

# COUNTY COUNCIL

Meeting date: 9 January 2020

From: Chair of Scrutiny Management Board

## SCRUTINY UPDATE REPORT

### **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

**1.1** *This report updates Full Council on the work of Scrutiny and any issues and developments that have occurred since the last meeting of Full Council.*

### **2.0 ISSUES FOR FULL COUNCIL**

**2.1** *Members are asked to:*

*Note the work programme presented as Appendix 1 and recent activity undertaken by Scrutiny set out in the report.*

### **3.0 BACKGROUND**

**3.1** In this report the Chair of Scrutiny Management Board would like to advise Members of the following issues:

**3.2** Scrutiny Work Programme

**3.3** The current Work Programme is presented as Appendix 1 which Members are asked to note.

**3.4** Scrutiny Advisory Boards have been considering the following matters recently:

- Scrutiny Management Board met on 27 November where they received updates on the Performance Working Group and individual Boards. The Board considered and agreed the Scrutiny feedback on Strategic Planning to be submitted to Cabinet on the 19 December.
- The Communities and Place Board last met on the 25 November when they discussed the Council's Equality Objectives, the Rural Strategy and Lobbying, the approach to managing section 38 and 278 agreements, the Board also received an evaluation report on rapid response vehicles.
- The Children and Young Peoples Board met on 20 December and at time of writing the planned the agenda for discussion included Mental Health, Child Exploitation, Disadvantage in Schools, and School Attainment.

- Health Scrutiny met on 10 December and considered how Primary Care Networks align with Integrated Care Communities, Winter planning across the North and South of the County, Recruitment and Retention of NHS staff, the committee also received an update on the progress made on the move to digital records.
- The Adults Board last met on 4 October and discussed the Shared Lives Programme, the development of a 'Reasonable offer for Adult Social Care', the Learning Disability Action Plan, Delayed Transfers of Care and Safeguarding of Adults.
- The LEP Scrutiny Board met on the 16 September and discussed the LEP Delivery Plan, how CLEP projects are identified and the work plan for People, Employment and Skills.

### 3.5 Strategic Planning

3.6 All non-executive Members were invited to a session on the 26 November where they received a presentation on the policy context and financial position of the Council from the Deputy Leader, Chief Executive and Director of Finance. Members had the opportunity to consider the budget proposals and discuss recommendations which Scrutiny Management Board will make to Cabinet.

3.7 These recommendations were discussed, refined and agreed at the Scrutiny Management Board on the 27 November and subsequently reported to Cabinet on the 19 December.

### 3.8 Update from the Performance Working Group

3.9 The Scrutiny Performance Working Group met on 9 October when the Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring Report was considered. Members considered progress with delivery of the Children Looked After Recovery Plan. At time of writing the next meeting of the Performance Working Group will take place on the 7 January where they will consider the Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring Report.

### 3.9 Scrutiny Development Plan

3.10 The Development Plan draws on key themes from the scrutiny self-assessment, headlines from the research undertaken into Scrutiny practice in other authorities, and the new national guidance. It informed the recommendations made in Scrutiny's feedback to the Strategic Planning process.

3.11 As part of the development plan work was undertaken on the approach taken by other Local Authorities to budget and financial scrutiny. This found two main models for undertaking scrutiny of the budget setting process. One where Councils had established a separate Scrutiny Board which meets regularly throughout the year and one where budget scrutiny is embedded into the work programmes of the existing Scrutiny Boards. The latter is the model Members felt most appropriate for Cumbria and provides an opportunity to build on and improve existing practice. Members identified the need for more formal mechanisms to identify specific Scrutiny Boards to report to when proposals are developed and agreed in a similar way to key decisions in the Cabinet Forward Plan.

- 3.12 Work has been initiated refreshing the format of the Scrutiny Annual Report with use of additional communication channels to raise the profile of Scrutiny both within the Council and to the wider community.

Attendance Management Task Group Review

- 3.13 Scrutiny Management Board (SMB) commissioned a full day Task and Finish Group session, with a focus on attendance management, organisational development and a specific deep dive into the absence within the 'People' directorate. The Task and Finish Group held a one-day session on 14 November 2019 in County Hall, Kendal, it made a number of recommendations which will be made to Cabinet in January.

3.14 Call Ins

- 3.15 A Call In was received on 26 November in relation to the decision Cabinet made on 14 November 2019 to cease residential care at The Abbey in Staveley. A Call In meeting took place on the 18 December where it was resolved that this matter be referred back to Cabinet.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 Scrutiny of a wide range of issues continues to be kept under consideration by each Board.

**Helen Blake**  
**Senior Manager Customer, Policy and Scrutiny**

*December 2019*

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix 1: Scrutiny Work Programme**

## **REPORT AUTHOR**

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