

**MEETING**

**CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

(Councillors Manku (Chair), Shaik, Escott, Hulme,  
Iftakhar, Mann, Matloob, Mohindra, O'Kelly and  
Stedmond)

**DATE AND TIME:**

TUESDAY, 26TH SEPTEMBER, 2023 AT 6.30 PM

**VENUE:**

COUNCIL CHAMBER - OBSERVATORY HOUSE, 25  
WINDSOR ROAD, SL1 2EL

**DEMOCRATIC SERVICES  
OFFICER:  
(for all enquiries)**

MANIZE TALUKDAR  
07871 982 919

**SUPPLEMENTARY PAPERS**

The following Papers have been added to the agenda for the above meeting:-

\* Items 3 & 6 were not available for publication with the rest of the agenda and are now presented below.

\*Item 4 (below) is a new cover sheet for the report previously published under item 4, to assist Members with their enquiries.

**PART 1**

<b><u>AGENDA ITEM</u></b>	<b><u>REPORT TITLE</u></b>	<b><u>PAGE</u></b>	<b><u>WARD</u></b>
3.	Quarterly Improvement and Recovery report	1 - 34	
4.	Coversheet to the Budget Outturn Report	35 - 36	
6.	Revised CISC Draft Work Programme	37 - 50	

This page is intentionally left blank

## Slough Borough Council

<b>Report To:</b>	Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date:</b>	26 September 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Quarterly Improvement and Recovery report
<b>Lead Member:</b>	Councillor Dexter Smith, Leader of the Council
<b>Chief Officer:</b>	Stephen Brown
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Sarah Hayward
<b>Ward(s):</b>	All
<b>Key Decision:</b>	NO
<b>Exempt:</b>	NO
<b>Decision Subject To Call In:</b>	NO
<b>Appendices:</b>	Appendix 1 – Consolidated report to Improvement and Recovery Board covering June, July and August 2023

### 1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 This report provides the quarterly update to Scrutiny on progress being made by the Council against the Secretary of State Directions issued in December 2021, and the overall council recovery plan.

#### **Recommendations:**

- 1.2 Scrutiny is requested to make any comments on the following to inform the consideration of this report by Cabinet:
- a) Note and comment on the progress made by the Council since the previous report in addressing the Directions of the Secretary of State;
  - b) Agree to the next steps to deliver improvement as set out in the action plans and other workstreams that have been developed to address the Directions.

#### **Reason**

- 1.3 Since the last report in June 2023 there have been three further meetings of the Improvement and Recovery Board in June, July and August. A consolidated copy of the reports to these meetings is attached as Appendix A..
- 1.4 Formal meetings with Commissioners continue monthly in the form of the Improvement and Recovery Board. Quarterly updates will continue to be

brought to Scrutiny and Cabinet setting out the detail of the issues reported on at these progress meetings along with additional areas of focus and activity as required by Commissioners. Other Scrutiny and Cabinet reports will also reference progress and agendas and decisions will strongly link to improvement and recovery activity.

- 1.5 This report and the appendix set out the progress made to date and the next steps to deliver change against the journey to recovery and improvement.

## **Commissioner Review**

### **To follow**

## **2. Report**

### **Introduction**

- 2.1 As previously reported Members are aware the Council received a formal direction from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities made under s.15(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1999, including a direction that prescribed functions are to be exercised by Commissioners; and the appointment of Commissioners from 1 December 2021.
- 2.2 The Council took a number of steps, including approving a new Corporate Plan in May 2022 that set out its strategy for improvement. This is in the process of being refreshed and a report will be submitted to September Cabinet and Council for approval.
- 2.3 Commissioners have recognised that there is now a more holistic approach to reporting progress against the various action plans in place to address the Directions and this is presented in the reports attached to the Improvement and Recovery Board.
- 2.4 The Commissioners' report to the Secretary of State in December 2022 set out the position after the first 12 months and the Secretary of State subsequently wrote to the council in March 2023. Commissioners' have submitted a further six month report to the Secretary of State and this was published on 14 September with a parliamentary statement and accompanying letter to the council – all documents can be found on the government website here [Intervention at Slough Borough Council - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/intervention-at-slough-borough-council). The Council welcomes the report and will issue a response once it has time to consider the detailed content.
- 2.5 Commissioners also wrote to the Chief Executive on 14 August 2023. The letter provided clarity on a series of priority areas and we will be providing regular reports on improvements against each of these in time for Commissioners to be able to consider before the submission of their next report.

## **3 Background**

- 3.1 It was agreed by Cabinet in November 2022 that regular public reporting on the Council's ongoing response to Government intervention was essential to ensure transparency and accountability.
- 3.2 These reports are submitted to Scrutiny Committee first to provide the opportunity for comment to Cabinet.

- 3.3 It is now almost two years since Commissioners were appointed by the Secretary of State. During that time the Council has had the opportunity to discuss with Commissioners the extent of the challenges it faces.
- 3.4 The Commissioner team changed earlier this year with the appointment of Gerard Curran and Denise Murray in May 2023, replacing Max Caller and Margaret Lee. Gavin Jones remains as a commissioner and has been appointed as the Lead Commissioner. In May the Council changed administration and the new Leader of the Council attends the monthly Improvement and Recovery Boards with Commissioners, the Chief Executive and senior managers.
- 3.5 Senior level appointments have created more of a sense of stability and an ability to oversee a refreshed corporate approach to financial planning, improvement and recovery.
- 3.6 Commissioners' submit regular reports to the Secretary of State, the latest of which was published on 14 September.
- 3.7 Following the last report to Scrutiny, Commissioners' commented in the subsequent report to Cabinet that:

The Council is working hard to address the significant problems that it faces. The new administration and senior managers are enthusiastic, realistic, and properly focused on the tasks ahead.

Whilst strenuous effort is essential it is not the same as success in resolving the issues. The council will want to resist the temptation to declare victory too soon or to see hard work, on its own, as being enough. Challenges remain and it is not possible yet to say that even in the medium term they will be fully resolved.

These challenges include but are not limited to:

- Winning the trust and commitment of the workforce to obtain the best from them
- Having a strong medium term financial strategy and a firm financial footing
- Implementing effective IT systems and processes
- Improving engagement with the public
- Fully engaging elected members in the running of the council
- Delivering improvement at pace
- Anticipating, preparing for and removing obstacles to the planned improvements
- Rising to the challenges faced by children in Slough

- 3.8 The appendix to this report presents an overview of the workstreams in place to address each of the Directions and how these have been reported to Commissioners.

- 3.9 Commissioners' also commented on the June Scrutiny report that the:

Committee will wish to satisfy itself that appropriate leadership, programme and project management skills are being deployed to ensure that the ambitions presented to them are delivered on time and on budget.

3.10 To that end, the Council has established an internal Recovery & Transformation Board to:

1. Develop and communicate SBCs recovery and transformation strategy.
2. Identify and prioritise Projects, approving strategic business cases as necessary, that support recovery and strategic objectives.
3. Assess whether new demand can be supported, and whether new resources are required, or existing ones redirected.
4. Resolve contention for organisation resources, ensuring a balanced portfolio.
5. Ensure that Projects are, and remain, aligned to SBCs recovery and strategic objectives, including the required pace.
6. Ensure that the best corporate wide solutions are identified / delivered, that provide the most benefits.
7. Provide oversight and guidance to delivery teams, ensuring that they have the resources and support they need.
8. Monitor progress against Transformational Projects, reporting on progress to the CLT, Members and Commissioners and demonstrating SBC is moving as fast as possible towards recovery with the available resources.
9. Assist in the identification and monitoring of escalated risks / issues and support proposed mitigation strategies.
10. Ensure that Transformation and Recovery Projects are aligned with the organisation's values and culture.

3.11 A separate report on the council's strategic direction in the form of a refreshed Corporate Plan will be submitted to September Cabinet and Council to confirm the continued focus on Improvement and Recovery and:

- Set a renewed purpose and set of strategic priorities for the council
- Ensure greater alignment with the medium term financial strategy.

