the following categories, as explained on the attached document:
 - a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)
 - b) Other Significant Interests (OSI)
 - c) Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests

See Agenda Item 2 for further details
 3. **Minutes of the last Meeting** 5 - 12
To approve the Minutes of the last Meeting
 4. **Housing Delivery and Management**
Housing Delivery and Management – Presentation
-

5. **Leader's Vision and Priorities for the next Corporate Plan**

Leader's Vision and Priorities for the next Corporate Plan -
Presentation

6. **Schedule of Key Decisions**

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7. **Work Programme Tracker**

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4 December 2023

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Declarations of Interest (see also “Advice to Members” below)

- (a) **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)** under the Localism Act 2011, relating to items on this agenda. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared, and the agenda item(s) to which it relates must be stated.

A Member who declares a DPI in relation to any item will need to leave the meeting for that item (unless a relevant Dispensation has been granted).

- (b) **Other Significant Interests (OSI)** under the Kent Code of Conduct relating to items on this agenda. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared, and the agenda item(s) to which it relates must be stated.

A Member who declares an OSI in relation to any item will need to leave the meeting before the debate and vote on that item (unless a relevant Dispensation has been granted).

However, prior to leaving, the Member may address the Committee in the same way that a member of the public may do so.

- (c) **Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests** not required to be disclosed under (a) and (b), i.e. announcements made for transparency alone, such as:

- Membership of amenity societies, Town/Community/Parish Councils, residents' groups or other outside bodies that have expressed views or made representations, but the Member was not involved in compiling or making those views/representations, or
- Where a Member knows a person involved, but does not have a close association with that person, or
- Where an item would affect the well-being of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc. but not his/her financial position.

[Note: Where an item would be likely to affect the financial position of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc.; OR where an item is an application made by a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc., there is likely to be an OSI or in some cases a DPI. ALSO, holding a committee position/office within an amenity society or other outside body, or having any involvement in compiling/making views/representations by such a body, may give rise to a perception of bias and require the Member to take no part in any motion or vote.]

Advice to Members on Declarations of Interest:

- (a) Government Guidance on DPI is available in DCLG's Guide for Councillors, at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5962/2193362.pdf
- (b) The Kent Code of Conduct was adopted by the Full Council on 19 July 2012, and a copy can be found in the Constitution alongside the Council's Good Practice Protocol for Councillors dealing with Planning Matters. See <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/2098/z-word5-democratic-services-constitution-2019-constitution-of-abc-may-2019-part-5.pdf>
- (c) Where a Member declares a committee position or office within, or membership of, an outside body that has expressed views or made representations, this will be taken as a statement that the Member was not involved in compiling or making them and has retained an open mind on the item(s) in question. If this is not the case, the situation must be explained.

If any Member has any doubt about any interest which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, or from other Solicitors in Legal and Democracy as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held in Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **14th November 2023**.

Present:

Cllr. Bell (Chair),

Cllrs. Bartlett, Chilton (Vice-Chair), Feacey, Ledger, Michael, C. Suddards.

Apologies:

Cllrs. Arnold, Nilsson, Ovenden, Walder.

In attendance:

Cllrs. Campkin, Hayward, Hicks, Wright.

Douglas Whitfield and Jo Shippey (South East Water),
Inspector Simon Johnson (Kent Police).

Assistant Director of Environment, Property & Recreation, Safety and Wellbeing Manager, Commercial Projects and Recreation Manager, Project Accountant, Leisure Contract Manager, Scrutiny and Partnerships Manager, Senior Governance & Data Protection Officer, Member Services Officer.

Also in Attendance (virtually)

Cllrs. Forest, Joseph, Shilton, McGeever, Meaden.

Deputy Chief Executive, Director of Place, Space and Leisure, Corporate Director of Health and Wellbeing, Head of Policy and Performance.

