

Statement to Cabinet from Overview & Scrutiny Management Board re. Forward Plan
Presented by: Councillor Kent

I present this statement on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to thank you for the improvements to the Cabinet Forward Plan – it is welcome progress that some agenda items are now appearing with more notice than the 28 day statutory minimum that was previously being achieved.

However, the Forward Plan is still quite sparse. This makes it hard for us to do our jobs scrutinising the work of the council, and in particular makes it hard for us to develop our own work programme for the Scrutiny commissions for the rest of this year, which we will be trying to do next Monday 20th September.

The particular issues are:

- **Lack of detail on many agenda items.** Many items only have a title. We understand that it will not be possible to publish detailed documents in advance for every agenda item, but if you could provide a very brief summary of a few sentences, this would make a big difference to our ability to assess what the agenda item is about and how important it is. Alternatively, if relevant background documents already exist, to simply attach these.
- **Some items are missing.** In some cases we personally know about items coming to Cabinet at particular dates in the near future (e.g. because we have been told about the timeline by officers) but they are still not on the Forward Plan, and it is not clear why they cannot be on there yet. We worry that if this is the case for agenda items we know about, there may be many others coming that we do not know about.
- **Lack of 'pending' section limits usefulness:** We would like to see the return of the 'pending' section of the Forward Plan, for items that do not have a specific date allocated yet but are on their way. This would allow scrutiny members, councillors and members of the wider community to know broadly what's coming in enough time to give meaningful input.

Thank you for the progress so far. We hope to see this improvement continue.

These points were agreed unanimously by OSMB Leads from all parties.