

## Slough Borough Council

**Report To:** Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** March 13 2024

**Subject:** The Commissioners 4th Best Value Report and Minister's response.

**Chief Officer:** Stephen Taylor, Monitoring Officer

**Contact Officer:** Alexander Polak, Statutory Scrutiny Officer

**Ward(s):** All

**Exempt:** NO

### 1. Covering Report

- 1.1 A meeting of the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee has been convened at the request of the Chair in response to the [Secretary of State's publication](#) of correspondence about the progress of the best value intervention at Slough Borough Council.
- 1.2 The purpose of this meeting is to explore the issues raised in this correspondence and to scrutinise the executive's intended response.
- 1.3 To this end, the Chair has invited the Leader and Cabinet to attend and answer questions, supported by the Chief Executive and Corporate Leadership Team. Commissioners have also been invited, in order to assist the committee with understanding and exploring this issue.
- 1.4 Members are reminded that the [Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference](#) include sections on the committee's role in:
  - Policy Development;
  - Scrutiny (holding to account); and
  - Improvement Functions.
- 1.5 These include, inter alia:
  - 'Monitor and drive improvement against any Directions by the Secretary of State and other external or internal inspections, reviews, performance information at their own discretion'; and
  - 'Question decision-makers about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects'.

- 1.6 The committee's work programme is created and maintained through a mixture of periodic reviews and continuous monitoring of events. Over the coming months the committee's annual report will be produced and reported to the Annual Council Meeting, and this will inform the committee's annual work programming effort in May/June. As usual, committee members are invited to give consideration to their future work programme while discussing this topic – both in terms of potential one-off items or suggestions for the committee's overall approach to fulfilling its terms of reference.

### **Recommendations:**

- i. That the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee note and discuss the correspondence published by the Secretary of State on 29 February 2024; and
- ii. That the Committee give consideration to implications or issues for the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee's future work programme.

## **2 The Documents**

2.1 The documents appended to this covering report are:

**A:** [The Commissioner's fourth report](#) (Page 3)

*The Commissioners' latest assessment of progress at Slough Borough Council. It flows on from their [previous report in June 2023](#). All public documentation published by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities can be found on the ['Intervention at Slough Borough Council' web page](#).*

**B:** [Ministerial Response to the Commissioners' fourth report](#) (Page 11)

*A letter from Simon Hoare MP, Minister for Local Government, to the Commissioners in response to the Commissioners' fourth report. Ministers' previous letters of this type can be found on the ['Intervention at Slough Borough Council' web page](#).*

**C:** [Letter to the Chief Executive](#) (Page 13)

*A letter from Max Soule, Deputy Director of Local Government Stewardship, to the Chief Executive, accompanying the above publications. Officials' previous letters of this type can be found on the ['Intervention at Slough Borough Council' web page](#).*