3.12 In addition, the Cabinet and other member forums continue to receive reports which relate to specific directions and improvements, including finance action plan updates, reports on specific company governance, updates on ICT, procurement and internal audit progress, asset disposal recommendations and updates and updates on senior officer staffing restructure.

## **4 Implications of the Recommendation**

### **Financial implications**

4.1 This progress update report is intended to complement existing financial reporting in particular against the Financial Action Plan. Any actions arising from the recommendations will be funded from within existing budgets.

### **Legal implications**

4.2 On 1 December 2021 the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities made statutory directions requiring the Council to take prescribed actions and that certain functions be exercised from this date by appointed Commissioners, acting jointly or severally. The directions were extended on 1 September 2022. The directions were made under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 1999 due to the Council having failed to comply with its best value duty. The general duty of best value is set out in section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 and requires local authorities to “make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness”. This requires consideration of overall value, including economic, environmental and social value, when reviewing service provision. There is also a duty to consult when deciding how to fulfil the best value duty.

4.3 Annex A of the directions set out the action the Council is required to take. Annex C sets out the functions to be exercised by the Commissioners. This includes functions associated with governance and scrutiny of strategic decisions, requirements for the proper administration of financial affairs, functions associated with the oversight of collection of revenues and benefits and appointment of the three statutory governance officers and the scrutiny officer, as well as functions to define the officer structure at a senior level, determine recruitment processes and recruit relevant staff to these positions. The Explanatory Memorandum to this Direction confirms that in practice most decisions are expected to be taken by the Council, however the Directions are designed to give the Commissioners the power to tackle weaknesses identified to ensure the Council is better equipped to meet the best value requirements. Cabinet should have regard to the advice and comments of the Commissioners contained in this report.

## Risk management implications

4.4 The table below sets the key risks

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Mitigations</b>
Financial	Failure to deliver financial sustainability	Financial action plan, Capitalisation Directive and immediate to long-term savings plans
Legal	Failure to address the Directions and demonstrate compliance with the Council’s best value duties or other legal duties leading to increased legal challenges to decision-making and further statutory intervention.	Appointment of new interim Monitoring Officer to bolster capacity at senior management level. Recruitment of interim support for governance and scrutiny.  A whole system approach, focusing on the basics of local government governance and decision making, including training and development and involvement of legal services at an earlier stage of policy formulation.

Risk	Summary	Mitigations
Reputational	Failure to meet the requirements contained in the Directions leading to further intervention from Government	A more comprehensive and corporate approach has been developed building on lessons learned over the past year to provide greater confidence in the Council's journey and direction of travel

## Environmental Implications

4.5 There are no direct environmental implications as a result of the recommendations contained in this report.

## Equality implications

4.6 The Council has a duty contained in section 149 of the Equality Act to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

The protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into day-to-day business and to keep them under review in decision making, the design of policies and the delivery of services.

## Procurement implications

4.7 One of the Directions includes specific reference to the procurement and contract management function and this is detailed in the Appendix.

## Workforce implications

4.8 Any future changes to the workforce will be subject to full statutory processes and consultation.

## Property implications

4.9 The Council has developed an Asset Disposal Strategy and this has been approved by Cabinet.



## **5 Background Papers**

5.1 See appendix.

This page is intentionally left blank

Strategy and Improvement

# Improvement and Recovery Board

Page 6  
Progress Report - consolidated  
June – July – August 2023

*Report Owner: Sarah Hayward, ED Strategy and Improvement*  
*Report Author: Strategy and Improvement Team*

CONFIDENTIAL

# Contents

## Section One - Administration.

- Welcome, Introductions & Declaration of Interests. Lead Commissioner.
- Open and Closing Actions. Lead Commissioner / Secretariat.

## Section Two - Headlines.

- Headline Commentary. Leader.
- Recovery Combined 'Plan on a Page'. Leader / CEX.
- Directions Progress Summary. Leader / CEX.

## Section Three - Directions Summary.

- Avoidance of Poor Governance or Financial Mismanagement & Financial Update (2 & 3a). S151 Officer.
- Asset Disposal Summary (3a). S151 Officer / AD Property & Housing.
- Democratic Governance and Scrutiny Action Plans (3b & 3c). Monitoring Officer.
- Internal Audit Action Plan (3d). S151 Officer.
- Procurement and Contract Management Action Plan (3e). S151 Officer.
- Information Technology Action Plans (3f). ED Strategy & Improvement.
- Culture Change (5). ED Strategy & Improvement.
- Subsidiary Company Review (6). S151 Officer.
- Better Data and Insight for Evidence Based Decision Making (7). CEX.

## Section Four - Close.

- Future Meetings, incl. Forward Plan. ED Strategy & Improvement.
- Any other Business. Leader / CEX.



## Headline Commentary - June

1. Public consultation has opened on a refresh of the Corporate Plan following approval at Cabinet – the draft has been informed by a new evidence base.
2. Commencement of action against culture change with the theme of a new start - key messages shared at staff roadshow on 27 June.
3. Centre for Governance and Scrutiny facilitated a session with new Scrutiny Committee and officers to plan work programme and task and finish groups.
4. Staff Survey results were received on 23 June, and we are currently working with the provider to understand their analysis - communicate with staff, commissioners and members will follow shortly.
5. Senior level restructure is progressing broadly against plan with latest communication on process issued 21 June.
6. CLT has started to take forward the intervention exit strategy thinking with a view to develop conversations with Commissioners in July.
7. DfE have indicated they will be issuing a statutory Direction in respect of SEND. At the time of going to press wording / details are not available.

1. As a result of our progress and plans, by the autumn of 2023 we will be on track to have;
  - Launched our new senior management structure including a reduction in the number of Directorates (and therefore Executive Directors) from 6 to 5.
  - Adopted a refresh of the Corporate Plan, following public consultation.
  - Further embedded changes as a result of the action plans in place for governance and scrutiny.
  - Made significant progress against specific legacy challenges identified in the Financial Action Plan as well as putting shape to our medium-term financial strategy.
  - Moved ahead with our plans to improve core corporate functions including ICT, Customer Services and HR.
  - Continued the Programme of Culture Change and ways of working to focus on the resident and best value.
2. Demand for Transformation resources continues to grow. Prioritisation will be key.
3. Complaints performance has improved compared to the previous year with a response time of 16 days average, down from 48.9 days Q4 of 2021/22. These are a result of;
  - Weekly overdue case report shared via Ads. Bespoke outstanding case reports to key areas sent on a weekly basis.
  - Remedial actions put in place as a result of complaint learning e.g. amendment to auto acknowledgements – updates to website.
  - Scheduled attendance to departmental meeting to discuss complaint handling.
  - Quarterly quality checks carried out on logged complaints to ensure consistency and accuracy.

1. Careful planning / prioritisation is required for upcoming deep-dives, scrutiny, task & finish groups to ensure the available Officer time is focussed where it can add most value.
  - In our enthusiasm to maintain pace, some parts of the organisation have indicated potential conflicting priorities and overload.
  - This is particularly key as we deliver the new organisational structure.
2. Demand for Transformation support continues to exceed supply (against what the original Recovery Business Case can support).
  - Consideration and prioritisation will take place through the Transformation Board.
  - It is seen as a positive sign, as Officers consider where and how Project Management support can accelerate progress.
3. The Senior level restructure consultation has been launched and is on time for approval at the September Full Council.



