

Chichester District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2016-17

Introduction by the Chairman

It seems only a few weeks ago I was writing the 2015/2016 Annual Report!

Yet again, as can be seen from the list of areas we have covered, our agendas have been very full. I hope the committee feels we have given enough time to the various subjects. I am always aware of the need for everyone to have their say or their questions answered but also having to move the agendas on due to time constraints sometimes.

This year every Cabinet Member has been asked to attend a meeting to present the work they are doing during the year. I would like to thank the Cabinet Members for their presentations which were very full and informative. I hope this will be continued as the Council has a very full agenda at the moment and it has been useful to have an in depth description of exactly what each portfolio holder has in their brief.

I know sometimes it is difficult for members to attend the pre-meetings. Thank you to all of those who do attend and I hope you find these pre-meetings useful in helping to make the committees run more efficiently. I would like to thank all members of the committee for their commitment to scrutiny and also a big thank you to Bambi, Steve and all in Member Services.

Clare Apel
Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny at Chichester District Council

Scrutiny is the way in which non-executive members of the council hold the Cabinet to account. They do this by reviewing existing council policy or decisions and by inputting into the development of new policies before the Cabinet approves these. In some cases they may ask for a decision (made by the Cabinet) to be re-considered before it is implemented to make sure all possible outcomes are thought through. These are called call-ins.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) or its task and finish groups may require any member of the Cabinet, any chief officer, and-or any head of service to attend before it to explain in relation to matters within their remit. Other public sector or public service officials, external partners and/or residents and stakeholders may also be invited to address the committee, discuss issues of local concern and answer questions. Recommendations may be made to the Cabinet or directly to Council.

In scrutinising an external partner or partnership, the recommendations may be made directly to that body. The views of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may be reported to the Cabinet or the Council and the OSC chairman shall be entitled to address that meeting.

Setting the Overview and Scrutiny work programme for 2016-17

The 2016-17 OSC work programme was developed taking into account:

- the Corporate Plan projects agreed by Cabinet
- the Forward Plan of Cabinet key decisions over the next few months
- projects identified from individual Service Plans
- items proposed or raised by Members
- topics included in last year's work programme which were delayed
- topics requiring members' involvement suggested by the Business Routeing Panel

A number of Task and Finish Groups were set up to carry out reviews in more depth and to report back to the main committee. These task and finish group reviews are detailed later in the report. Space was left in the work programme for topical issues that often arise during the year.

All Members were consulted in the development of this work programme through a member workshop held on 29 March 2016.

The impact and influence of scrutiny

OSC met seven times in 2016-17 (five ordinary meetings and two special meetings). The Chairman meets with the committee half an hour before each meeting to enable discussion about the agenda items and to agree the key issues to be explored on each topic.

Task and Finish Groups are used to take issues offline in order to maximise the volume and depth of a review.

A total of 23 recommendations were made by the committee to the Cabinet or Leader during the year. Of these, 22 recommendations were agreed by the Cabinet with one recommendation in relation to a call in not taken up.

This was the only call-in initiated this year and related to an extension of evening parking charges in two car parks.

Of the 48 members on the council, 15 are on the OSC. With Cabinet Members and other interested members attending meetings or involved in task and finish groups this equates to 58.33% of all members being involved in scrutiny in some form or other during the year.

The committee nominated Mr M Cullen (now resigned) to be its representative on the corporate Leisure Contract Management Task and Finish Group and Mr N Galloway as its representative on the corporate Novium Options Task and Finish Group.

Members' training and development

- Mrs N Graves attended a South East Employers' Leading and Chairing Overview and Scrutiny event on 7 April 2016
- Mrs P Plant attended a Regional Scrutiny Networking Seminar (led by Mr S Quigley) at Farnborough on 15 September 2016.
- Mr S Morley attended a Financial Scrutiny training event at the Centre for Public Scrutiny on 22 September 2016.
- Mrs C Apel attended a Democracy, Governance and the Truth seminar at the Centre for Public Scrutiny, Bloomsbury on 1 December 2016.