201 Declaration of Interest

Councillor	Interest	Minute No
Bartlett	Made a Voluntary Announcement that he was a Member of Ashford Community Safety Partnership and KCC, and that he had awarded a Member grant to Sk8side.	204
Campkin	Made a Voluntary Announcement that he was a Member of KCC	204
Chilton	Made a Voluntary Announcement that his relative was employed by Kent Police	204
Feacey	Made a Voluntary Announcement that he was Chair of Ashford Volunteer Centre and Chair of Ashford International Development Company	206

202 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of this Committee held on the 11th October 2023 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

203 South East Water Presentation

Douglas Whitfield and Jo Shippey from South East (SE) Water attended the meeting and gave a presentation to the Committee, which covered in detail the following areas:

- About South East Water and its history
- Recap on recent outages in December 2022 and June 2023
- Improving resilience and investment
- Key drivers in Kent necessitating increased water supply resilience
- Longer term resilience options
- Broad Oak reservoir
- Planning for the future
- Regional approach to tackle challenges of the network
- Headline investment £1.9bn

The presentation was opened up to the Committee and the following responses were given to questions/comments: -

- The risk of outages to some areas of Kent e.g. Biddenden and Staplehurst, remained for the next couple of years as the enhancements outlined in the presentation would take time to implement. Short-term improvements already employed to neighbouring areas would help to minimise any outages to other areas, including more storage and source water. Increased reactive actions had also been built into the plan.
- Sensors on the pipe network were restricted in numbers to certain levels, hence why the public were still encouraged to continue reporting water leaks. Increasing the sensors was included as part of the future plan.
- SE Water hoped to roll out Smart Meters by 2027, but the tariffs had not yet been categorised. The benefit of Smart Meters was to improve detection of leaks or unusual usage.
- A data sharing agreement was in place with Maidstone Borough Council to identify vulnerable customers and those with financial difficulties, and this agreement could be explored with Ashford, with the intention to ensure that any discounts or social tariffs be applied to eligible residents.
- Factors influencing replacement of old pipework included age, size, and condition and failure rate. A significant increase for pipe replacement was

included in the 5-year plan.

- To try to ensure the plans were future-proof, the long term 25 year Water Resource Management Plan took into account Central Government housing/growth predictive data. In addition, SE Water considered climate change and varying growth and economic scenarios when formulating the short and long-term plans, to ensure greater resilience and possible adaptations.
- In addition to Broad Oak, another reservoir would be constructed within 5 years at Arlington in Sussex, which would provide additional storage and source.
- A Government target had been set to reduce per person usage, and new initiatives were being considered for each household to help reduce waste and usage. It was suggested that SE Water liaise with ABC on ways in which the Council and Councillors could assist with communication on this matter, and with a view to including this target within the Local Plan.
- The SE Water Business Plan operated in 5-year cycles to correspond with funding. Business Plans were submitted in October and in the following year Ofwat would announce the final determinations, which would confirm if the plans were acceptable and finalised.
- In response to a question requesting figures for people breaching hosepipe bans over the past 5 years, it was explained that the core aim of bans was to raise perception and a lot of steps were taken before reaching the issuing of a fine, so the figure was likely to be low.

Resolved:

That the Presentation be received and noted.

204 Community Safety Partnership Update

Inspector Simon Johnson and the Safety and Wellbeing Manager introduced the report, which provided an interim update on community safety, including crime statistics for the Borough, and the work being undertaken to reduce crime and disorder in conjunction with partners and other agencies.

The report was opened up to the Committee and the following responses were given to questions/comments: -

- The 101-telephone service had previously experienced issues with the volume of calls being answered, and a Member acknowledged that although reporting was also available via social media and email, some residents still preferred to report via telephone. Insp Johnson explained a new model had been implemented and that figures in Ashford showed a reduction in crime figures. Feedback from the public was positive around the collective work undertaken between the police and partners and he gave thanks to everyone involved.

- Catch 22 and Uprising were youth initiatives that would hopefully gain more promotion and recognition once a Working Group had been established.
- The Safer Streets Fund was overseen by Kent Police and the Police Crime Commissioner and if ABC was a correct fit for the funding stream, then another bid could be submitted.
- The Police Victim Based Crimes Team had recently been expanded, and this model was hoped to provide a more specialised service, and this included retail crime. Consequently, victims received differing methods of police support and contact, and worked to different timescales.
- Youth provision and intervention formed part of Central Government's Anti-Social Behaviour Action Plan, and financial investment across all age youth groups was planned. It would be interesting to see how that would cascade down across regions and counties, to understand what young people actually wanted, and to offer something they would attend and enjoy.
- Increased numbers of local PC's were incorporated into the new police model, a new Neighbourhood Task Force had been set up, and a Child Centre Policing Team would be set up soon. PC numbers were currently at 50% with the objective of increasing to 100% as the new model continued to roll out.
- Sk8side was expected to be increasing its opening hours and this would help to alleviate anti-social behaviour in the Borough.
- The Chair and Members thanked the Officers and Police for the great work they continuously undertook.