# Recovery Combined "Plan on a Page"

Feb-23 Mar-23 Apr-23 May-23 Jun-23 Jul-23 Aug-23 Sep-23 Oct-23 Nov-23 Dec-23 Jan-24 > Jan-24

## Oversight

◆ IRB (Feb-23, Mar-23, Apr-23, May-23, Jun-23, Jul-23, Aug-23, Sep-23, Oct-23, Nov-23)  
 ◆ Letter to DLUHC (incl. Grant Thornton audit) (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Letter to DLUHC (Jun-23, Sep-23, Dec-23)

## Financial Sustainability

Future Years Budget Exploration & Savings Ideation (Mar-23 to Jun-23)  
 2024/25 Draft Budget Preparation (Jun-23 to Sep-23)  
 2024/25 Budget Finalisation (Sep-23 to Jan-24)  
 S151 Arrives (Feb-23)  
 ◆ 2023/24 Budget Update & Approval (Mar-23)  
 ◆ 2018/19 Accounts Audit Complete (Mar-23)  
 ◆ 2019/20 Statement of Account Complete (Oct-23)  
 ◆ 2024/25 Draft/update Budget (Nov-23)  
 ◆ Financial Settlement (Jan-24)  
 ◆ 2020/21 Statement of account (Dec-23)

## Asset Disposal

On-going Asset Disposal Programme (Feb-23 to Jan-24)  
 ◆ Q1 Receipts forecast: £36m (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Q2 Receipts forecast: £53m (Jun-23)  
 ◆ Q3 Receipts forecast: £34m (Sep-23)  
 ◆ Q4 Receipts forecast: £23m (Dec-23)

## Procurement & Contract Mgmt.

Contracts Register Reviews (focussed to ensure up to date and robust, then six-monthly thereafter) (Feb-23 to Aug-23)  
 ◆ Mgmt. Framework (Feb-23)  
 ◆ KPI's Monitoring (Feb-23)  
 ◆ Procurement process mapping (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Contracts Register on Finance System (Sep-23)  
 ◆ Six-Monthly Register Reviews Start (Oct-23)

## Subsidiary Companies

Increase Member Oversight (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 Present and Implement Annual Business Plans for JEH, GRE5, SCF (Mar-23 to Sep-23)  
 ◆ JEH, GRE5, SUR Business Plans to Cabinet (Mar-23)  
 ◆ DISH Review (Jun-23)  
 ◆ Undertake and Implement Recommendations for Governance Reviews (Jul-23 to Dec-23)  
 ◆ 2023/24 Receipts forecast £7.5m (Sep-23)  
 ◆ 2023/24 Receipts forecast £7.5m (Nov-23)  
 Exit from GRE5 & SUR 2024/25 (Jan-24)

## Democratic Governance & Scrutiny

P2a – Short Term (incl. CfGS review response) (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 P2b – Short to Medium Term (incl. improving Member and Officer decision making processes, introductory training) (Feb-23 to Jan-24)  
 P3 – Medium to Long Term (incl. improved partnership governance, longer-term planning & decision making) (Mar-23 to Jan-24)  
 ◆ Governance & Culture Workshop (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Whole Council Elections (Apr-23)  
 Agree Member Dev Programme (Mar-23 to Apr-23)  
 Deliver Member Development Programme (Apr-23 to Jun-23)  
 ◆ Present Reports on T&F Groups linked to Recovery (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Implement new Scrutiny Structure, delivery training and finalise annual work programme (Jun-23)  
 ◆ Post-Election Member Survey (Oct-23)  
 Shadow O & S Arrangements (Mar-23 to Jun-23)

## Internal Audit

◆ First Tranche of IA Recruitment Complete (Feb-23)  
 ◆ 2023/24 Audit Plan available (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Finance Board Update on IA way forward (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Candidate appointed to Internal auditor role (Jun-23)  
 Transition RSM to In-House Team (Jun-23 to Jul-23)  
 ◆ Present revised 2023/24 Audit Plan at Audit and Corporate Governance Committee (Jul-23)  
 Review against PSIAS Standards (Jan-24)

## ICT & Digital

Corporate Telephony (Feb-23)  
 ◆ Updated ICT Strategy (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Security and Resilience, incl. DR Improvements (Apr-23)  
 ◆ Service Management Customer Portal Go-Live (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Data-Centre Relocation Completes (Jun-23)  
 ◆ Mobile Telephony (Sep-23)  
 ◆ Service Management – Ph 2 Go -Live (Sep-23)





## Mgmt. Structure & Recruitment

Recruitment Process Optimisation (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 ◆ ED & AD Levels Complete (Mar-23)




## Workforce & Culture

P1 - Defining Future & Quick Wins (Feb-23 to Mar-23)  
 P2 - Reshaping for Performance (Mar-23 to Aug-23)  
 P3 – Optimised Delivery (Aug-23 to Jan-24)  
 ◆ Leadership Roadshow (Jul-23, Nov-23)  
 ◆ Improved PM (Mar-23)  
 ◆ Staff Survey (Apr-23, Jun-23)  
 ◆ Q'ly Perf Rep (Jul-23, Sep-23)  
 ◆ Staff Survey (Dec-23)





# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
1	Functional Capability Assessment	Sarah Hayward	Dean Tyler		01-Dec-22		=	<b>14/10</b> - Service plans have been completed, which will address gaps in capability. These are continuing to be iterated to ensure coherence across services and alignment with the corporate plan. SLT will act as the governance body for the service planning. Next steps are to develop reporting arrangements for monitoring progress in delivery, and ensure lessons for next year are captured.
2	Avoid Poor Governance or Financial Mismanagement	Adele Taylor	Alistair Rush & Hitesh Jolapara	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	Continuous		=	<b>10/08</b> Action plan overview discussed with Commissioner and Lead Member. Paper will go to cabinet in September <b>09/06</b> Agreed with new Commissioner that the action plan will be considered at August Finance Board to go to Cabinet in September. This reflects change in Commissioner and wanting to involve them in the development of the combined plan.
Page 46 3a	Financial Sustainability Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Alistair Rush & Hitesh Jolapara	Leader / Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-29		=	<b>10/08 &amp; 14/07</b> - Outturn was deferred until September by Commissioner <b>09/06</b> – Outturn for <b>22/23</b> being finalised with Cabinet paper due in July cabinet. MTFP and underlying assumptions will be refreshed with outturn data and a new MTFP model built during June / July. Will review progress at August finance board. <b>13/10</b> - The Finance action plan covers 10 years in detail from 2015/16 to 2024/25 and is supplemented by a 14 year active financial model (to 2028/29). Key elements are: Accounts, Assets sales, Capitalisation direction, Revenue budgets, Borrowings, MRP, DSG, Internal audit, Risks and mitigations Finance structure and Directions/recommendations from DLUHC, GT, CIPFA, Directions. The plan is regularly updated.
3b	Democratic Governance Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Leader	01-Dec-23		=	<b>11/07</b> - Deep dive commentary and materials shared with the appropriate groups and feedback has been taken onboard. The annual governance statement has been produced in first draft. The launch of the Governance leadership learning has been successful with good attendance and engagement as of the 4th of July. <b>16/06</b> – Phase 2a of the Democratic Governance Action plan can be completed with the successful delivery of the election and all the preparatory work for it including; a review of the constitution and development of an enhanced member development programme. Phase 2b continues as planned and Phase 3 can get underway – the scheduled 'deep dive' at IRB on 29th June will provide further detail at this checkpoint.





# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
3c	Scrutiny Action Plan	Stephen Taylor	Alexander Polak	Chair, Overview & Scrutiny Committee	01-Dec-23		=	<p><b>11/07</b> - Work is ongoing to improve the scrutiny function as a whole and support members. Discussion around the recruitment of a permanent Scrutiny officer are underway.</p> <p><b>16/06</b> - Induction of the new Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee is well underway, following the full adoption of the revised constitution at the AGM in May 2023 including the new O&amp;S structure and procedure rules. The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny are working alongside the Statutory Scrutiny Officer and Democratic Services Team to emphasise the criticality of this function and to upskill the Chair and committee, the majority of whom are new Councillors.</p>
3e	Internal Audit Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Tariq Monsour	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	31-Mar-23		=	<p><b>01/08</b> - The revised annual Internal Audit Plan for 2023/24 and the Internal Audit Charter were approved by the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on 19 July 2023. <b>10/07</b> - We have introduced a KPI of 0% for all high priority audit actions raised in <b>21/22</b> and 0% with a tolerance of 10% for all high priority actions raised in <b>22/23</b>. For <b>23/24</b>, audit actions to be closed after 30 days from the assigned implementation date. <b>09/06</b> - Continued monitoring of actions through DLT. Audit and Governance committee training on <b>07/06</b> covered their oversight role and at the July committee they will consider the first report on the progress around internal audit actions.</p>
3e	Procurement and Contract Management Action Plan	Adele Taylor	Clare Priest	Lead Member for Financial Oversight, Council Assets, Procurement and Revenues & Benefits	12-Jan-23		=	<p><b>31/07</b> - Improvement plan to implement recommendations from process mapping exercise is live. Work to develop a contract management framework has commenced. Recruitment has been partially successful, contract management support lead and procurement officer onboarded on 10th July. A further round of recruitment for procurement category managers has commenced. Social value pilot underway and work with SME's has commenced, working with the economic development team on an event in October.</p>

# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
3f	Information Technology Action Plan	Stephen Brown	Simon SharkeyWoods	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	11-Jan-23		▲	<p><b>08/08</b> - The delays to the implementation of the new wide area network (SD-WAN) mean that the data centre implementation is now provisionally scheduled for the end of October. There have been new starters to support ICT procurements, strengthen our networks team, and provide resource for building the next generation of devices. A site visit has taken place to begin the proof-of-concept of new hybrid meeting room technology. Deep dive with CEO and Commissioners has provided clarity around the balance of risk vs pace in progressing technology improvements.</p> <p><b>12/07</b> – The rollout of the new telephony platform has been completed. The challenges of implementing modern technology solutions over the top of back-office infrastructure going through major change were significant. The same issue has caused a delay in the delivery of a standard, business class laptop solution, and this work is being reset with additional resource to overcome the current blocks. Recruitment of 2 senior posts has been successful which will mean the ICT management team will be at full strength for the first time in 16 months.</p>
3	Suitable Officer Structure and Scheme of Delegation	Stephen Brown	Sarah Wilson (MO)	Leader	01-Oct-22		=	<b>Please see direction 8.</b>
4	Improvement Plan Monthly Reporting	Sarah Hayward	Tony Wisken	Leader	01-Sep-23		=	<p><b>11/08</b> - In readiness for the departure of Tony Wisken (<b>13/08</b>) the reporting process has now been embedded in the team and appropriate snr officer ownership going forward has been established. Handover is taking place.</p> <p><b>13/06</b> - Further discussion with RTB and Commissioners required to ascertain if changes to reporting styles / content / timing are needed.</p>
5	Culture Change	Stephen Brown	Sarah Hayward	Leader	31-Dec-23		▲	<p><b>18/08</b> - Next CLT workshop now been targetted for September with external facilitation being lined up. Refresh of headline plans progressing well.</p> <p><b>13/07</b> - The next Culture Change CLT Workshop is being schedule for August. Workstream leads have been tasked with refreshing their headlines plans now that we have reached the mid-year point. The next deep-dive will aim to demonstrate the good work that has been achieved on Culture that perhaps is not currently being recognised, incl. with Commissioners.</p>

# Directions Progress Summary

Ref	Direction	CLT Lead (Strategic)	SLT Lead (Operational)	Member (Political)	Target Completion	RAG		Commentary / Progress
						Curr.	Trend	
6	Subsidiary Company Review	Adele Taylor / Sarah Wilson	Pat Hayes	Cabinet Member for Financial Oversight & Council Assets	02-Apr-23		▲	<p><b>13/07</b> - Following progress made to date and the remaining actions largely with Property, ownership is now with Pat Hayes.</p> <p><b>04/07</b> SCF Business and Improvement Plan recommended for approval on an interim basis at July cabinet. Plans in process to appoint a new Chair for SCF Board as well as new SCF Director of Finance.</p> <p><b>19/05</b> - Subsidiary Company Review is tracking to plan.</p>
7	Evidence Based Decision Making	Sarah Hayward	Sarah Wilson	Cabinet Member for Customer Services, Procurement & Performance	02-Apr-23		▲	<p><b>16/06</b> - New evidence base created to inform refresh of Corporate Plan. New Data Strategy being developed for July. Options paper and business case with proposals to enhance data and insight</p> <p><b>14/04</b> - Position statement developed for agreement with CLT including proposals for introduction for new technology to improve data collection and management.</p> <p><b>09/02</b> - First draft of Data Strategy created. Due at CLT in March.</p>
Page 19	Senior Officer Structure and Recruitment	Commissioners	Stephen Brown		31-Mar-23		=	<p><b>13/04</b> - Now considered BAU, however a restructure at the AD and levels immediate below is about to get underway.</p> <p><b>03/02</b> - ED for Strategy and Improvement has been appointed. This was the last remaining vacancy in CLT.</p>
SEND	DfE Issued SEND Direction (wording TBC)	Sue Butcher	Len Brazier	Cabinet Member for Education, Children's Services, Lifelong Skills and Governance	TBC		=	<p><b>11/08</b> - SEND Direction wording has now been received. DfE has acknowledged the progress that has been made. Plans / response are in development.</p>

## Six themes – update:

- Cabinet report discussed with Lead member for finance and outline with Commissioner
- Will be circulated in draft form (cover report and action plan appendix w/c 14/08)
- Significant activity this month against the 6 themes:
  1. Getting the basics right: Meeting with external audit to agree next steps in terms of getting SOA produced and audited with newly released statutory deadlines.
  2. Governance and Decision making: Significant number of key finance reports in September. First Qtr1 monitor and outturn.
  3. Financial culture and awareness: Preparation for next round of financial training (Sept with CFGS) and audit committee. Finance and commercial vision.
  4. Medium term financial planning: CD model updated with outturn information and now working on MTFS update model.
  5. Transformation and Automation: Focus on the improvement work in Revs & Bens and meeting with DWP.
- Deep Dive Projects: 3 specific Income and Debt related projects identified that expect to impact (positively) on the in-year financial position as well as financial sustainability going forwards. One is part of a broader piece of work around TA, (Commercial property, HB overpayments/other TA spend reduction, social care income).

The priorities for the Asset Disposal Programme over the next month include:

- Secure the approvals necessary to move forward with transactions
- Complete July auction sales and continue to identify further sites for auction.
- Continue the Estate Strategy work to identify further disposal opportunities and to help clarify the size of the retained portfolio, moving forward. Stakeholder Engagement sessions are near completion.
- Finalise reports for September Cabinet:
  - Estate Strategy Update – Agreement of Guiding Principles
  - Observatory House Business Case – Agreement of Strategic Business Case
  - Asset Disposal Programme – Agreement of an updated Disposal Strategy
  - Completion of Cabinet report to recommend improvements of current
- Review reporting on the Asset Disposal Programme.
- Clarify the status of HRA assets and the ability to appropriate to the General Fund.

Further to IRB's agreement of the next steps for Democratic Governance and ongoing discussions with commissioner Ged Curran, the detailed weekly breakdown of actions over the next six months is in development, to support a detailed discussion with Ged at a meeting with the Monitoring Officer on 7 September.

#### Next Steps Summary:

1. Deliver further Slough-specific training on working in a political environment, as part of refreshed L&D offer for senior leaders and managers.
2. More work is needed to further improve timeliness of all stages of cabinet report process including early engagement with stakeholders, clearance and sign-off.
3. Review of management and senior officer development programme is underway led by HR – ensure governance learning elements are included.
4. Reformulate 'policy statement on Corporate Governance' into a more standard 'Code of Governance' statement for the public website.
5. Recruitment of permanent Monitoring Officer and succession planning as part of senior officer restructure (phase 3).
6. Next Member Survey due October 2023 to provide a baseline with the new council.
7. Development and implementation of a longer-term strategic planning and delivery cycle linked to the four-year municipal cycle is well underway.
8. Various other actions as per 'deep dive' presented to IRB.



The new committee's second meeting took place in July; a draft work programme was presented which had been facilitated by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny following training and a whole-committee workshop.

The committee acted on the advice of commissioner Ged Curran to 'note' this work programme while the next iteration is designed for September's meeting, increasing the committee's focus on improvement and recovery, value-add and evidence-based triangulation of 'what good looks like'.

While this work is underway, a task and finish group was launched to review the status of Adult Social Care and readiness for the new CQC inspection regime, seeking to identify potential areas for improvement of that service area.

