

Annual Report of the Scrutiny Committee 2022-23

During the civic year 2022 – 23 the Scrutiny Committee met on thirteen occasions. Two of those meetings were joint budget meetings held in January 2022 with the Overview Committee to consider the Council's draft budget and service plans for the following financial year. The Committee also received online training from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny on good scrutiny practice and forward work programming.

In June 2022 the Committee considered a report on car parking petitions and recommended to Cabinet to consider a petition platform on the Council's website and to publicise the Council's petition scheme more widely.

An update on the East Devon Social Resilience Dashboard was received at the July meeting, following which the Committee recommended that options be explored to provide local voluntary and community groups with access to the data. This meeting also considered the People Data Annual Report for 2021/22.

The meeting held on 8th September was considering a report on Planning for waste water, water supply and water quality and was adjourned due to the announcement during the meeting of the sad passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

This report was then discussed at the October meeting together with a report on beach and river water quality which resulted in a number of recommendations to Cabinet regarding provision of data throughout the district, liaison with various agencies and groups on nature-based solutions and on-going liaison with South West Water regarding improving water quality. The October meeting also saw the first of the Portfolio Holder Annual reports with Economy and Assets under consideration.

In November the Committee held two day-time virtual briefing meetings with South West Water to discuss beach and river water quality and planning issues. It was hoped that these meetings would continue the constructive dialogue with South West Water which had begun in March 2022.

The Finance Portfolio Holder Annual Report was presented to the November Committee meeting, followed by the Portfolio Holder Annual Report on Sustainable Homes and Communities at the December meeting. The December meeting also considered the Portfolio Holder's update on the draft Members Training Strategy.

The February Committee meeting considered the process for production of the Local Plan and the Portfolio Holder Annual Reports for the Strategic Planning and Climate Action and Emergency Response Portfolios.

Two Committee meetings were held in March in order to try to complete the work programme before the pre-election period. These meetings received the Portfolio Holder Annual Report for Coast, Country and Environment and a report on expenditure on consultancy and agency staff 2021-22, together with the Portfolio Holder Annual Reports for Council and Corporate Co-ordination and Tourism, Leisure, Sport and Culture.

The Committee expressed its appreciation and thanks to all Portfolio Holders who attended and presented their reports for the year.

In addition the Committee continued to receive and monitor the Quarterly Performance Reports and make recommendations where appropriate.