Recommended:

- That**
- i) The report be noted**
 - ii) The committee supported the formation of a cross member working group**
 - iii) The annual Community Safety Partnership report be presented to the Overview & Scrutiny committee each November**

205 Freedom Leisure at the Stour Centre - presentation

The Commercial Projects and Recreation Manager attended the meeting and gave a presentation to the Committee, which covered in detail the following areas:

- Leisure Contract Overview and Timeline
- Contract Finances
- Performance Standards and Monitoring
- Participation
- Programmes, Activities and Events

- Memberships
- Staffing
- Facility standards (Cleanliness / Hygiene / Maintenance)
- Energy and Environmental
- Healthy Communities

The presentation was opened up to the Committee and the following responses were given to questions/comments: -

- Members noted the difficulty in contacting the Stour Centre via telephone and were assured that this was being rectified.
- The Stour Centre café had received a very low hygiene rating, and one of the main reasons for this was attributed to complacency regarding checking-procedures. More robust measures and mechanisms were now in place, and staff were being re-trained.
- Freedom Leisure were focussing on generating revenue via subscriptions and café proceeds.
- Some of the membership subscriptions were price protected by ABC, whilst others were subject to inflation according to market trends. The £1.50 administration booking charge would be examined.
- The additional cleaners were welcomed with an increase from one to three employees, and this salary cost fell under Freedom Leisure.
- Whilst there had been an overall saving and the Public Sector Decarbonation Scheme had eliminated the gas usage, the electricity tariff had increased.
- Swimming pricing was reviewed regularly and competition was stiff around the Ashford area. To counteract that, Freedom Leisure tried to promote the wider range of activities including soft play and the café area.
- Following Covid, the subscription price increase in 2021/2022 could be attributed to the refurbishment and improved facilities. Pre-pandemic prices were based on the older facilities and different operators. Discounted subscriptions were available for those people on lower incomes and means tested benefits.
- A new app would shortly be launched to assist with bookings and this would help alleviate waiting times.

Resolved:

That the Presentation be received and noted.

206 Savings Plan Progress – 2nd Quarter 2023/24

The Project Accountant presented the report to the Committee, which provided a detailed update on the proposed savings plan and was included and supported in the 2023/24 budget report presented to Cabinet in February 2023.

The report was opened up to the Committee and the following responses were given to questions/comments: -

- Under the proposed savings, the Administration review had been amalgamated into the Review of service structures.
- A saving of £234k had been made this year within the Environment, Property and Recreation department, but £88k had been earmarked for two park keepers from April 1st, if the Parks Foundation proposal was accepted.
- Central Government had decided that there would be no Border Control Post at Dover, and imports/exports would now be processed at Sevington, therefore the scale of work would be greater for Ashford.
- The direct charge for Project Management to Capital for a specific post initially was a cost, but it was then split across assets that were being built or developed and so this could be attributed to an asset, which then depreciated over 25/30 years.
- The interest payment from the Ashford International Development Company was not included within the Savings Plan, but would be additional. This would be deliberated at the Budget Task Group meetings.
- The Safety and Wellbeing Manager was leading on the Enforcement Review, and would consider the Committees view that Planning enforcement should not be reduced, as it was a vital service. The Chairman asked if Planning enforcement could be brought before the Committee to be reviewed on a regular basis.

Resolved:

That the Report be received and noted.

207 Corporate Performance Report – Quarter 2

The Senior Governance & Data Protection Officer introduced the report, which provided an update and performance monitoring of the Council's progress towards the aspirations of the Corporate Plan. Whilst progress generally remained strong, the cost of living squeeze continued to impact upon a number of measures. There were some positives across the spectrum with two new experience based businesses opening in Ashford Town Centre, and planning caseload figures continuing to reduce.

The report was opened up to the Committee and the following responses were given to questions/comments: -