Members also conducted a whole-committee scrutiny session on the topic of the asset disposals programme. The committee voted to request better quality materials from cabinet and officers in future.

Page 23

#### Next Steps Summary:

1. The second iteration of the new committee's first work programme is in urgent development for September 26 meeting.
2. The scrutiny officer advert has closed and interviews are scheduled following proactive agency-assisted search for candidates.
3. Scrutiny chair now has an LGA mentor assigned. Additional support and training for the Chair and whole committee continues to be a priority.
4. Implementation of a system of pre-meetings with facilitated identification of key lines of inquiry for significant items continues – each month additional elements are introduced for the Chair and committee (this month the first 'pre-agenda' meeting will be held).
5. Detailed scoping and research for the Adult Social Care Improvements Task & Finish Group
6. Various other actions in the medium and long term as per 'deep dive' presented to IRB.

- **A new Internal Audit team has been recruited** and the 'Head of Internal Audit' has been in post since 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2023, the Internal Audit Manager since 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023, Senior Internal Auditor since 11<sup>th</sup> April 2023 & two Internal Auditors since 1<sup>st</sup> June 2023 and 19<sup>th</sup> June 2023, respectively.

### **21/22 internal audits:**

- Actions completed as at end of June number 192 or 59% of the total due with 1 action not yet due. A concerted effort is being made by CLT to close the remaining 133 actions or 41% that are overdue.

### **22/23 internal audits:**

- 20 reports have been finalised and a further 7 reports are in draft and being responded to by management. 220 actions have been raised for 2022/23 from these reports. As of 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023, 61 actions or 28% are overdue and 51 or 23% complete. 48 or 27% are awaiting management responses (actions owners and implementation dates).

Page 24

### **23/24 Internal Audit Plan**

- An Audit Plan was approved by the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee on 14 March 2023. The revised plan has been reviewed and updated by in-house Head of Internal Audit in Q1 2023/24 and will be presented to Audit and Risk Committee for approval on 19 July 2023.
- Reports on progress of implementing recommendations are made to the Audit and Corporate Governance Committee, Finance Board and CLT Assurance meetings.

1. All internal audit actions have been allocated to and reviewed by actions owners and Executive Directors, including actions that are deemed not relevant due to changes in circumstances. Actions from previous year's audits are also reviewed to ensure they are relevant to the service area to which they have been assigned.
2. The action tracker has been reviewed and updated to reflect the senior management restructure and the change in Directorates.
3. High rated actions are being given priority and are reviewed monthly by the Council's Finance Board, DLTs' and will be reviewed quarterly by CLT Assurance meetings.
4. Progress is being made on closing actions on the tracker. Evidence of actions completed is obtained and quality assured by the Internal Audit Manager, and, retained for use in follow up audits.
5. Officers have strengthened the arrangements for monitoring and verifying completion of audit actions through monthly DLT meetings. This will also continue in the quarterly CLT Assurance meetings.

- We have introduced a KPI of 0% for all high priority audit actions raised in 21/22.
- We have also introduced a KPI of 0% with a tolerance of 10% for all high priority audit actions raised in 22/23.
- For 23/24, audit actions to be closed within 30 days from the assigned/agreed implementation date.

1. Contracts register is being used as a business-as-usual tool in forward planning procurement activity, this includes consideration of longer-term procurement activity required for high value, high risk contracts. Meetings held with Executive Directors and their management teams to review throughout July which has informed the forward plan update report for September cabinet
2. Utilising existing IT systems for the contract register – options for the implementation on Agresso commenced in July 2023 and will interface with the work of the newly established user group. A phased approach to implementation is recommended to ensure that implementation of the register and transactional features are carefully applied.
3. The training programme on the council's contract procedure rules continues and reflects the revised rules approved by Council in November, 120 staff have been trained to date. Further date scheduled in September.
4. Continue to build a permanent in-house team. Contract management support lead and procurement officer onboarded on 10 July. Further round of recruitment in place for procurement category managers, working with HR colleagues to find creative ways to attract candidates which has had a wide reach.

**Further key development activities**

1. Implement the contracts register on the council's finance system – by July 2023 (work has commenced)
2. Develop a framework to ensure there is a co-ordinated and consistent approach to contract management. This is being done with the contract management pioneer programme– from January 2023.
3. Process mapping procurement - focus is on governance to provide the council with external validation on its processes and to make recommendations on improvements which are being implemented – From April 2023.
4. Establishment of Contract Management Assurance Board to drive best practice in contract management. As part of this process, the contract register steering group will be disbanded and the project ended as the project has met its aims and objectives. A lessons learned review was undertaken in April 2023.
5. Ensure KPI's are meaningful and monitored effectively – from January 2023.
6. Programme of continuous contracts register reviews to ensure the council is getting the best value for money – from September 2023 and six monthly thereafter.
7. Develop a commercial strategy to replace the procurement and contract management strategy and implement actions throughout the 2023/24 financial year.
8. Pilot a social value policy and engage with SME's- from August 2023
9. Report went to February Overview & Scrutiny Committee on the Contracts T&F Group recommending improvements to contract management. Recommendations also reported to Cabinet on 27 February.

## Current activity and next steps

1. AD CDIO has written to the EDs for Children and Adults to propose a way forward with stabilising and improving the management of systems and data across the two directorates. ICT&D will seek to collaborate on a business case to move things forward.
2. ED for Strategy and Improvement, and AD CDIO met with Commissioners for the planned deep-dive in July. The update for Cabinet around the progress of ICT&D modernisation works has now been scheduled for November due to volume of activity over the coming couple of months.
3. The ICT&D team are finalising new processes and have now engaged with internal audit ahead of the formal review of the asset management processes in October.
4. The planning for the new wide area network will be completed over the coming weeks.
5. Following discussions with the Executive Director of Finance and Commercial (S151), and the ED for Strategy and Improvement, the AD CDIO will be writing up the issue around a lack of resource in departments and in ICT&D to properly support key platforms.
6. The new ICT category procurement specialist has started and will now be progressing work on contracts linked to disaster recovery capability and backup solutions.

1. Next series of Leadership Workshops (CLT) being planned. The next workshop to focus on the Action Plan to address issues raised within the staff survey, definition of what the new SBC values and behaviours will be across the organisation, and the development of clear and measurable objective setting to smarter working practices. These actions are to be incorporated into Cultural Change Programme of work.
2. We are seeking to involve the LGA in facilitating the CLT workshop, and to support an Executive 360 to establish areas for development
3. The staff survey has been completed and the data is being analysed to identify a number of key initiatives to feed into the Culture Change Programme and an Action Plan to address the concerns.
4. Members and cabinet development programme being rolled out.
5. Number of quick wins being rolled out from web browser pages landing on Insite to joint working with ICT to roll out bitesize refresher training across workforce to support smarter ways of working and utilising tools effectively.
6. We are progressing on the HR Improvements to support the end to end recruitment, induction, workforce development, and talent management structures to be put into place.
7. Workstream leads are in the process of a mid-year refresh of their workstream plans, developing the roadmap of milestones to be achieved through to the end of the year.



The refreshed Corporate Plan is based on need identified in the latest available evidence with an overarching purpose to address the gap in healthy life expectancy between Slough and other areas, starting with children.

We have reset the Corporate Performance Report with 59 key performance indicators to track progress against achievement of the strategic objectives and the latest report is attached with the papers for the IRB agenda.

Pages  
We are reinstating public reporting of performance starting with October Cabinet. The key performance indicators will be adjusted to take account of comments and any changes to ensure they are the most appropriate measures of delivery. A number of these are currently red and we are transparent in the fact that this evidences the work that needs to be done to improve performance.

A project has been established to review options for greater use of technology to enable automation of reports so that current resource capacity can be refocussed on data and insight and performance management as opposed to performance monitoring.

# Calendar



Page 32

IRB & RTB Updates / Papers due	12:00pm to Strategy & Transformation
Publish final papers for RTB	Transformation Team to distribute
Recovery and Transformation Board	Monthly, usually the 3rd Tuesday
Publish final papers for IRB	9:00am to IRB Administration
Improvement & Recovery Board	Monthly, usually the 4th Thursday
IRB Papers due for CLT	9:00am to CLT Administration
CLT to pre-approve IRB papers	Wed before IRB (RTB approves after May)
Dispatch Papers for Finance Board	TBC
Finance Board	Monthly

# Improvement & Recovery Board - Forward Plan

Function	CLT Member	Cabinet Member	Initiative / Description	Jul (27/07)	Aug (24/08)	Sep (28/09)	Oct (26/10)	Nov (23/11)	Jan (TBC)
Democratic Services	Stephen Taylor	Dexter Smith	<b>Direction 3b:</b> Democratic Governance Action Plan	<b>Direction 3b</b> (Review & Exit Strategy)					
Democratic Services	Stephen Taylor	Dexter Smith	<b>Direction 3c:</b> Scrutiny Action Plan	<b>Direction 3c</b> (Review & Exit Strategy)					
Finance	Adele Taylor	Wal Chahal	<b>Direction 3e:</b> Procurement & Contract Management Action Plan		<b>Direction 3e</b> (Review & Exit Strategy)				
Strategy & Improvement	Sarah Hayward	Dexter Smith	<b>Direction 5:</b> Culture Change Programme		<b>Direction 5</b> (Review, incl. Staff Survey & Exit Strategy)				
Finance	Adele Taylor	Wal Chahal	<b>Direction 2:</b> Avoid Poor Governance or Financial Management			<b>Direction 2</b> (Review & Exit Strategy)			
Finance	Adele Taylor	Wal Chahal	<b>Direction 3a:</b> Financial Sustainability Action Plan			<b>Direction 3a</b> (Review & Exit Strategy)			
Chief Exec	Stephen Brown	Dexter Smith	<b>Senior Officer Restructure</b>			<b>Restructure Update</b>			
Property and Housing	Pat Hayes	Wal Chahal	<b>Direction 6:</b> Subsidiary Company Review				<b>Direction 6</b> (Review & Exit Strategy)		
Strategy & Improvement	Sarah Hayward	Dexter Smith	<b>Direction 3f:</b> Information Technology Action Plan				<b>Direction 3f</b> (Review & Exit Strategy)		
Children's	Sue Butcher	Paul Kelly	<b>DfE / SEND Response</b>				<b>SEND Update</b>		
Finance	Adele Taylor	Wal Chahal	<b>Direction 3d:</b> Internal Audit Action Plan					<b>Direction 3d</b> (Review & Exit Strategy)	
Strategy & Improvement	Sarah Hayward	Dexter Smith	<b>Direction 7:</b> Evidence Based Decision Making					<b>Direction 7</b> (Review & Exit Strategy)	
Strategy & Improvement	Sarah Hayward	Chandra Muvvala	<b>Customer Services Improvement</b> (Channel shift / call & complaints reduction)					<b>Customer Services Update</b>	
Strategy & Improvement	Sarah Hayward	Dexter Smith	<b>Direction 4:</b> Improvement Plan Monthly Reporting						<b>Direction 4</b> (Post Dec Letter Review)

Note, this forward plan was tabled at the previous meeting. It will be updated pending the outcome of the Commissioner / Officer meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> Sep.

Page 33



## Slough Borough Council

<b>Report To:</b>	Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date:</b>	26 September 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Budget Out-turn report 2022-23</b>
<b>Chief Officer:</b>	Stephen Taylor, Monitoring Officer
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Alexander Polak, Statutory Scrutiny Officer Kunwar Khan, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager
<b>Ward(s):</b>	All
<b>Exempt:</b>	No

### 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report details the budget out-turn for the year 2022-23. It was presented to Cabinet on the 18<sup>th</sup> September.
- 1.2 The Scrutiny Committee's interest in this report relates primarily to the carry forwards of underspend and required savings into the current financial year. These should be considered in the Committee's investigation of the Current year Q1 out-turn (Item 6).
- 1.3 In addition, the information in this report will serve as a valuable reference as the Committee turns its attention to Scrutiny of the 2024-25 Budget as it takes shape in the coming months.

### 2. Recommendations:

- That the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee notes the information contained in this report in its scrutiny of the 2024-25 budget going forward;
- That, especially in the context of next item, the Committee focuses its attention on:
  - Para's **8.1 to 8.5 and Table 7** of the report that relate to revenue carry forward.
  - Para's **8.6 and 8.7 and Tables 8 & 9** relating to Capital carry forward; and
  - **Para's 9.11-9.13 and Table 12** cover the overall financial position of Slough BC going forwards
- The committee should explore their implications on actual and predicted spending and savings for 2023-24

### 3. Appendices

Appendix A: Budget Out-turn report 2022-23

This page is intentionally left blank

## Slough Borough Council

<b>Report To:</b>	Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee
<b>Date:</b>	26 September 2023
<b>Subject:</b>	Forward Work Programme of the Corporate Improvement Select Committee (CISC)
<b>Chief Officer:</b>	Stephen Taylor, Monitoring Officer
<b>Contact Officer:</b>	Alexander Polak, Statutory Scrutiny Officer Kunwar Khan, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager
<b>Ward(s):</b>	All
<b>Exempt:</b>	No
<b>Appendices:</b>	<b>Appendix A</b> – Revised Draft Forward Work Programme 2023-24 for Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee  <b>Appendix B</b> – <a href="#">Report outlining the context and process to date, as presented to 25 July 2023 CISC meeting</a>

### 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the latest version of a work programme for the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee (CISC), included at Appendix A. It should be read in conjunction with [Appendix B](#), a report on the same topic which was presented to the July meeting of this committee.

#### **Recommendations:**

- The Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee is recommended to review and agree the Forward Work Programme (Appendix A).

#### ***Commissioner Review***

*To Follow.*

### 2. Report

- 2.1 The Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee (CISC) is invited to review and agree this work programme (Appendix A) whilst noting that it is a living document and is intended to continue to evolve in response to events over the course of the period covered. In the usual course of things, it will also be fully refreshed after each Annual Council.
- 2.2 Work programmes always evolve over time, but this version is significantly different to the draft work programme considered at the committee's last meeting in July 2023. The committee made a range of comments about how to further

develop the work programme, not least in light of feedback sent to that meeting by the commissioner Gerard Curren. Substantial further work was requested. Officers have therefore worked at the direction of the Chair to focus the work programme even more closely on the key drivers of Slough Borough Council's improvement and recovery.

- 2.3 A previous forward programming covering report was presented to 25 July 2023 CISC meeting and is [linked as Appendix B](#) to provide the necessary context and details. It explains how Members and officers worked together to shape the initial draft work programme for CISC with the active support of the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, describing the process, contributions and details together with guidance about best practice. The work programme presented here today builds further on all of that work.
- 2.4 For the Committee's information, other actions from the Scrutiny Improvement Action Plan have also progressed since the last time a draft work programme was reported to the committee. For example:
- The Cabinet Forward Plan is now sent to scrutiny members monthly and the Chair and Vice Chair review it with Democratic Services' support to consider what items, if any, could be chosen for future scrutiny.
  - Pre-agenda meetings are now scheduled monthly, for the Chair and Vice Chair to meet report authors for the next two meetings, helping to shape the scope and content of reports, and helping to plan how to support the Committee to make an impact.
  - A very experienced, full-time Scrutiny and Governance Officer has been recruited into the Democratic Services Team. This completes the full resourcing of Scrutiny capacity, alongside the new Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager who started in May.

### **3. Implications of the Recommendations**

#### *3.1 Financial implications*

- 3.2 This is not a decision-making report so there are no direct financial implications. Where further work is required to respond to the issues identified, any recommendations from CISC will be made to Cabinet.