Main areas of work for OSC this year and outcomes/achievements

Areas of focus	Outcomes-achievements
Planning and Housing Portfolio Holder	<p>Mrs S Taylor was invited to present her priorities and areas of focus over the next year and to answer questions from the committee on progress towards achieving the aims and targets of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities. She covered a range of issues within her portfolio - local planning performance standards, the Housing Strategy, the Local Plan, affordable housing, resourcing the Planning department and South Downs National Park Authority contract, pre-application process, permitted development rights consultation, starter homes, relationships with neighbouring authorities regarding planning, building control options, housing for vulnerable under 25 year olds.</p> <p>Outcome: The committee noted progress towards achieving the aims and targets of the Corporate Plan priorities relating to this portfolio and noted the areas of focus over the next year.</p>
Chichester in Partnership Annual Report 2015-16	<p>The committee noted the progress achieved by Chichester in Partnership as identified in its action plan progress report including the following projects – Choose Work, financial inclusion, Selsey Works, Dementia Arts festival, partner organisations showcase, Our Place neighbourhoods and health and wellbeing.</p> <p>A recommendation was made to Cabinet that consideration be given to establishing an emergency fund for Chichester In Partnership for the period 2016-2021 to ensure its ability to function in times of hardship.</p> <p>Outcome: Council subsequently approved a £10K funding reserve for the partnership.</p>
Chichester Business Improvement District (BID) Renewal	<p>Mr Finnamore (the outgoing Chairman of Chichester BID), Mr Colin Hicks (the proposed incoming Chairman) and Mrs C Wickens, the BID Manager, attended to give evidence, outlining the areas of success.</p> <p>The committee recommended to Cabinet that the BID Renewal business proposal be agreed and that renewal of the BID for the further term of five years be supported. The committee also recommended to Cabinet that the level of support provided by this Council to the BID's strategic partnership be considered and that a further report be requested that identifies how our joint objectives can be better delivered. This will be considered by the committee in June 2017.</p> <p>Outcome: The ballot resulted in a positive result for Chichester BID. A further report will be presented to the OSC on 13 June 2017 relating to the level of the council's support.</p>
Chichester Vision	<p>The committee noted the progress made to date in the preparation of the Chichester Vision. However they recommended</p>

	<p>to Cabinet that their concerns regarding the lack of attention being given to access to and from the city be noted and that the long term provision be improved.</p> <p>Outcome: This is being taken into account as the Vision progresses.</p>
Shared Services Review including the Building Control Service Delivery Options	<p>The committee recommended to Cabinet that the detailed business cases and plans be developed for all six of the services proposals. Cabinet in July 2016 resolved this as well as recommending that a contribution of £25K be made for a project manager to support this process.</p> <p>Outcome: Following a further in depth review Cabinet decided in January 2017 not to go ahead with the shared services arrangement with Arun District Council and Horsham District Council.</p>
Southern Rail	<p>The Committee recommended to the Leader of the Council that a letter be written to the Government Minister and to the two local Members of Parliament expressing the Council's concern at the recent decision to reduce Southern Rail services, highlighting the impact on residents, businesses and visitors and seeking an explanation of how the situation will be resolved.</p> <p>Outcome: A response to this letter was subsequently received by the Leader from the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Transport and circulated to all members by email on 30 August 2016.</p>
Southern Water (SW)	<p>The committee heard from Mr P Kent (Environment & Wastewater Strategy Manager) and Mrs B Rhead (Stakeholder Engagement Manager (Sussex)), both of SW. A series of questions had been developed by the committee and sent to SW to answer at the meeting. Members of the public also attended to ask further questions of SW. A full review was carried out which concluded with a number of recommendations.</p> <p>The committee resolved that a meeting be arranged with interested parties to include the Environment Agency, Southern Water, West Sussex County Council, this council and other relevant bodies to investigate and identify a way forward to resolve the issue of flooding as a result of riparian watercourses. They also resolved that the council investigates the imposition of better planning conditions for dealing with foul water drainage which reflect the requirements of individual sites and ensures that these conditions are properly enforced over the lifetime of the development. Southern Water was requested to provide written answers to those questions that were not able to be answered at the meeting which were subsequently received and circulated to members.</p> <p>Outcome: Improved liaison with SW and better communication with members. A tour of the Apuldram Waste Water Treatment</p>

