

Scrutiny Cycle 1 report

This is my first report of the 2020/21 Municipal year and it is good to be able to report that despite the COVID-19 pandemic we are up and running with the scrutiny function of this Council.

At our first meeting on 10th June scrutiny received a presentation from the Chief Executive, the Chief Operating Officer and all Heads of Service on the Council's response to COVID-19 outlining the current response, what was being planned for the transition and recovery period and what, as far as could be reasonably predicted what the future would hold as 'the new normal'. I also welcomed the attendance at that meeting of all the Executive members. It is vitally important that we all work together over the coming months to ensure the best outcomes for our residents and I am sure that scrutiny's involvement will assist by providing support to the officers and the Executive for what is bound to be a most challenging of times for us all.

Our second meeting, held on 1st July was very much an extension of the 10th June's dialogue. The June meeting had included a presentation which, by necessity, had taken over an hour and the amount of member's pertinent questions and officer responses meant that after three hours we agreed to continue the agenda to the July meeting. This was particularly useful as it gave time to digest the responses and for supplementary questions and topics to be aired. Thanks must be afforded to all involved, to the officers who are clearly doing a very good job in difficult unprecedented circumstances, to Committee members of all parties who provided a myriad of questions covering topics impacting on the town and its residents, to the Executive who attended and spoke at both meetings and last but not least to the Democracy department who dealt with an incredible amount of minute reproduction, written and verbal question recording and gave me invaluable guidance to cover this important subject as thoroughly as was the case

I can also report that scrutiny will continue this year with the housing repairs review that we started in early 2020. Unfortunately we were unable to complete this review by the end of March as we had intended, but members have agreed to continue with the review and a meeting will be held shortly. I hope that we can conclude this review and reports its outcomes to the Executive and a future Council meeting.

Other items of business will be added to the calendar as we progress through the year, understandably our main priority will all aspects of the COVID-19 response and we have asked for comprehensive reports from Officers to enable Scrutiny, most importantly, to consider all the issues in good time, prior to any decision being made at the Executive.

Andy Tatchell

Councillor Andy Tatchell

Chair of Scrutiny

July 2020