#### *3.3 Legal implications*

- 3.4 The Local Government Act 2000 introduced a new political management system for local councils in England and Wales, requiring them to have a separate 'executive' in the form of a leader, or elected mayor, and cabinet. To provide a counterweight for this, the Act also introduced the concept of 'overview and scrutiny' – sometimes referred to simply as 'scrutiny' – whereby every council with an executive management structure is required to have an overview and scrutiny committee. This enables the rest of the council to scrutinise the executive by investigating their decisions; policies; issuing reports and recommendations where any shortcomings are identified. Four key roles for overview and scrutiny are: holding executive, individual cabinet members and chief officers to account to ensure corporate priorities are met; policy development and review; external scrutiny, and performance management and best value.



3.5 *Risk management implications*

3.6 Overview and Scrutiny, commonly referred to as Scrutiny, is a statutory function and is currently subject to government direction in Slough. Failure to develop and approve a Forward Work Programme for Corporate Improvement and Scrutiny would increase the risk of challenge and criticism.

3.7 *Equality implications*

3.8 The FWP and the covering report include reference to the CfGS scrutiny guidance – which together with the general Public Sector Equality Duty and Nolan’s principles, incorporates provisions that are linked to the Equality Act duties, including, inter alia, a requirement to maintaining integrity, respect the rule of law, consideration of any disproportionate impact of decision-making process, ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement.

4. **Appendices**

**Appendix A** – Draft Forward Work Programme 2023-24 for Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee

[Appendix B](#) – [Previous forward programming covering report outlining the programming process and details with work programming guidance from Centre for Governance and Scrutiny \(CfGS\) presented to 25 July 2023 CISC meeting.](#)

This page is intentionally left blank

# Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee (CISC)



## Forward Work Programme (FWP) 2023/24

Chair: Cllr Manku | Statutory Scrutiny Officer: Alex Polak | Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager: Kunwar Khan

Meeting Date	Priority Area Reference / Directions	Topic / Issue	Purpose	Type of Scrutiny	Responsibility
26 September 2023	<p>Council-wide <b>Improvement and Recovery</b> monitoring following Government Directions.</p> <p>Financial sustainability; closure of long-term budget gap across the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS); and balanced financial forecast for 2023/24. (<b>Annex A, Paragraph 3a of <a href="#">Government Directions to Slough on 1 September 2022</a></b>)</p>	<p><b>Scrutiny Challenge – Quarterly Improvement and Recovery</b></p> <p><b>Budget Monitoring Q1 23/24 and Budget Outturn 22/23</b></p>	<p>To receive a report – scrutinise key areas and monitor progress of actions relating to improvement and recovery.</p> <p>Strategic scrutiny and budget monitoring of 23/24 and 22/23 Outturn as this will inform the Council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy for 24/25 and beyond which will underpin the Council’s budget proposals.</p> <p>To agree the revised CISC Forward Work Programme after Commissioners’ feedback.</p>	<p>Holding to account – oversight, monitoring and scrutiny</p> <p>Holding to account – oversight, monitoring and scrutiny.</p> <p>Critical friend role.</p> <p>Forward Planning</p>	<p>Stephen Brown, Chief Executive</p> <p>Sarah Hayward, Executive Director, Strategy and Improvement</p> <p>Adele Taylor, S151 Officer and Executive Director</p>

	Proper functioning of scrutiny. ( <b>Annex A, Paragraph 3c of <a href="#">Government Directions to Slough on 1 September 2022</a></b> )	<b>Revised Scrutiny Forward Work Programme</b>			Alex Polak, Statutory Scrutiny Officer  Kunwar Khan, Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager
24 October 2023	<p>Implement an <b>ICT strategy that enables service delivery</b> and communications with residents.</p> <p>Improvements in relation to the proper functioning of the procurement and contract management function. (<b>Annex A, Paragraph 3e of <a href="#">Government Directions to Slough on 1 September 2022</a></b>)</p> <p>To meet the Council's <b>statutory responsibility</b> to publish equality information and objectives.</p>	<p><b>Direction Deep Dive on:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>ICT; and</b></li> <li>• <b>Procurement</b></li> </ul> <p><b>Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) and Council Decision-making (compliance and new objectives)</b></p>	<p>To receive a report about the Council's ICT and procurement (including contract management) functions as identified in the priority area/reference column by the Government and Commissioners.</p> <p>To receive a report providing assurance to CISC on the Council's specific duties under the Equality Act to help comply with the public sector equality duty. Public authorities must publish equality information at least once a year to show how they've complied with the</p>	<p>In-depth review of the progress against the directions. Holding to account – oversight, monitoring and scrutiny.</p> <p>Pre-decision scrutiny and policy development. Critical friend role.</p>	<p>Sarah Hayward, Executive Director, Strategy and Improvement</p> <p>Clare Priest, Head of Commercial Services</p> <p>Sarah Hayward, Executive Director, Strategy and Improvement</p>

			equality duty; they must prepare and publish equality objectives at least every 4 years.		
28 November 2023	<p>Financial sustainability; closure of long-term budget gap across the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS); and balanced financial forecast for 2023/24. <b>(Annex A, Paragraph 3a of <a href="#">Government Directions to Slough on 1 September 2022</a></b></p> <p><b>ASC CQC new inspection regime – The ASC assurance programme touches a number of key improvement and recovery areas.</b> CQC will place a lot of emphasis on the importance of good Leadership and Culture as well as on Customer Service and experience. The initial internal assessment suggested</p>	<p><b>Scrutiny of Council's 2024/25 Budget setting process</b></p> <p><b>Adult Social Care and the new CQC Regime – Report back from T&amp;F 1</b></p>	<p>To receive a report about the budget setting process 2024/25. Seeking assurance in line with Directions relating to finance, MTFS and budget. Final details of the item to be confirmed by finance.</p> <p>To receive a report with recommendations from the ASC T&amp;F as the parent committee before it goes to Cabinet.</p>	<p>Oversight, monitoring and policy development.</p> <p>Pre decision scrutiny, oversight and monitoring.</p>	<p>Adele Taylor, Executive Director and S151 Officer</p> <p>T&amp;F Chair Marc Gadsby, Executive Director, Adult Social Care</p> <p>Amanda Halliwell, CQC Project Manager</p>

	<p>that this area requires attention and therefore a focussed T&amp;F can add value by reviewing the methodology and outputs from the ASC/CQC workstream.</p> <p><b>Improving public trust and engagement with residents to enable better service delivery as part of wider organisational change.</b></p>	<p><b>Launch T&amp;F 2 – Resident Engagement and Building Public Trust</b></p>	<p>To agree topic and scope of the T&amp;F work.</p>	<p>Policy development; in-depth review and critical friend role.</p>	<p>Sarah Hayward, Executive Director Strategy and Development</p> <p>Caroline Adlem, Head of Communications and Resident Engagement</p> <p>CLlr Manku – Chair of CISC</p>
4 January 2024	<p>Council-wide Improvement and Recovery monitoring following Government Directions.</p> <p>Assurance that <b>HR function is fit for purpose</b></p>	<p><b>Quarterly Scrutiny Challenge – Improvement and Recovery</b></p> <p><b>Deep Dive on Human Resources – Direction of travel and ‘fit for purpose’</b></p>	<p>To receive a report – scrutinise key areas and monitor progress of actions relating to improvement and recovery.</p> <p>To receive a report providing assurance and progress ensuring that business support services such as HR are ‘fit for purpose’</p>	<p>Holding to account – oversight and monitoring</p> <p>Holding to account – oversight and monitoring.</p>	<p>Stephen Brown, Chief Executive</p> <p>Sarah Hayward, Executive Director, Strategy and Improvement</p> <p>Sarah Hayward, Executive Director, Strategy and Improvement</p>