- The Council tax collection amount was slightly lower than in previous years, and more figures would be collated and brought before the Committee.
- The new Corporate Plan was being drafted and a working group had been formed. The Policy & Performance Manager explained that the first draft should be ready early 2024 with a public consultation planned for spring 2024. The final draft was planned for completion in July 2024.
- The Counter Fraud Team worked to ensure due diligence was undertaken with regards to business rates collections, and ABC were part of the Kent Intelligence Network, which used industry led technology to identify properties that might be fraudulently claiming exemptions or were not registered. The Small Business Rates Relief review was underway, periodic measures were in place, and a report recently went before the Audit Committee which covered the work by the Fraud Team. A figure of 2 - 3% was estimated for fraudulent business rates for counties outside of London.
- The Economic and Development Team would be able to provide more detail on what connections ABC had with the Job Centre and other partners regarding 18-24 year old unemployment.
- The number of Homelessness presentations within the report was discussed and the Deputy Chief Executive observed that a report had been sent to Management Team concerning homelessness and temporary accommodation. He added that this topic could be included on the O&S work programme, as it did present a budget pressure. In response to a Member's question regarding homeless presentations by people from outside the Borough, it was confirmed that initial checks were made to ensure a local connection before an application could proceed.
- The Chair expressed his apprehension around Small Business Rates Relief checks in rural areas to achieve savings, since these business were often vital services in small communities. It was confirmed that this was a statutory Central Government scheme and was not specific just to Ashford.
- The Planning KPI showed that the backlog had been reduced, and this figure would be lower still, if the Stodmarsh issue was taken out of the equation.

Resolved:

That the Report be received and noted.

208 Cabinet Schedule of Key Decisions

Resolved:

That the Schedule be received and noted.

209 O&S Work Programme 2023 to 2024

Resolved:

That the Report Tracker be received and noted.

**CABINET
SCHEDULE OF KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN**

The following Key Decisions will be taken by Ashford Borough Council’s Cabinet on the dates stated.

Ashford Borough Council’s Cabinet is made up of: - Councillors Noel Ovenden; Steve Campkin; Bill Barrett; Simon Betty; Linda Harman; Heather Hayward; Dawnie Nilsson; Kate Walder; and Liz Wright.

Copies of the reports and any other relevant documents that are submitted to the Cabinet in connection with a proposed decision will be available for inspection, five clear days before the decision at <https://ashford.moderngov.co.uk>

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
21st December 2023					
25th January 2024					
Revenues & Benefits Recommended Write-Offs Schedule	<i>Proposed formal write-off of debts</i>	Cllr Ovenden	Nic Stevens	Open (Exempt Appendix)	27/1/23
Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report	<i>Quarterly budget monitoring report</i>	Cllr Ovenden	Lee Foreman	Open	24/2/23

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
Tenant Engagement Strategy	<i>To approve a Strategy to ensure a clear organisational approach and commitment to tenant engagement within the Borough. The strategy will set out an action plan and the obligations of the Tenant Engagement Team and other teams in the Housing Service as a whole.</i>	Cllr Barrett	Rebecca Smith	Open	17/10/23
Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy	<i>To obtain Cabinet approval for the adoption of the new Temporary Accommodation Charging Policy.</i>	Cllr Barrett	Amanda Gill	Open	20/9/23
Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy	<i>To obtain Cabinet approval for the adoption of the new Temporary Accommodation Placement Policy.</i>	Cllr Barrett	Amanda Gill	Open	20/9/23
Tenant Pet Policy	<i>To gain the endorsement to implement the Housing Pet Policy 2023. The policy includes all housing stock but excludes temporary accommodation.</i>	Cllr Barrett	Anthony Crossley	Open	20/11/23
22nd February 2024					
Revenue Budget 2024/25	<i>To present the draft revenue budget for 2024/25 to the Cabinet for recommendation to Council.</i>	Cllr Ovenden	Lee Foreman	Open	24/2/23

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
Corporate Performance Report	<i>The report seeks to give Members and the Borough's residents an overview of how the Council is performing. It seeks to do this in a transparent and easily-accessible manner, giving a key performance 'snapshot'.</i>	Cllr Ovenden/ Hayward	Tom Swain	Open	24/2/23
Outcome of the Five Year Review of the Ashford Local Plan 2030	<i>Local Plans have to be reviewed within five years of their adoption to demonstrate that they are still relevant and up to date. The ALP 2030 was adopted in February 2019, so this will be a short report explaining the Plan's status and to confirm that it is up to date for planning purposes.</i>	Cllr Harman	Ian Bailey	Open	10/11/23
Parks Foundation		Cllr Walder	James Laidlaw	Open	24/11/23
Tenterden Leisure Centre Procurement		Cllr Walder	Shaun Meyer	Open	30/11/23
Corporate Asbestos Management Policy, Procedure and Management Plan	<i>To seek approval for the revised Asbestos Management Policy, Procedure and Plan.</i>	Cllr Betty	Victoria Couper-Samways	Open	14/6/23
Renewal of LASER Contract for the Supply of Gas and Electricity		Cllr Betty	Victoria Couper-Samways	Open	4/12/23

