

## Slough Borough Council

**Report To:** Cabinet

**Date:** 20 May 2024

**Subject:** Recommendation/s to Cabinet from CISC 23 April 2024 and the Task and finish group report on Resident Engagement and Building Trust

**Chief Officer:** Monitoring Officer

**Contact Officer:** Michael Edley, Scrutiny Officer

**Ward(s):** All

**Exempt:** NO

**Appendices:** Appendix A: Documents related to the CISC recommendations.

### 1. Summary and Recommendations

1.1 This report sets out Cabinet's response to the recommendations arising from the [Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee's Meeting on 23/04/2024](#).

#### Recommendation:

That Cabinet approves the recommended responses (Table 1 Column iii) to each recommendation (Table 1, column i) with reference to the options set out in Section 2.3.

### 2. Report

#### Introduction

2.1 The key roles and functions of Scrutiny in Slough are set out in Article 6, Sections 2-6 of the constitution and include (6.2.ii):

“make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council and/or the Executive and/or any other Committee in connection with the discharge of any functions;”

2.2 Table 1 below sets out:

#### Column

- i. The recommendations to Cabinet (or alternative body) agreed by CISC at its most recent meeting, on 23/04/2024;
- ii. A link to the relevant CISC source document or minutes for each recommendation.
- iii. The Cabinet's recommended response;

- iv. Notes and links to any formal report to the Cabinet (either at this meeting or expected at a future meeting) that addresses the recommendations and their implementation or otherwise.
- v. The Relevant Cabinet Member and Director.

2.3 The Cabinet is asked to respond accordingly adopting one of the five response options available to Cabinet, (drawn from Part 4.5, 17.2 of the Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules: The options are:

- a. NOTE BUT **NOT** AGREE the recommendation, on the grounds that [insert rationale];
- b. NOTE AND AGREE the recommendation, or a specific part of the recommendation, noting whether action is already underway, and which named director will implement it and by what date;
- c. REQUEST FURTHER WORK BY OFFICERS(Defer) in response to the recommendation (e.g. to evaluate options to implement and report back to cabinet for final decision by [date]).
- d. Note matters referred by CISC to Full Council, a committee, another public service organisation or partnership for action; or
- e. For recommendations relating to operational matters and therefore directed to one or more members of the CLT, the Cabinet is invited to either ENDORSE the recommendation or CAUTION it.

### 3.0 Appendices

**Appendix A:** Documents related to the CISC recommendations.

**Table 1.** Recommendations requiring Cabinet response.

i. Scrutiny Recommendation	ii. Source of recommendation (link to CISC report/minutes)	iii. CABINET RESPONSE (from options a-e above)	iv. Explanatory notes provided by Cabinet Member	v. Name of Cabinet Member and Executive Director
<b>Member Communications</b>				
a. Cabinet to endorse adding all SBC Councillors to the distribution list for media releases from the communications team, to ensure members receive the latest news at the same time as the public; and	<a href="#">Report to CISC on 23 April 2024</a>  <a href="#">Task and Finish Group Report on Resident engagement and building trust</a>	B. NOTE AND AGREE		Leader / CEX
b. Cabinet to endorse a monthly release by the Communications Team to Councillors, either stand-alone (Councillors' Cascade?) or as part of the current bulletin schedule.	<a href="#">Task and Finish Group Report on Resident engagement and building trust</a>	B. NOTE AND AGREE	The current Member bulletin will be augmented with a broader range of information and messages.	Leader / Director of Law & Governance and MO
<b>Consultation</b>				
c. The CEX should ensure that the Target Operating Model includes a senior officer with corporate responsibility to ensure a strategic approach to resident engagement, consultation and communication to ensure quality engagement, meeting required standards that are consistent and co-ordinated across the organisation (and ultimately with Partners). The appointed officer, as a priority should:	<a href="#">Report to CISC on 23 April 2024</a>  <a href="#">Task and Finish Group Report on Resident engagement and building trust</a>	B. NOTE AND AGREE	The role of Director of Strategy, Change & Resident Engagement is currently being recruited to, and the Director will need to review staffing and responsibilities once in post. The Engagement Policy and Toolkit will be reviewed as proposed. The new Target Operating Model is currently in development and the Task & Finish Group's recommendations will inform its design.	Leader / CEX