<p>30 January 2024</p>	<p>To mitigate the risk of poor <b>CQC inspection</b> outcome for Adult Social Care (ASC) services.</p> <p>Financial sustainability; closure of long-term budget gap across the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS); and balanced financial forecast for 2023/24. (<b>Annex A, Paragraph 3a of <a href="#">Government Directions to Slough on 1 September 2022</a></b>)</p>	<p><b>Adult Social Care Transformation Programme</b></p> <p><b>Scrutiny of Council's Draft Budget Proposals 2024/25 (Capital and Revenue – Savings, Growth, EqIA, Risks and MTFS)</b></p>	<p>To scrutinise key areas and seek assurance that Adult Social Care Service is undertaking the necessary improvement work to reduce the risk of poor CQC inspection outcome.</p> <p>To receive a report about the Council Draft Budget Plan 2024/25.</p>	<p>Oversight, monitoring and critical friend. Policy development.</p> <p>Pre decision scrutiny Critical friend and budget recommendations to Cabinet.</p>	<p>Marc Gadsby Executive Director, Adults (People)</p> <p>Adele Taylor, S151 Officer and Executive Director</p>
<p>22 February 2024</p>	<p>Practice improvement for Children with SEND – <b>Ofsted</b></p> <p>Improving public trust and engagement with residents to enable better service delivery as</p>	<p><b>Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).</b></p> <p><b>Report from the T&amp;F 2 (Resident engagement and building public</b></p>	<p>Report on practice improvement for children with SEND – monitoring of actions taken and progress made to address the priorities identified by Ofsted and CQC in their inspection report</p> <p>Reporting progress to the parent committee.</p>	<p>Oversight and monitoring.</p> <p>In depth review; policy development and monitoring</p>	<p>Sue Butcher Executive Director – Children's Services Chief Executive, Slough Children First</p> <p>Sarah Hayward, Executive Director, Strategy and Improvement</p> <p>Chair of T&amp;F</p>

	part of wider organisational change.	<b>trust) launched in October 2023.</b>			<p>Cllr Manku, Chair of CISC</p> <p>Sarah Hayward, Executive Director, Strategy and Improvement.</p>
26 March 2024	<p><b>Ofsted inspection report and improvements in Children Services.</b></p> <p>Participation/engagement is identified as an area of development by Ofsted.</p> <p>Implementation of an estates strategy to make clear how the Council will use its assets to enable service delivery. (<b>Annex B, 2b of <a href="#">Government Directions to Slough on 1 September 2022</a></b>)</p>	<p><b>Launch of Task and Finish Group 3 – Journey to Good – SCF</b></p> <p><b>Scrutiny of Council’s Estate Strategy and its implementation</b></p>	<p>To provide input to develop community involvement plan and engagement in improving children services.</p> <p>To receive a report on the implementation of the Council’s estates strategy to review how the Council is using its assets to enable service delivery; value for money; impact on resident and council’s finances – what external validation or checks are in place; what have been/are the key challenges and opportunities.</p>	<p>Policy development and critical friend role.</p> <p>Oversight, monitoring and critical friend.</p>	<p>Sue Butcher Executive Director – Children’s Services, Chief Executive, Slough Children First.</p> <p>Chair of CISC, Cllr Manku</p> <p>Patrick Hayes, Executive Director Housing and Property</p>
23 April 2024	Council-wide Improvement and Recovery monitoring following Government Directions.	<b>Quarterly Scrutiny Challenge – Improvement and recovery progress</b>	To scrutinise key areas and gain wider insight into progress of actions relating to improvement and recovery.	Oversight, monitoring and policy development.	Stephen Brown, Chief Executive



	<b>Statutory scrutiny responsibility</b> for crime and disorder functions.	<b>Crime and Disorder/Policing Report</b> (Timing TBC, subject to all Member briefing)	To receive a report with a view to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions.	Monitoring and oversight. Annual attendance at scrutiny.	Sarah Hayward, Executive Director for Strategy and Improvement  Superintendent Lee Barnham  Matthew Barber, Police and Crime Commissioner
<b>May 2024 onwards</b>	<b>Annex A, Paragraph 6 of <a href="#">Government Directions to Slough on 1 September 2022</a></b>	<b>Governance and operation of subsidiary companies</b>	To receive a report demonstrating that Council has compiled or adequately progressing with the letter and spirit of the Direction 6 relating to review by Authority of its companies, including any subsidiaries but excluding Slough Children First (SCF). For those companies that it is agreed to continue, make sure that the Directors appointed by the Authority are appropriately skilled in either technical or company governance matters to make sure each Board functions effectively. For those companies which it is determined not to continue with in this form, to establish a plan to internalise, close or sell as appropriate.	Oversight and Monitoring.	Patrick Hayes, Executive Director Housing and Property

	<p><b>Annex A, Paragraph 7 of <a href="#">Government Directions to Slough on 1 September 2022</a></b></p>	<p><b>Data and Insight Report</b></p>	<p>To appraise and reassure the Committee as to what steps have been taken to enable evidence-based decision making, including enhancing the data and insight functions to enable more effective decision making.</p>	<p>Oversight and monitoring.</p>	<p>Sarah Hayward, Executive Director for Strategy and Improvement</p>
	<p><b>Annex A, Paragraph 3f of <a href="#">Government Directions to Slough on 1 September 2022</a></b></p>	<p><b>Progress against Directions: Scrutiny of ICT and HR improvements progress</b></p>	<p>To review and scrutinise progress relating to HR and ICT directions/commentary/report by Commissioners.</p>	<p>Oversight and monitoring.</p>	<p>Sarah Hayward, Executive Director for Strategy and Improvement.</p>
	<p><b>Monitoring of Corporate Performance</b></p>	<p><b>Quarterly Corporate Performance Report</b> <b>Organisational Culture Change Programme –</b> <i>Flexibility to be taken as a report or a T&amp;F.</i></p>	<p>To receive a quarterly performance report in order to review and scrutinise council's performance. A report to the main item or a T&amp;F – TBC.</p>	<p>Oversight and monitoring.</p> <p>Policy development. Critical friend role.</p>	<p>Sarah Hayward, Executive Director for Strategy and Improvement.</p> <p>Sarah Hayward, Executive Director for Strategy and Improvement.</p>

Task and Finish Group Topics 'Taxi-rank' in Priority Order	
Topic / Issue	Comments
Adult Social Care (ASC) Assurance Programme/New CQC regime	<p>The ASC assurance programme touches a number of key improvement and recovery areas.</p> <p>CQC will place a lot of emphasis on the importance of good Leadership and Culture as well as on Customer Service and experience.</p> <p>The initial assessment suggests opportunity for value to be added through scrutiny/T&amp;F. Timely scrutiny engagement, through this Task and Finish Group will help assure that the service is focussing on the right priorities and making required improvements. This will also offer critical friend challenge around assurance programme and delivery of the outcomes through an action plan. Starting in September 2023.</p>
Resident Engagement and Building Trust	<p>Building and maintaining public trust through resident engagement is an important component for SBC. Agreement in principle with the service.</p>
Journey to Good – Slough Children First	<p>Participation/engagement is identified as an area of development by Ofsted so a T&amp;F can add real value.</p> <p>A Task and Finish Group focussing on developing community and faith groups involvement in improving children services. This will ensure that enhanced partnerships bring different skillsets and experiences. Agreement in principle with the service.</p>

<p>Organisational Culture Change Programme – <i>Flexibility to be taken as a report to the main committee if it was felt more appropriate.</i></p>	<p>Paragraphs 5 of the Commissioners’ letter of 14 August 2023 as well as <a href="#">Government Directions to Slough on 1 September 2022</a></p> <p>Culture and behaviour change Task and Finish Group to review progress and provide input to comply with implementation of a programme of cultural change to rebuild trust between officers and members, to the satisfaction of the Commissioners. This should make sure both Members and Officers understand the scale of the challenge and their respective roles in driving improvement and the way in which the Authority and its activities are regulated; governed and the way in which this is monitored, and breaches rectified. Introduction/review of (a credible and comprehensive) culture change programme with targets and measures of success (5f). Timing and the form to be confirmed in consultation with the service.</p>
<p><i>Any appropriate deep dive items can be suggested as a proposal for a future T&amp;F Group subject to the following:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Alignment with the Directions/Council’s Corporate Plan (Improvement and Recovery Plan);</i></li> <li>• <i>Slough’s progress and direction of travel;</i></li> <li>• <i>Commitment and support from the CISC Chair and relevant Executive Director to enable effective and efficient delivery to add value – ‘But-For/So-What’ test.</i></li> <li>• <i>Statutory guidance/constitution/remit.</i></li> </ul>	<p>TBC.</p>