

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

From: Ben Staines, Project and Research Officer	Report Number: BOS/17/6
To: Babergh Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Date of meeting: 24 July 2017

OUTSTANDING ITEMS FROM JOINT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETINGS, 2016/17

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Members of the items considered by the Joint Scrutiny Committee in 2016/2017 and recorded as still requiring action or ongoing.
- 1.2 To enable Members to decide which items they wished to be added to the forward plan for Babergh's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the members of the Committee decide which items previously considered by the Joint Scrutiny Committee be added to the forward plan for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no specific financial implications identified from this report.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 There are no legal implications identified from this report.

5. Risk Management

- 5.1 This report is not linked to any risks identified on the Council's Significant Risk Register, however key risks are set out below

Risk Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Measures
If Babergh Overview and Scrutiny Committee do not identify the right areas for review in their forward plan, then the Council's priorities may not be achieved.	Unlikely (2)	Noticeable (2)	Babergh Overview and Scrutiny Committee will examine the list of items previously considered by the Joint Scrutiny Committee and scrutinise those where it is assessed not doing so could impact on the achievement of the Council's priorities.

6. Consultations

6.1 Officers were consulted to provide updates on the current position for each of the items listed below.

7. Equality Analysis

7.1 This report has no inherent equality and diversity impact.

8. Shared Service / Partnership Implications

8.1 None.

9. Links to Joint Strategic Plan

9.1 This report itself does not link directly to the Joint Strategic Plan. Links to the delivery of the Joint Strategic Plan are considered in the selection of topics for review.

10. Key Information

10.1 Below is a list of the topics scrutinised by the Joint Scrutiny Committee in the 2016 year and recorded as not being complete. This includes some items brought forward from previous years which the Committee wanted to retain on their list of topics that may require further scrutiny.

Topic	Date scrutinised	Excerpt from minutes	Current position
Fuel Poverty	June 2015	<p>June 2015 position Martin King, Head of Service Housing, has been identified as lead officer.</p> <p>Seven Recommendations from the task and finish group were presented to the 11 February 2015 Joint Scrutiny meeting where they were approved and the recommendations passed onto Executive (09/03/15) and Strategy (12/03/15) Committees where the recommendations were delegated to the relevant Programme Steering Boards to be adopted as part of the work programme with reports to be made back to Strategy and Executive.</p>	<p>As noted in April 2016, the Fuel Poverty Strategy is being incorporated into the overall Poverty Strategy.</p> <p>Babergh and Mid Suffolk Councils are both on the Poverty Strategy Steering Group which has as an ambition to 'reduce levels of food and fuel poverty'. The Councils are signed up to the Suffolk Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 'Working together to tackle poverty', this including a section on a joint fuel poverty strategy.</p> <p>Outcomes from this will be verbally reported at the meeting to assist members in deciding whether they wished Fuel Poverty to be added to the forward plan.</p>

Topic	Date scrutinised	Excerpt from minutes	Current position
Supporting Business Growth	October 2015	Further examination of measures for supporting micro and small businesses has been added to the proposed forward plan.	<p>Since 2015 the Councils have continued with the development and expansion of the Open for Business services.</p> <p>There is now a dedicated page on the Babergh/Mid Suffolk website that includes a detailed start-up pack to assist any business developing in the Districts.</p> <p>This is available to view on the Council's website in the section headed 'Business' and then the sub-section 'support for businesses'.</p> <p>It was suggested at the June Overview and Scrutiny committee meeting that a summary of current activities under the Open for business programme be reported to the committee at a future meeting (yet to be timetabled)</p>
Void performance	February 2016	<p>Members asked for the following to be provided at future meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An update on the progress of the new Responsive Repairs service 12 months after implementation; • Void performance for Sheltered Housing to be provided separately from other council properties; • An overview as to how void performance fits in the wider performance management review 	This is in the draft forward plan to be scoped at the July 2017 O&S meeting.
Community grants	February 2016 and June 2016	Members commended the team for all their hard work and the support they offer.	The Corporate Manager – Strong Communities will give a verbal report on the current position at the meeting.

