

Slough Borough Council

Report To:	Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee
Date:	23 April 2023
Subject:	Report of the Resident Engagement Task and Finish Group
Chief Officer:	Chief Executive
Contact Officers:	Michael Edley, Scrutiny and Governance Officer Kate Pratt, Acting Head of Communications Dave Hounsell, Acting Head of Service, CEO Office
Ward(s):	All
Exempt:	No
Appendices:	Appendix A: Report of the Scrutiny Task Group on Resident Engagement and Building Trust

1. Summary and Recommendations

- 1.1 The attached report (Appendix A) is that of the Scrutiny Task and Finish Group, launched at the CISC meeting on 28 November 2023. The recommendations made by the Task Group, if adopted by Cabinet and CLT, will contribute directly towards the council's improvement & recovery, being linked to 3 of the 5 strategic priorities in the council's corporate plan,

Recommendations:

- a. **That the committee thanks the members of the Task and Finish Group, and the officers who supported it, for their work to produce the report at Appendix A;**
- b. **That the report (Appendix A) and its recommendations (Section 4) are endorsed by the committee; and**
- c. **That the recommendations a-o, set out in the Executive Summary (Page 3) of the report, made by the 'Resident Engagement and Building Trust' Task & Finish Group, are recommended to Cabinet for their approval or endorsement.**

DLUHC Commissioner Review: Commissioners will be interested to see the Council's response to this considered and important report.

2. Report

- 2.1 In accordance with this committee's work programme, most recently [considered by the committee on 4 January 2024](#), a 'task and finish group' was launched on the 28 November 2023, on the topic of 'resident engagement and building trust'.
- 2.2 This topic was originally recommended for the CISC forward plan due to the low levels of trust identified in our resident survey in early 2023, and the importance of this issue in terms of the overall improvement and recovery of the council.
- 2.3 [Slough Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2023-27](#) sets out five principles, three of which relate to the interaction between residents and the council. This reflects that finding from the 2023 resident survey. Delivery of this strategy is a key driver of the council's improvement and recovery journey, and effective resident engagement has been identified as key to successful delivery of the plan.
- 2.4 The scope of the Task and Finish group (Appendix A) focused on Improvements that will contribute to delivery of the outcomes set out in building trust, being resident focused and enabling residents and communities .



- 2.5 The recommendations, arising from the work of the task group, are set out in Section 4 of the report and the Committee are asked to endorse them to be submitted to the Cabinet for their approval or their endorsement if a recommendation is made to another committee, the Council or to CLT.

3. Implications of the Recommendations

Financial implications

- 3.1 This is not a decision-making report so there are no direct financial implications. The task group has focused on improvements requiring few additional resources and /or adds value to the use of existing resources.

Legal implications

- 3.2 The Local Government Act 2000 introduced a new political management system for local councils in England and Wales, requiring them to have a separate 'executive' in the form of a leader, or elected mayor, and cabinet. To provide a counterweight for this, the Act also introduced the concept of 'overview and scrutiny' – sometimes referred to simply as 'scrutiny' – whereby every council with an executive management structure is required to have an overview and scrutiny committee. This enables the rest of the council to scrutinise the executive by investigating their decisions and policies, and issuing reports and recommendations where any shortcomings are identified,

Risk management implications

- 3.3 Overview and Scrutiny, commonly referred to as Scrutiny, is a statutory function and is currently subject to government direction in Slough. It is important that topics selected by the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee clearly contribute to the overall improvement drivers for the council, in order to demonstrate that the conditions of the government intervention are being met.

Equality implications

- 3.4 The Task group has sought to address under representation of certain demographic groups in voter registration and voting in local and national elections so that residents from all backgrounds are able to engage with the democratic process and the council's work and so ultimately should improve equalities outcomes.

4. Appendices

- Appendix A:** Report of the Resident Engagement and Building Trust Task and Finish Group