	<p>Works was organised for the committee by SW and this took place on 23 March 2016.</p>
Choose Work Evaluation	<p>Performance against the targets and activities of this programme were considered by the committee. The council commits its support to hosting the project and to part fund 30% of the costs. If the Lottery Fund bid is successful this would cover the costs of project for two years.</p> <p>Outcome: Members were supportive of the programme, however there were concerns that partners were not contributing to this project. The committee requested officers to seek the remainder of the funding from partners and, in the event that there is a shortfall in funding, the committee recommendation to Cabinet that the council makes up that shortfall, but that further enhancements to the project be sought.</p> <p>Subsequently Choose work has been successful in its bid for the Department of Communities and Local Government Communities Fund where we have received £70,000 to spend by the end of 2018. With this funding we will expand the Choose Work offer to work with potential NEETs in local schools. We have also published our offer to the Department for Work And Pensions (DWP) commissioning process, but we are still awaiting DWP to put out any contracts. Currently there is no shortfall in funding but we will continue to investigate other avenues of funding in order to make the project sustainable.</p>
Post Project Evaluation (PPE) of the Multi-Agency Agreement for the Management of Encampments across West Sussex and the Provision of a Gypsy and Traveller Transit Site (GTTS) at Chichester, West Sussex	<p>The PPE provided a review of how the proposed construction of the GTTS, supported by the multi-agency agreement had performed against the original objectives and success criteria set out in the PID. The PPE process allows lessons learned from the scheme to be passed on to other projects and ensure that provision has been made to address all open issues and risks and highlight future actions and recommendations where appropriate.</p> <p>Outcome: The committee noted the findings of the PPE and suggested that officers should approach Southern Water to ask that they reconsider a mains waste service connection at the transit site. The Building Services and Facilities Manager is currently in discussions with the WSCC Transit Site Manager, County Surveyors and Officers from the Environment Agency regarding a number of suggested options designed to provide an economic alternative to the current foul water disposal system which is currently in operation at the Transit site.</p> <p>Option1. Disconnect the existing foul water cesspits on site and link the final foul water drainage connections a new pumping chamber with rising main, linking the transit site to the existing foul water system, or, a gravity drainage system connected to scheme still under consideration</p>

	<p>Option2. Implement a possible scheme to provide a mains drainage connection from the existing Westhampnett Road foul water sewer, pending implementation of a proposed major residential housing development opposite the Transit site. There are a number of conditions to be met but, subject to confirmation on final proposals, there could be sufficient surplus capacity in the new infrastructure to accommodate the Transit site discharge.</p> <p>This is an ongoing project and the Building Services and Facilities Manager will periodically update the Committee on any progress made.</p>
Housing for Care Leavers	<p>This review was carried out by a task and finish group set up by the West Sussex Joint Scrutiny Steering Group and led by Worthing Borough Council. A number of recommendations were made relating to a common and flexible policy across the county regarding 'local connection' and care leavers, a joint protocol across authorities, future monitoring of housing provision for care leavers and the benefit situation continue to be monitored and its impact on young people under the age of 21 who leave local authority care.</p> <p>Outcome: Recommendations were approved by all authorities and will be monitored by the West Sussex Strategic Housing Officer Group and through the West Sussex County Council (WSCC) Corporate Parenting Panel.</p>
Finance and Governance Portfolio Holder	<p>Mrs P Hardwick was invited to present her priorities and areas of focus over the next year and to answer questions from the committee on progress towards achieving the aims and targets of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities. She covered a range of issues within her portfolio – finance and accounts, investments and returns, cost of services, revenues and benefits and the roll out of Universal Credit, fees and charges, second bedroom tax and the housing benefit scheme.</p> <p>Outcome: The committee noted progress towards achieving the aims and targets of the Corporate Plan priorities relating to this portfolio and noted the areas of focus over the next year.</p>
Leisure Contract Monitoring	<p>Mr Cullen, the OSC's representative on the Leisure Contract Monitoring Task and Finish Group, reported back on current performance of the new contract, SLM.</p> <p>Outcome: As it would be a full year before meaningful progress could be established, the committee requested that a further report come back to the committee in September 2017.</p>
Cultural Grants – review of arrangements	<p>The committee considered the cultural benefit to the district of stage productions at Chichester Festival Theatre and art exhibitions at Pallant House Gallery, the economic impact made by the two venues, the social impact for the district's residents made by the two organisations and the implications of CDC funding in drawing in external funding particularly from the Arts Council, England and the financial stewardship exercised by the</p>

	<p>two organisations.</p> <p>Outcome: The committee recommended to Cabinet the level of grant payable to the two organisations for the period 2018-2022. This was agreed by Cabinet who also agreed that the committee should continue its roll of monitoring performance against the existing service level agreements with both organisations.</p>
Commercial Services Portfolio Holder	<p>Mrs G Keegan was invited to present her priorities and areas of focus over the next year and to answer questions from the committee on progress towards achieving the aims and targets of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities. She covered a range of issues within her portfolio – economic development, The Novium, parking services and car parks, The Grange leisure centre and commercial site, the Enterprise Centre and property developments.</p> <p>Outcome: The committee noted progress towards achieving the aims and targets of the Corporate Plan priorities relating to this portfolio and noted the areas of focus over the next year.</p>
Developing a New Strategy for the Visitor Economy	<p>This review considered the economic impact of tourism, town and city centre research, the results of business and visitor surveys, an industry audit, visitor satisfaction rates, partnerships and the work of WSCC.</p> <p>Outcome: The committee recommended to Cabinet that £50,000 annual partnership funding be allowed for five years from April 2017 to assist development of the district's visitor economy and that a strategic review be sponsored into how the council could facilitate or encourage additional overnight accommodation in the district. Cabinet approved the £50,000 partnership funding, with the Chichester BID also allocating £50,000 of funding. A transition group has been established and the group are actively seeking a new Chair of Visit Chichester. Once the Chair has been appointed an SLA between the Council and Visit Chichester will be agreed.</p>
The Novium Museum Options Appraisal	<p>The committee considered the options appraisal carried out by the appointed consultants. This report was considered in confidential business.</p> <p>Outcome: The committee recommended to Cabinet that the baseline and trust options were worthy of further consideration. A follow-on report will be considered by the committee in January 2018.</p>
Call-In of Cabinet decision relating to evening car parking charges in New Park Road and Northgate Car Parks	<p>The committee considered a decision, taken by Cabinet on 10 January 2017, relating to off street parking charges at the Northgate and New Park Road car parks, which had been called in. Members considered that by identifying the two car parks for introduction of evening car parking charges was unfair and targeted to the City. They recommended that Cabinet reconsider an increase in all the district's car parks during current charging hours, which would be a more fair and equitable means to increase car parking charges.</p>

	Outcome: Cabinet, having considered the comments made by the committee, upheld its original decision.
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Community Services address	<p>Mrs E Lintill was invited to present her priorities and areas of focus over the next year and to answer questions from the committee on progress towards achieving the aims and targets of the Council's Corporate Plan priorities. She covered a range of issues within her portfolio – Chichester in Partnership and its various projects, community safety, youth engagement, grants and concessions, health and wellbeing and foreshores.</p> <p>Outcome: The committee noted progress towards achieving the aims and targets of the Corporate Plan priorities relating to this portfolio and noted the areas of focus over the next year.</p>
Recycling Action Plan	<p>The committee reviewed progress against the 2016-17 Recycling Action Plan and the updated plan for 2017-18. Members asked questions about fly tipping in the area, food waste, anaerobic digesters, EU recycling figures, packaging regulations, street sweeping and biological treatment.</p> <p>Outcome: The committee noted the report but asked that any council shortfall in dealing with increased fly tipping as a result of the closure of the county's recycling centres be considered further. Mr Barrow, the Cabinet Member for Contract Services, will deal with this issue via the Inter-Authority Waste Group.</p> <p>It was also recommended that parish councils be encouraged, through parish forums, to separate recyclables when organising clean ups to assist the district's recycling campaign. A Member/ Officer working group has been set up to develop a litter action plan and will include this recommendation in its development.</p>

Task & Finish Groups

The work of the Task and Finish Groups is described below along with the outcomes achieved.

<p>Budget Task and Finish Group Overview and Scrutiny Members: Mrs N Graves, Mr S Lloyd-Williams and Mr J Ransley Corporate Governance and Audit Committee Members: Mr G Barrett, Mrs P Tull (Chairman) and Mr G Hicks</p>
<p>Areas of focus – This group has representatives from both OSC (performance and policy remit) and Corporate Governance and Audit Committee (governance and risk remit). The group considered the 5 Year Financial Model and Statement of Resources 2016-17 to 2021-22 and the projected revenue budget variations for 2016-17 and 2017-18.</p> <p>Outcomes – Members involvement with budget scrutiny prior to presentation of the Budget to Cabinet in February 2017. The group was satisfied with the explanation of the projected variances on the 2017-18 budget.</p>

Community Safety Review Task and Finish Group

Mr M Cullen (Chairman), Mr H Potter and Mr J Brown

Areas of focus – OSC has a statutory duty in accordance with Sections 19 and 20 of the Police and Justice Act 2006 to review the district's Community Safety Partnership (CSP) by holding the CSP to account for its decision making, scrutinising the performance of the CSP and undertaking policy reviews of specific community safety issues. The group held two meetings in February 2017. The Head of Community Services and the Communities Interventions Manager gave members an update on the various projects and performance over the last year and the priorities of the partnership for next year. Mrs Eileen Lintill, Cabinet Member for Community Services, Chairman of the Chichester CSP and the council's representative on the Police and Crime Panel (PCP), described the role of that panel in holding the Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) to account. Ms Emily King, Principal Manager Community Safety and Wellbeing, WSCC described the county council's role and that of the County Agreement. Mr Justin Burtenshaw, Chief Inspector of Sussex Police and District Commander for Arun and Chichester, described the structures and challenges of Policing the combined area.

Outcomes – The committee endorsed the key points concluded from the review and requested that members receive brief case studies highlighting key areas of the Community Safety Partnership's (CSP) achievement in the District via the Members' Bulletin. The group also suggested that members should be encouraged to promote community safety and crime prevention messages within their wards.

Corporate Plan Task and Finish Group

Mrs P Dignum (Chairman), Mr N Galloway, Mr L Hixson and Mr S Morley

Areas of focus – To consider mid-year progress on actions and targets in the Corporate Plan and to identify any further action that needs to be taken to challenge poor performance and to reduce any risk to an acceptable level. Mrs P Bushby (Communities Interventions Manager) and Mr T Radcliffe (Human Resources Manager) attended to give updates on two areas of particular concern.

Outcomes – The Group agreed that there were good explanations for areas of the Corporate Plan where targets had not been met. Several requests were made for further scrutiny or a written response on specific issues. Overall the Group felt that there were a limited number of concerns from a large range of policies, indicating a high standard and care in carrying out the Corporate Plan projects.

Cultural Grants Task and Finish Group

Mr G Hicks (Chairman), Mrs C Apel, Mr N Galloway, Mrs N Graves and Mrs J Tassell

Areas of focus – The Council have a funding agreement in place with both Chichester Festival Theatre and Pallant House Gallery until 2018. The Council negotiates a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with both organisations annually to ensure that appropriate outcomes are achieved for the local community, schools, etc. The group carried out a review in 2017. They considered progress against both organisations' service level agreements as well as their proposed SLAs for the following year.

The group met with both organisations and scrutinised their performance and future objectives.

Outcomes – Representatives from the two organisations were held to account regarding their past performance and commitments and their future priorities. The group was satisfied that the draft 2017-18 SLAs for both the theatre and gallery were complementary to the strategic aims of the council and that the council was achieving value for money from its grants, particularly the community work being carried out in both organisations which meets the authority's corporate priorities of 'support our communities' and 'improve and support the local economy'.

Education Review Task and Finish Group

Mrs P Dignum (Chairman), Mr N Galloway, Mrs N Graves, Mr S Morley and Mr S Oakley

Areas of focus – To consider the current performance of schools in the Chichester district, the current status of secondary schools and children's readiness for school (i.e the under 5s at first entry to primary school). Ms L Jallow (West Sussex County Council), Mr D Linsell (The Kemnal Academy Trust) and Mr James Munt (The Kemnal Academy Trust) attended to provide evidence to the group.

Outcomes – The group agreed that it had achieved the outcomes set in the terms of reference and understood the progress in GCSE performance, the WSCC role in monitoring academies, the issues related to readiness for school and the change in the Key Stage regime. The group concluded that the Education Task and Finish Group should reconvene again in two years to focus on secondary education and how young people are made ready for further education and work.

WSCC Select Committee liaison

Ms C Neville is the council's representative on the West Sussex County Council Health and Adults Social Care Select Committee (HASC). This role was previously held by Mrs P Plant until her election onto the Cabinet in October 2016.

Both members have reported back to the committee on issues affecting the Chichester district and local residents. The council can submit concerns regarding any health issue to the HASC for consideration via its Business Planning Group (BPG) which meets quarterly.

West Sussex Joint Scrutiny

Mrs C Apel is the Vice-Chairman on the West Sussex Joint Scrutiny Steering Group, a group of scrutiny members from the seven districts and boroughs of West Sussex who get together to suggest issues which are of common interest to two or more authorities for joint scrutiny review. Details of the review of Housing for Care Leavers carried out in 2016 are mentioned above.