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
21st March 2024					
Annual Pay Policy Statement (including Review for 2024/25)	<i>A review of the annual Pay Policy Statement.</i>	Cllr Nilsson	Michelle Pecci/ Joy Cross	Open	31/3/23
Parking Strategy		Cllr Campkin	Alison Oates	Open	1/12/22
25th April 2024					
Allocations Policy		Cllr Barrett	Amanda Gill	Open	20/9/23
30th May 2024					
27th June 2024					
Corporate Plan Annual Report 2023/24	<i>To present the Annual Report 2023/24 highlighting performance against the Corporate Plan priorities.</i>	Cllr Ovenden/ Hayward	Tom Swain	Open	30/6/23
Final Outturn 2023/24	<i>Final budget outturn for previous financial year.</i>	Cllr Ovenden	Lee Foreman	Open	30/6/23
25th July 2024					
Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report	<i>Quarterly budget monitoring report</i>	Cllr Ovenden	Lee Foreman	Open	30/9/22

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
Revenues & Benefits Recommended Write-Offs Schedule	<i>Proposed formal write-off of debts</i>	Cllr Ovenden	Nic Stevens	Open (Exempt Appendix)	30/7/22
Brompton Development	<i>To update of the progress of the discussions with both Brompton and the Developer in bringing forward the proposed development including the setting up a of joint venture company.</i>	Cllr Betty	Paul McKenner	Open	28/7/22
29th August 2024					
KEEP CLEAR FOR HOLIDAYS					
26th September 2024					
Corporate Performance Report	<i>The report seeks to give Members and the Borough's residents an overview of how the Council is performing. It seeks to do this in a transparent and easily-accessible manner, giving a key performance 'snapshot'.</i>	Cllr Hayward	Tom Swain	Open	2/10/23
Update on Levelling Up Funding and Newtown Works Development	<i>To update on the progress in drawing down the Levelling Up Funding, the works undertaken to date, the current programme for the development and the risks for the project.</i>	Cllr Betty	Andrew Osborne	Open	2/10/23

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
31st October 2024					
Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report	<i>Quarterly budget monitoring report.</i>	Cllr Ovenden	Lee Foreman	Open	27/10/23
Council Tax Base 2025/26	<i>To present for approval the estimated 2025/26 Council tax base calculation for the Borough and each parished area, on which the major preceptors and local Parish Councils will base their requirements.</i>	Cllr Ovenden	Jo Stocks	Open	27/10/23
Medium Term Financial Plan	<i>To ask Cabinet to note the Medium Term Financial Plan ahead of this year's Budget process.</i>	Cllr Ovenden	Lee Foreman	Open	27/10/23
Annual Commercial Property Update - 2023/24	<i>To advise of the revenue performance of the Council's corporate property portfolio during the last financial period and to advise of proposals to increase profitability in the coming financial period.</i>	Cllr Betty	Eloise Duffy	Open	27/10/23
Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2024 - 2054 (including Financing and Affordable Homes Programme)	<i>To detail the financial position in the HRA and ask Members to agree Housing's priorities for the next year.</i>	Cllr Barrett	Jo Stocks/Mark James	Open (Exempt Appendix)	27/10/23

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
28th November 2024					
Corporate Performance Report	<i>To give Members and residents an overview of how the council is performing with a key performance 'snapshot'.</i>	Cllr Ovenden/ Hayward	Tom Swain	Open	1/12/23
Draft Budget 2025/26	<i>To present the preliminary draft service budget and outline MTFP for the purposes of subsequent formal scrutiny by the O&S Task Group and public consultation.</i>	Cllr Ovenden	Lee Foreman	Open	1/12/23

***If you wish to contact a Report Author by email, unless stated otherwise, the addresses are;
first name.surname@ashford.gov.uk***

4/12/23

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Work Programme 2023 to 2024

Current Work Programme			
Report Title	Date due to O&S	Reporting Service	Scope of what is to be scrutinised
Update on Future System Upgrades with Arcus Global	September 2023	Planning and Development	The Committee expected to receive updates on the next phase of system upgrades with Arcus Global in the Planning and Development Service and Safety and Wellbeing Service.
Corporate Performance Report Q1	September 2023	Policy and Performance	Quarterly Performance Report in relation to Quarter 1. Information on what the Council has achieved through its decision making; key performance data and wider contextual information.
Residents Survey and Analysis	September 2023	Policy and Performance	The Committee requested a presentation regarding the latest results and analysis of the latest Residents Survey.
Consultation and Engagement Recommendations Update	September 2023	Policy and Performance	A report to update the Committee on the progress of recommendations made by the Consultation and Engagement Task Group.
Council Finance, Budget and Commercial Scrutiny	26 th September 6-8pm	Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (external)	This session will help Members of scrutiny to recognise the vital role of scrutiny in helping to constructively test and challenge to council's corporate priorities and the robustness of financial planning to support them. Members should gain an understanding of how scrutiny can test assumptions, risks and pressures that underline budgets

			and medium-term financial plans. This session will also help Members to develop questioning strategies to test budget and financial plans and hold to account political decision makers for the delivery of their plans.
Waste Contract Implementation	October 2023	Environment, Property and Recreation	A presentation regarding the recent waste contract implementation, the councils recycling rate and goals and updates on issues relating to bin stores and fly tipping collection rates.
Budget Scrutiny Task Group Membership	October 2023	-	An item to agree Membership for the Budget Scrutiny Task Group.
Using information and developing effective questioning skills	17 th October 2023	Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (external)	This session, hosted by the Centre for Governance & Scrutiny, will provide an opportunity for members to acquire or develop their questioning techniques in a scrutiny setting. The seminar will cover how effective, organised and prepared questioning can significantly improve member contributions and overall success of scrutiny sessions.
Water Supply in the Borough	November 2023	South East Water (external)	A presentation from South Easter Water to share latest updates on how they are improving resilience across their network and answer Member questions.
Community Safety Update	November 2023	Safety and Wellbeing	<p>A presentation will be brought forward to provide an update on Community Safety and also the options moving forward, including savings for the Ashford Monitoring Centre.</p> <p>A review of the decisions made and action taken in connection with the discharge of crime and disorder functions by the members of the Community Safety Partnership. The Committee operates as the designated Crime and Disorder Committee for the council.</p>
Freedom Leisure at the Stour Centre	November 2023	Environment, Property and Recreation	Members would like information regarding overall service delivery including general maintenance and cleanliness.

Savings Plan Progress – 2 nd Quarter 2023/24	November 2023	Finance, IT and Digital	O&S agreed to monitor the delivery of the proposed savings identified on an ongoing and regular basis.
Corporate Performance Report Q2	November 2023	Policy and Performance	Quarterly Performance Report in relation to Quarter 2. Information on what the Council has achieved through its decision making; key performance data and wider contextual information.
Leader’s vision and priorities for the next Corporate Plan	December 2023	Chief Executive	The Leader is invited to attend and discuss the vision and priorities for the next Corporate Plan.
Housing Delivery and Management	December 2023	Housing	A presentation regarding the delivery of units and housing management operations, including an update on the repairs arrangements.
Budget Scrutiny Meetings 2024/25	December 2023 to January 2024	Policy and Performance Finance, IT and Digital	Scrutiny of the draft budget 2024/25 will take place over three or four meetings during December and January.
Final Report of the Budget Scrutiny Task Group	February 2024	Finance, IT and Digital	A final report and findings from the annual Budget Scrutiny Task Group will be submitted, including any recommendations for consideration by Cabinet.
Hybrid Working and Productivity Update	February 2024	HR, Customer Services, Communications and Digitalisation	An update presentation on a report received by the Committee last September regarding hybrid working and productivity.
Safeguarding Update	February 2024	Safety and Wellbeing	Annual update to the committee on the council’s work on safeguarding adults and children at risk.
Corporate Performance Report Q3	February 2024	Policy and Performance	Quarterly Performance Report in relation to Quarter 3. Information on what the Council has achieved through its decision making; key performance data and wider contextual information.

Equalities , Diversity and Inclusion	March 2024	Policy and Performance	An overview report of what has been done so far towards promoting equalities, diversity and inclusion at the council.
Productivity, Staff Morale and Hybrid Working Task Group	Spring 2024	HR, Customer Services, Communications and Digitalisation	The Committee wished to potentially set up a Task Group to look at workforce productivity, staff morale, remote working (including the remote working/hybrid model proposed for the move to international house). Following the report in February, this would decide whether the Task Group was required.
O&S Annual Report	May 2024	Policy and Performance	A report to summarise the work undertaken by the Committee during the last municipal year.
Annual Performance Report	May 2024	Policy and Performance	A report to summarise the council's performance during the last municipal year.
Enforcement Review	TBC	Safety and Wellbeing	The findings of the enforcement review will be brought forward to the Committee once the review has concluded.