

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Overview and Scrutiny Committee **DATE:** 9th July 2015

CONTACT OFFICER: Dave Gordon
Scrutiny Officer

(For all Enquiries) (01753) 875411

WARD(S): All

PART I **FOR DECISION**

THE FIVE YEAR PLAN – FUTURE APPROACH OF SCRUTINY

1. **Purpose of Report**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to consider the overall structure of the Five Year Plan and decide the most suitable approach to its scrutiny. The options open are:

- Scrutinise the Five Year Plan using a general overview of all aspects.
- Scrutinise the Five Year Plan, with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee taking reports on each outcome on a rotational basis.
- Scrutinise the Five Year Plan, with outcomes delegated to scrutiny panels as appropriate.

2. **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to resolve that the following approach is taken:

- a) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee retains the responsibility for scrutinising the themes 'Changing, Retaining and Growing' and 'Using Resources Wisely'.
- b) That the theme 'Enabling and Preventing' is sub-divided and delegated as follows:
 - Slough will be one of the safest places to live in the Thames Valley – Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel.
 - Children and young people in Slough will be healthy, resilient and have positive life choices – Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel.
 - More people will take responsibility and manage their own health, care and support needs – Health Scrutiny Panel.
- c) That the schedule for scrutinising these themes discussed in section 5.8 (namely, Overview and Scrutiny Committee to look at each of its two themes once every six months, the Panels to do likewise for their outcomes) be adopted.

3. **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

3.1 **Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy Priorities**

The five year plan relates to all aspects of the Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy's (SJWS) priorities and cross-cutting themes as set out below.

Priorities:

- Health
- Economy and Skills
- Regeneration and Environment
- Housing
- Safer Communities

Cross-Cutting themes:

- Civic responsibility
- Improving the image of the town

The SJWS is due to be refreshed this year and the review will be carried out in the light of the direction of the five year plan.

The five year plan has been developed using the evidence base of the JSNA and the Slough Story.

3.2 **Five Year Plan Outcomes**

The outcomes are:

- Slough will be the premier location in the south east for businesses of all sizes to locate, start, grow, and stay
- There will more homes in the borough, with quality improving across all tenures to support our ambition for Slough
- The centre of Slough will be vibrant, providing business, living, and cultural opportunities
- Slough will be one of the safest places in the Thames Valley
- More people will take responsibility and manage their own health, care and support needs
- Children and young people in Slough will be healthy, resilient and have positive life chances
- The Council's income and the value of its assets will be maximised
- The Council will be a leading digital transformation organisation

4. **Other Implications**

(a) **Financial**

The five year plan will be used to determine the Council's spending priorities from 2016/17. This process will start during 2015/16 including by identifying in year savings.

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal		
Property		
Human Rights		
Health and Safety		
Employment Issues		
Equalities Issues		
Community Support		
Communications		
Community Safety		
Financial		The plan will provide a mechanism to make budget decisions from 2016/17.
Timetable for delivery		
Project Capacity		
Other		

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

There are no direct legal implications. The specific activity in the plan and outcome plans may have legal implications which will be considered when required. There are no Human Rights Act Implications.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

Equality Impact Assessments will be prepared for specific actions within the plan when required.

5. **Supporting Information**

5.1 Slough Borough Council's Five Year Plan (attached as Appendix A) contains three themes. Each of these areas has outcomes, structured as follows:

- **Changing, retaining and growing**
 - Slough will be the premier location in the south east for businesses of all sizes to locate, start, grow, and stay
 - There will more homes in the borough, with quality improving across all tenures to support our ambition for Slough
 - The centre of Slough will be vibrant, providing business, living, and cultural opportunities

- **Enabling and preventing**
 - Slough will be one of the safest places in the Thames Valley
 - More people will take responsibility and manage their own health, care and support needs
 - Children and young people in Slough will be healthy, resilient and have positive life chances

- **Using resources wisely**

- The Council's income and the value of its assets will be maximised
- The Council will be a leading digital transformation organisation

5.2 At the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, members indicated that the first approach mentioned in section 1 of this report (a general overview) would not be effective. Instead, a more in depth appraisal of each of the eight outcomes would be needed.

5.3 As a result, the Scrutiny Officer was charged with producing proposals which would allow for greater input from scrutiny. An approach involving the subdivision of all eight outcomes as separate areas has the potential to mean that, even if it became a standing item on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agenda, ensuring that all matters were covered on an annual basis could prove problematic. This would particularly be the case if no outcomes were sub-delegated to the three Scrutiny Panels.

5.4 However, given its role as the Committee which provides a corporate overview, it would still seem logical to ensure that the majority of work on the matter is undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The proposed approach would be for the Committee to retain the areas of 'Changing, Retaining and Growing' and 'Using Resources Wisely'.

5.5 The justification for this would be that 'Changing, Retaining and Growing' has some similarities with the existing work of the Committee. Given the fact that, in 2014 / 15, the Committee discussed the Council's plans for regeneration, including both housing and methods of attracting business to the area, the three outcomes under this theme would seem a logical progression in the Committee's responsibilities.

5.6 The other theme recommended to be assessed by the Committee ('Using Resources Wisely') is a very close fit to the existing responsibilities. The Committee oversees scrutiny of the Annual Budget as well as other audit responsibilities, ensuring that the financial nature of this theme would be highly suitable for the Committee.

5.7 To ensure that the workload is spread in as relevant and efficient a manner as possible, the remaining theme ('Enabling and Preventing') logically divides its outcomes between the three Scrutiny Panels. As one pertains to health, one to children and young people and the final one to community safety, it is proposed that these are delegated as outlined in the recommendation.

5.8 To ensure that the Five Year Plan is subject to thorough and regular scrutiny, it is also proposed that the following timetable is adopted for the evaluation of outcomes:

- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should discuss each of the themes it is recommended to take on once every six months. These should also be spaced in the work programme so that an item on the Five Year Plan is taken roughly every three months: for example, Changing, Retaining and Growing in October and April, Using Resources Wisely in July and January.
- The three Scrutiny Panels to take their outcomes once every six months on their work programmes.

The officers to represent Slough Borough Council at these meetings should vary as appropriate to the exact focus of the agenda item.

- 5.9 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the three Scrutiny Panels will remain at liberty to request that any particular theme or matter of concern can be brought back as soon as is practicable or necessary. However, it is proposed that the structure laid out in sections 5.4 – 5.8 is adopted as the overall structure for the process.

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

This matter has not yet been discussed by the three Scrutiny Panels mentioned in this report.

7. **Conclusion**

The proposals should help bolster the Overview and Scrutiny's Committee as the body responsible for corporate oversight whilst also using the expertise of the Scrutiny Panels. In addition, given the relatively light workload being imposed on them as a result of these proposals, it should be anticipated that the adoption of this structure will not over burden them or obstruct their other business.

8. **Appendices Attached**

'A' - Slough Borough Council Five Year Plan 2015 - 2019

'B' - Extract from Slough Borough Council's Constitution:
Article 6 Overview and Scrutiny

9. **Background Papers**

'1' - Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting,
9th April 2015.