i. Scrutiny Recommendation	ii. Source of recommendation (link to CISC report/minutes)	iii. CABINET RESPONSE (from options a-e above)	iv. Explanatory notes provided by Cabinet Member	v. Name of Cabinet Member and Executive Director
<p>d. Promote <a href="#">Citizen Space</a> internally and externally, as the Consultation and Engagement Hub for Slough. This will be relaunched shortly with a new look and feel that will highlight accessibility links and set out the consultation and feedback standards residents can expect.</p>		<p>B. NOTE AND AGREE</p>	<p>Citizen Space will be the only platform through which public consultations are run, other than those that go through the Planning Portal. Use of this process will be mandatory for all services.</p> <p>A new Citizen Space page, with additional resident engagement features, will be live by the end of May.</p> <p>The Policy Team in the CEO Office are hosting sessions to raise awareness internally on how it can be used consistently and effectively.</p> <p>Delib, who run Citizen Space, are committed to accessibility and the website is compliant with Web Content Accessibility Guidelines V2.2 AA.</p> <p>New consultations will be shared via the council's social media, and the link to the Citizen Space page will be accessible from SBC's homepage.</p> <p>Citizen Space will be used to adopt a 'You Said, We Did' approach for resident engagement.</p>	<p>Leader / CEX</p>
<p>e. Cabinet asks the CEX to establish and develop a forum of officers (reporting to CLT) across the council (and partners) that will help ensure there is a cohesive and joined-up approach to consultation and</p>		<p>C. REQUEST FURTHER</p>	<p>The new Director of Strategy, Change &amp; Resident Engagement will need to review processes and strategy and propose any improvements or new fora, considering the recommendations of the Task &amp; Finish Group,</p>	<p>Leader / CEX</p>

i. Scrutiny Recommendation	ii. Source of recommendation (link to CISC report/minutes)	iii. CABINET RESPONSE (from options a-e above)	iv. Explanatory notes provided by Cabinet Member	v. Name of Cabinet Member and Executive Director
<p>engagement across the council, a Corporate Consultation and Engagement calendar, peer support for officers to share best practice as well as monitoring of consultation standards; and</p>		<p>WORK BY OFFICERS</p>	<p>and drawing on their experience and expertise. The form these take will be dependent on any changes made following the review of the Engagement Policy and Toolkit proposed in recommendation <b>c</b>.</p> <p>Any new processes will require an assessment of potential impact against any anticipated demand on limited staff resources.</p>	
<p><b>f.</b> Cabinet asks the CEX and CLT that, from immediate effect, the consultations for 2023-24 and all consultations going forward are published on Citizen Space, including both the results of all consultations and a link to the ultimate outcome (Cabinet report) within proscribed time periods. Whenever possible, as a courtesy, provide feedback specifically to those people who contributed to a consultation.</p>		<p>B. NOTE AND AGREE – (IN PART)</p>	<p>Citizen Space will be the only platform through which public consultations are run, other than those that go through the Planning Portal. Use of this process will be mandatory for all services.</p> <p>These published outcomes must, however, be summaries, not show individual responses and be compliant with any Data Protection Assessment completed prior to the commencement of the consultation. In some instances, these assessments may require consultation data to be deleted, once the purpose for which they were created has been completed.</p> <p>In regard to responses, it will often not be possible or appropriate to provide feedback to</p>	<p>Leader / CEX</p>

i. Scrutiny Recommendation	ii. Source of recommendation (link to CISC report/minutes)	iii. CABINET RESPONSE (from options a-e above)	iv. Explanatory notes provided by Cabinet Member	v. Name of Cabinet Member and Executive Director
			<p>individual respondents – either where the consultation was particularly large, or where a decision is yet to take place. For example, there were over 400 responses to the consultation on Slough’s Children’s Centres.</p> <p>Responding individually might also require complex internal sign-off or authorisation processes, which could require a disproportionate use of staff and senior management resources.</p> <p>However, we can ensure that all respondents to consultations are sent a message, thanking them for their participation, and explaining the next steps in the decision-making process.</p>	
<b>Community Networks</b>				
<p><b>g.</b> That Cabinet request the Member Development team work with the Community Development Officer to develop a simple self-service tool, for Members by which they can refer residents to relevant community groups. This would be of value in Members’ surgeries, and an opportunity to connect with community groups and to build local conduits for 2-way flows of information;</p>	<p><a href="#">Task and Finish Group Report on Resident engagement and building trust</a></p>	<p>C. REQUEST FURTHER WORK BY OFFICER</p>	<p>Officers will look into the practicality of producing a guide for members detailing a list of resources available to them, with the aim of including among other things: The Community Directory (public) <a href="http://www.wellbeingforslough.org.uk/">http://www.wellbeingforslough.org.uk/</a> Asset Directory (internal), and the Cost of Living Resource pack (public) Fighting the cost of living <a href="#">Fighting the cost of living Autumn Winter 2023 2024 4th edition (slough.gov.uk).</a></p>	<p>Lead Member for Community Cohesion, Leisure &amp; Sport / Director for Public Health &amp; Protection</p>

i. Scrutiny Recommendation	ii. Source of recommendation (link to CISC report/minutes)	iii. CABINET RESPONSE (from options a-e above)	iv. Explanatory notes provided by Cabinet Member	v. Name of Cabinet Member and Executive Director
<p><b>h.</b> Cabinet directs Community Development to produce a guide for Councillors that list key sources of information about Borough-wide and ward-based Community Groups;</p>		<p>B. NOTE AND AGREE</p>	<p>Officers will run a training session for members on how to access the information available at ward level including ward profiles which are to be published imminently.</p>	<p>Lead Member for Community Cohesion, Leisure &amp; Sport / Director for Public Health &amp; Protection</p>

<p>i. Cabinet directs Member Development to commission a training module, to be rolled out for all councillors, helping them learn about how to make connections (see g above) with residents and borough and local community groups (see h above). The <a href="#">LGA starter kit for front-line councillors</a> offers a useful starting point;</p>		<p>C. REQUEST FURTHER WORK BY OFFICERS</p>	<p>Please refer to notes in recommendations <b>g</b> and <b>h</b> above.</p>	<p>Leader / Director of Law &amp; Governance and MO</p>
<p>j. Cabinet request Democratic Services and CLT to find ways to publicise the <a href="#">Community Directory</a> to all councillors and officers responsible for consultation and engagement ; and</p>		<p>B. NOTE AND AGREE</p>	<p>The Community Directory will be included in the information bulletin for the Health and Wellbeing Board, and officers will explore further opportunities for raise awareness of it.</p>	<p>Leader / Director of Law &amp; Governance and MO</p>
<p>k. Cabinet request that Cabinet Reports have a new section (in Implications section perhaps), setting out the detail of resident and community engagement that has taken place especially in relation to new policies and changes to services.</p>		<p>B. NOTE AND AGREE</p>	<p>This information is often included within Equalities Impact Assessments; however, it may benefit from its own specific section. Staff could be encouraged to state the action taken with reference the engagement toolkit – see recommendation <b>c</b>.</p>	<p>Leader / Director of Law &amp; Governance and MO</p>
<p><b>Democratic Engagement</b></p>				
<p>i. (To Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee) That over the life of this administration, the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee should aim to continuously improve the way it involves the public in work programming, priority setting and the investigation of issues, including, developments such as:</p>	<p><a href="#">Report to CISC on 23 April 2024</a>  <a href="#">Task and Finish Group Report on Resident engagement and building trust</a></p>	<p>E. ENDORSE</p>	<p>[all of these are covered by the action plan in the 2023/24 Scrutiny Annual Report]</p>	<p>Chair, CISC / Director of Law &amp; Governance and MO</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Putting out a public call for work programme topics at the beginning of the year;</li> </ul>		<p>E. ENDORSE</p>	<p>[all of these are covered by the action plan in the 2023/24 Scrutiny Annual Report]</p>	<p>Chair, CISC / Director of Law &amp; Governance and MO</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Calling for public evidence whenever a T&amp;F group is launched;</li> </ul>		E. ENDORSE	[all of these are covered by the action plan in the 2023/24 Scrutiny Annual Report]	Chair, CISC / Director of Law & Governance and MO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making greater use of options to invite or even co-opt expert witnesses to assist in representing specific relevant groups on a topic-by-topic basis; and</li> </ul>		E. ENDORSE	[all of these are covered by the action plan in the 2023/24 Scrutiny Annual Report]	Chair, CISC / Director of Law & Governance and MO
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making greater use of alternative approaches to scrutiny that enable greater public representation either directly or through community representatives.</li> </ul>		E. ENDORSE	[all of these are covered by the action plan in the 2023/24 Scrutiny Annual Report]	Chair, CISC / Director of Law & Governance and MO
<p><b>m.</b> Cabinet approve and instruct Member Development to commission a training module to be developed and rolled out to all <b>committee chairs</b> (open to all other councillors) on public participation options and methods. This will assist the council in developing better, more consistent and pro-active practice with respect to a resident engagement element at its committees.</p>		C. REQUEST FURTHER WORK BY OFFICERS	Officers will explore options for a training module and if necessary, produce a business case for any new tool to the Expenditure Control Panel.	Leader / Director of Law & Governance and MO
<p><b>n.</b> That the Cabinet and other Committees where appropriate make better use of Slough's Youth Parliament (YP) as a way of involving young people in the decision-making process, on issues that are relevant. In particular, the Cabinet should consider consulting the YP during the budget-setting process, and meet the YP to discuss young people's priorities and how they might be taken forward; and</p>		B. NOTE AND AGREE	Cabinet and other Committees will, where possible, make use of youth voice mechanisms provided by the youth voice team; including Slough's Youth Parliament (SYP), Slough Young Inspectors (SYI), Slough Young Commissioners (SYC) and attending/being panel members for Slough Young People's Question Time (SYPQT). Cabinet and other committees recognise the value of involving young people in the decision-making process, the commissioning process and gaining their views on issues that are relevant. In particular,	Leader / Lead Member for Education & Children's Services / ED Children's Services / Director of Law &

			utilising the Youth Voice Team during the budget-setting process, and meeting with them to discuss young people's priorities and how they might be taken forward in a youth friendly manner.	Governance and MO
o. That Cabinet endorses the recommendation that the Electoral Registration Officer commissions a review to identify what additional action could be taken by the council to improve the rates of voter registration and voting especially amongst any identified under-represented groups of residents in Slough.		E. ENDORSE		Electoral Registration Officer / Returning Officer

**Appendix A: CISC Documents relating to the recommendations**

**A1:** [Report to CISC on 23 April 2024](#)

**A2:** [Task and Finish Group Report on Resident engagement and building trust](#)