



**EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**REPORT COVER SHEET**

<b>Title of Report:</b>	Chairman of the Scrutiny (Value for Money Council) Committee: Annual Report 2023/24	To be marked with an 'X' by Democratic Services after report has been presented
<b>Meeting of:</b>	Corporate Management Team: <b>N/A</b>	
	Leader and Deputy Leaders: <b>N/A</b>	
	Leader's / Leader of the Opposition's Advisory Group / Independent Alliance Advisory Group: <b>N/A</b>	
	Council: <b>18th March 2024</b>	
	Audit Committee / Scrutiny (Community Regeneration) Committee / Scrutiny (Environment and Health and Well Being) Committee / Scrutiny (Value for Money Council) Committee: <b>N/A</b>	



Is this an Executive Decision:	NO	Is this a Key Decision:	NO
Is this in the Forward Plan:	NO	Is the Report Confidential:	NO
If so, please state relevant paragraph from Schedule 12A LGA 1972:	N/A		

**Essential Signatories:**

**ALL REPORTS MUST BE IN THE NAME OF A HEAD OF SERVICE**

Monitoring Officer: **John Teasdale**

Date ..... Signature .....

Chief Finance Officer: **Lloyd Haynes**

Date ..... Signature .....

**EAST STAFFORDSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Report to Council**

**Date: 18<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

<b>REPORT TITLE:</b>	Chairman of the Scrutiny (Value for Money Council) Committee: Annual Report 2022/24
<b>PORTFOLIO:</b>	Leader of the Council
<b>HEAD OF SERVICE:</b>	Chief Executive
<b>CONTACT OFFICER:</b>	Seán Loughran (P&T Officer) Ext. No. 1269
<b>WARD(S) AFFECTED:</b>	Non-specific

**1. Purpose of the Report**

- 1.1. To provide a summary of the Scrutiny activities undertaken by the Scrutiny (Value for Money Council) Committee during 2023/24.

**2. Background**

- 2.1. The Council's Scrutiny Committees discharge the overview and scrutiny function under Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.
- 2.2. The Committees are tasked with:
- 2.2.1. Reviewing and/or scrutinising decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
  - 2.2.2. Reviewing and scrutinising the performance of the Council;
  - 2.2.3. Serving as consultees in relation to executive decisions and key elements of service plans when required; and
  - 2.2.4. Producing progress reports and recommendations to the Executive arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process or refer to the Executive entire reports produced as a result of the scrutiny process. However it is the decision of the Executive whether or not such a report is subsequently submitted to Full Council.

2.3. The Committee met for the first time this municipal year on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

### **3. Contribution to Corporate Priorities**

3.1. This report can contribute to all priorities to some degree (depending on the subject matter of the scrutiny review in question).

### **4. Committee Activities**

#### **4.1. Scrutiny Work**

4.1.1. Over the past year, the Committee has undertaken various scrutiny work, including keeping a watching brief on corporate items and working on a number of specific reviews covering a broad spectrum of subject matter:

4.1.1.1. **Currently Reviewing Grounds Maintenance:** At the meeting of the Scrutiny (Value for Money Council) Committee held on 13th July 2023, Committee Members agreed to progress a review of Grounds Maintenance across the borough. It was agreed that a sub-group of the Committee would be formed to lead the review. The core themes of this review are to consider current services provided by the contractor to ESBC, looking into the breakdown of the contract, value for money and to establish if insourcing the services would be a viable option. This is a wide ranging and ongoing review, with the necessary data gathering underway. A summary of the scope of this review can be seen in ***Appendix 1***.

4.1.1.2. **Currently Reviewing Car Parking Charges:** At the meeting of the Scrutiny (Value for Money Council) Committee held on 13th July 2023, Committee Members agreed to progress a review of Car Parking charges. It was agreed that a sub-group of the Committee would be formed to lead the review. The core themes of this review are to look into the service and infrastructure regarding car parking across the borough, payment options, parking enforcement resource, current strategy and value for money. This is a wide ranging and ongoing review, with the necessary data gathering underway. A summary of the scope of this review can be seen in ***Appendix 1***.

4.1.1.3. **Car Parking Charges Call In:** Following a Cabinet decision on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023 relating to the Parking Review, the Key Decision was called in by a number of members, as allowed in the constitution. The VFM Committee reviewed the decision, hearing input from various members and the decision makers. This was taken to a vote and the decision was allowed to stand.

4.1.1.4. **General Scrutiny Responsibilities:** There has been ongoing scrutiny from the Committee of the quarterly Corporate Plan Performance Reports as in previous years. The Committee has continued to scrutinise Executive Decision Records on an ongoing basis, and considered questions submitted to the Committee by members of the public for the first time.

4.1.1.5. **Ongoing Programme of Reviews:** The Committee continues to maintain a programme of future reviews, with Members highlighting and prioritising potential topics on an ongoing basis. This approach ensures a full and productive programme of work for the Committee, with additional reviews commencing in the near future as existing work is completed.

## 5. **Financial Considerations**

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Financial Management Unit: **Lloyd Haynes***

5.1. There are no financial issues arising from this Report.

## 6. **Risk Assessment and Management**

6.1. The main risks to this Report and the Council achieving its objectives are as follows:

6.1.1. **Positive** (Opportunities/Benefits):

6.1.1.1. None identified

6.1.2. **Negative** (Threats):

6.1.2.1. None identified

6.2. The risks do not need to be entered in the Risk Register. Any financial implications to mitigate against these risks are considered above.

## 7. **Legal Considerations**

*This section has been approved by the following member of the Legal Team: **John Teasdale***

7.1. Where a local authority operates under executive arrangements then it must also have an Overview and Scrutiny Committee ('OSC'), which is responsible for overseeing and scrutinising the local authority's decisions, for example, scrutinising the financial arrangements and performance of the local authority including its budget and accounting processes (section 9F, Local Government Act 2000). An OSC may be split into a number sub-committees dealing with the scrutiny of different areas, such as health and well-being or climate change.

7.2. A local authority operating under executive arrangements must ensure that its OSC has the power to:

- Review or scrutinise decisions or actions taken which relate to the discharge of any functions which are and are not the responsibility of the executive
- Make reports or recommendations to a local authority or its executive relating to the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the executive and also those that are not.
- Make reports or recommendations on matters which affect a local authority's area or its inhabitants.

7.3. However, and as this is a summary report, there are no significant legal implications.

## **8. Equalities and Health**

8.1. **Equality Impacts:** The subject of this Report is not a policy, strategy, function or service that is new or being revised. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.

8.2. **Health Impacts:** The outcome of the health screening question does not require a full Health Impact Assessment to be completed. An equality and health impact assessment is not required.

## **9. Data Protection Implications – Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)**

10.1. A DPIA must be completed where there are plans to:

- use systematic and extensive profiling with significant effects;
- process special category or criminal offence data on a large scale; or
- systematically monitor publicly accessible places on a large scale
- use new technologies;
- use profiling or special category data to decide on access to services;
- profile individuals on a large scale;
- process biometric data;
- process genetic data;
- match data or combine datasets from different sources;
- collect personal data from a source other than the individual without providing them with a privacy notice ('invisible processing');
- track individuals' location or behaviour;
- profile children or target marketing or online services at them; or
- process data that might endanger the individual's physical health or safety in the event of a security breach

10.2 Following consideration of the above, there are no Data Protection implications arising from this report which would require a DPIA.

**10. Human Rights**

10.1. There are no Human Rights issues arising from this Report.

**11. Sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures)**

11.1. Does the proposal result in an overall positive effect in terms of sustainability (including climate change and change adaptation measures) **N/A**

**12. Recommendation(s)**

12.1. To note the report

**13. Background Papers**

13.1. None

**14. Appendices**

14.1. Appendix 1: Scrutiny (Value for Money Council) Committee Reviews 2023/24 (*below*).

## **Appendix 1: Scrutiny (Value for Money Council) Committee Reviews 2023/24**

### **Review of Grounds Maintenance**

#### **Summary of Background and Scope**

##### Background

At the meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023, the newly set up Value for Money Council Scrutiny Committee, engaged Members to agree to undertake a review of Grounds Maintenance services across East Staffordshire. A sub-group of Members led the review on behalf of the Committee.

The purpose of this Review was to consider current services provided by the contractor to ESBC, looking into the breakdown of the contract, value for money and to establish if insourcing the services, or any other options open to the Council, would be a viable option.

##### Scope

The core themes of this report were:

- To review current contract performance
- To understand the current barriers in relation to the contract
- To review potential ways of delivering the contract for the future

#### **Approved Recommendations**

- The review is ongoing with the outcomes from this review still to be confirmed



## Review of Car Parking Charges

### Summary of Background and Scope

#### Background

At the meeting on 13th July 2023, the newly set up Value for Money Council Scrutiny Committee, engaged Members to agree to undertake a review of Car Parking Charges across Council owned car parks in East Staffordshire. A sub-group of Members led the review on behalf of the Committee.

The purpose of this review was to establish viability of current financial/operational performance of car parking, ensuring residents were receiving value for money.

#### Scope

The core themes of this report were:

- To understand the Councils current charging policy
- To review the infrastructure surrounding car parking, including Enforcement resource
- To consider viable options for future car parking policies

### Draft Recommendations

- The review is ongoing with the outcomes from this review still to be confirmed