Topic	Date scrutinised	Excerpt from minutes	Current position
		<p>The Corporate Manager – Strong Communities, advised that a further report detailing the outcome of the health check would be brought to a future Committee for Members consideration.</p>	
<p>Scoping a review of the waste services</p>	<p>February 2016</p>	<p>Some Members expressed a view that consideration should be given to residents' views to ensure any changes to the waste collection system were user-friendly, in particular from smaller properties and properties in heavily built-up and rural locations. Members felt it appropriate that the Committee scrutinise the plan for post 2019 and requested a further report be brought at that time</p>	<p>This will be included in the draft forward plan for scrutinising when it appears on the forthcoming decisions list.</p>
<p>Housing delivery</p>	<p>February 2016 and April 2016</p>	<p>Councillor Rachel Eburne commented that the Forward Plan had been populated up to April, when the last meeting for the current Council year would take place. When new Committee Members were elected, they might wish to set a different agenda going forward. She advised that Councillors Peter Burgoyne, David Card, Kathryn Grandon and herself had met with housing officers to establish what aspects of housing delivery were to be scrutinised. Further work was to be done with Portfolio Holders to ensure the required skills currently provided by external consultants were transferred to enable delivery by Officers.</p>	<p>The excerpt is from the minutes of the meeting in February 2016.</p> <p>When the topic was brought to the April meeting the resolution below was proposed and agreed:</p> <p>(1) That the information provided about the progress of the Councils' own affordable housing delivery programme in Paper JSC/03/16 be noted.</p> <p>(2) That the plans to recruit skills and expertise when required and develop skills within the organisation to enable the Councils to deliver an affordable housing programme and develop its wider housing delivery function be noted.</p>

Topic	Date scrutinised	Excerpt from minutes	Current position
		Portfolio Holders had requested Scrutiny Committee look at where the barriers were and a report would be brought to the April meeting.	
Opportunities for Joint Scrutiny in Suffolk	April 2016	Peter Quirk, Interim Projects – Governance and Elections, introduced the debate by giving a brief overview of possible areas for collaboration across Suffolk. During the course of a discussion regarding the opportunities and potential approaches for Joint Scrutiny working, Members identified the following areas including budget activity, proactive approach, pre-decision scrutiny and devolution which could form part of a Joint Scrutiny framework in Suffolk.	<p>No areas were identified for joint scrutiny work by the JSC.</p> <p>Some Members and officers did attend a workshop on Scrutiny without boundaries in March 2016 and Members and officers have attended scrutiny committee meetings at Suffolk County Council.</p> <p>Discussions took place at a member and officer level on opportunities for joint working between the Suffolk Councils and some opportunities were identified, including Gypsy and Traveller sites in Suffolk and what scrutiny of a combined authority might look like.</p> <p>When the 2017/18 forward plan is agreed the Overview and Scrutiny support officer will liaise with other Suffolk Councils' officers to identify whether there are any opportunities for joint working.</p>
Planning appeals	August 2016 and December 2016	<p>Minutes August 2016 - Members also specifically requested that further consideration be given to the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does the Committee provide support in understanding why Members refer delegated matters to the Planning / Development Control Committees and how is this better managed? 	<p>The minutes of the December 2016 meeting include the following:</p> <p>Members were aware of the effect of factors such as lack of a five year land supply on some decisions, and the need for Committees to fully articulate their reasons when making a proposal which was not in accordance with an officer recommendation.</p>

Topic	Date scrutinised	Excerpt from minutes	Current position
		<p>2. How does the Committee make recommendations to support Planning / Development Control when we are dealing with complicated appeals?</p> <p>3. How best to engage Members from Planning / Development Control Committees in appeals processes when they have overruled officer recommendations and also engage with all stakeholders to ensure, as far as possible, that appeals are avoided?</p> <p>RESOLVED That the contents of Paper JSC/08/16 be noted and the items raised during the discussion, as referred to above, be progressed appropriately.</p>	<p>However, a proposal to establish a Member working group to review the area of 'overturns' in relation to officer recommendations and the effect on the appeals record was lost on being put to the vote.</p> <p>Members agreed that the position as reported by the Professional Lead be noted.</p> <p>The Professional Lead will provide a verbal update to the meeting on the current position on planning appeals.</p>
Neighbourhood planning	April 2017	That the recommendations listed in paragraph 10.3 of Paper JSC/16/16 be supported and that the Senior Leadership Team reports back to this Committee or its successor(s) in six months' time regarding those recommendations.	The Senior leadership Team is working on the recommendations as supported by the Joint Scrutiny Committee and will report on progress in October 2017.
Community Infrastructure Levy			CIL was identified as being something the Joint Scrutiny Committee wanted to be on the forward plan for scoping and reviewing around April 2018.
Babergh and Mid Suffolk Building Services (BMBS)			It was agreed at the June Overview and Scrutiny meeting that BMBS would be timetabled for a review 12 months after its' implementation.

10.2 The draft forward plan for Babergh's Overview and Scrutiny Committee is also on the agenda for this meeting. That draft forward plan includes the topics above where a review date has already been agreed. The forward plan also includes the subjects that were agreed for scrutiny by Babergh Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the meeting of 19 June 2017 plus some topics previously noted for annual review.

11. Appendices

Title	Location
None	

12. Background Documents

12.1 None.

Authorship:

Ben Staines
Project and Research Officer

01449 724572, mobile 07860 829632
ben.staines@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk