


Agenda Item No:	11	
Committee:	Overview & Scrutiny	
Date:	26th June 2023	
Report Title:	O&S Panel Task and Finish Group	

COVER SHEET

1 Purpose / Summary

- 1.1 At its meeting on 9th May 2022, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee established a Task and Finish Group for the purpose of reviewing the Council's corporate performance indicators.
- 1.2 The Task and Finish Group made good progress in undertaking its review however, the review was not completed within the timescales originally predicted and there is therefore further work to be done.
- 1.3 In view of the change in membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, revised nominations to the Task and Finish Group are required in order that the work can be completed. This report seeks nominations for that purpose.

2 Key Issues

- 2.1 In order for the Task and Finish Group to fulfil its agreed objectives, further nominations to its membership are required in view of the change in composition of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Terms of Reference also require formally updating to reflect the change in timescales required to facilitate the conclusion of the objectives identified.

3 Recommendations

- 3.1 It is recommended that member of the Overview and Scrutiny Panel:
 - 3.1.1 Nominate replacement members to the Task and Finish Group up to a total of 3 members, 2 conservative and 1 opposition, with 1 substitute each. It is further recommended that where possible, the membership is comprised of the 2 former members of the Task and Finish Group who remain on the Overview and Scrutiny Panel.
 - 3.1.2 Agree the proposed amendment to the Terms of Reference of the Task and Finish Group shown as track-changes to the section entitled Report and Timescales.

Wards Affected	All
Portfolio Holder(s)	N/A
Report Originator(s)	Amy Brown – Assistant Director
Contact Officer(s)	Amy Brown – Assistant Director amybrown@fenland.gov.uk
Background Papers	Overview & Scrutiny Committee minutes from 17.01.22

REPORT:

1 BACKGROUND

1.1 At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17th January 2022 and during the discussion of the draft Business Plan for 2022/23 members requested the opportunity to consider the establishment of a task and finish group for the purpose of reviewing the Council’s corporate performance indicators.

1.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is permitted to establish an advisory/task group by virtue of paragraph 23.3 of the Council’s Standing Orders which states as follows:

“The Council, Cabinet, Cabinet portfolio holder and any committee or panel may appoint such advisory groups as they may consider necessary from time to time and shall specify the purpose, duration and terms of reference of such advisory group, except that such advisory group shall be of a deliberative nature only and shall report back with or without recommendations to the body or person that appointed them”.

1.3 At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9th May 2022, the following recommendations were agreed:

- the formation of a time-limited cross-party scrutiny task and finish group;
- the Terms of Reference for the proposed task and finish group (at Schedule 1);
- initial nominations for the membership of the task and finish group; and
- agreeing that the outcomes of the task and finish group should be presented back to Overview and Scrutiny Committee at a future meeting.

1.4 The aim of the established Task and Finish Group is to review the corporate performance indicators for the purpose of ensuring that they enhance the Council’s corporate priorities and are both measurable and achievable in nature.

- 1.5 The cross-party Task and Finish Group, which it was resolved would be comprised of 3 members, was previously comprised of Cllrs Connor and Cllr Miscandlon with Cllr Hay as substitute and Councillor Booth with former Councillor Bob Wicks as substitute. Subject then to Cllrs Hay and Booth remaining on the Task and Finish Group, members are requested to nominate and agree a substantive and substitute conservative appointment and an FIA/Independent substitute.
- 1.6 It was initially envisaged that the work of the Task and Finish Group would be completed by the end of 2022 in order that its recommendations could be comprised within the draft business plan for 2023/24. However, due to various factors including the need to cancel a number of meetings during the official period of mourning for the Late Queen Elizabeth II it was not possible to meet that deadline. Nevertheless, in discussion with the former Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the original members of the Task and Finish Group, it was agreed that the work should continue and be completed as soon as was reasonably possible ensuring as the main priority that the overall objectives of the exercise are achieved.

2 TASK AND FINISH GROUP ACTIVITY TO DATE

- 2.1 To date the Task and Finish Group have reviewed all but the Communities priorities. Once this has been completed, a further meeting will be required to recap and review the previous discussions and proposals in relation to the other priorities (Environment, Equality and Quality Organisation). There therefore remains an ongoing opportunity to contribute not only to the outstanding priority but also in formulating the recommendations that the Overview and Scrutiny Panel ultimately agree for consideration as part of the draft Business Plan for 2024/25 for which consultation will commence later this year.
- 2.2 In order to ensure that new members of the Task and Finish Group are able to participate fully in achieving the desired outcomes, a briefing session will be arranged to outline in more detail the work that has already taken place and next steps.

3 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 3.1 The most obvious alternative options in this scenario are either to discontinue the work of the Task and Finish Group, or to complete the work of the Task and Finish Group with the 2 original members only. These options have been discounted as the Overview and Scrutiny Panel resolved that the work should be completed and good progress has been made to date and also that the Task and Finish Group should be comprised of 3 members.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Legal Implications

4.2 There are no legal implications connected with the recommendations set out in this Report.

4.3 Financial Implications

4.4 There are no direct financial implications connected with the recommendations set out in this Report.

4.5 Equality Implications

4.6 The business plan and corporate priorities are designed to deliver and promote equal opportunities for all. The corporate performance indicators ensure that anticipated outcomes are met and provide opportunities for further improvement where issues are identified. These all contribute to the promotion of equal life opportunities for all.

5 SCHEDULES

5.1 Schedule 1 – Agreed Terms of Reference of the Task and Finish Group

**TERMS OF REFERENCE
SCRUTINTY TASK AND FINISH GROUP TO REVIEW THE
CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

1. Membership

3 members to be comprised of 2 Conservatives and 1 opposition group with 1 substitute each.

2. Advisers

Peter Catchpole, Corporate Director with responsibility for Governance and s.151 Officer.

Amy Brown, Head of Legal and Governance and Acting Monitoring Officer.

David Wright, Head of Policy & Communications.

Linda Albon, Member Services Officer.

Relevant service leads.

3. Purpose

1.1. To review the corporate performance indicators in accordance with recommended practices.

1.2. To report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee with its findings and suggestions for the purpose of enabling members of that Committee to make appropriate recommendations for incorporation into the next draft Business Plan.

4. Scope

To identify and agree the parameters for establishing effective performance indicators with input from officers and reference to resources such as the Local Government Association's Performance Manager Councillor Workbook.

To identify good practice from other local authority areas particularly where similar objectives are required to be achieved for example the fulfilment of certain statutory functions.

To review existing corporate performance indicators on an area by area basis with a view to establishing whether they enhance the Council's corporate priorities and are measurable and achievable.

To make suggestions as to how the existing corporate performance indicators may be amended or replaced.

To understand the skills and resources which will be required across the Council and relevant stakeholder organisations to deliver agreed actions.

To suggest a prioritisation mechanism to ensure that any resultant suggestions are effectively targeted and delivered having regard to the skills and resourcing available.

5. Reporting & Timescales

The Scrutiny Task and Finish Group will report its suggestions to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee ~~and should do so on or before its final meeting of 2022~~at its meeting on 16th October 2023 in order to ensure that any resultant recommendations can be incorporated into the draft Business Plan for 20243/254 which is due to be presented for consideration in February 20243.