

Chichester District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Annual Report 2017-18

Introduction by the Chairman

Time rushes by and here we are again with the annual report of Overview and Scrutiny.

The list that the committee covers seems to get longer each year. Yet again I hope all the members feel enough time was given to all the subjects we covered. Time is always the enemy as I have to move things on which means I may seem to cut people short at times. I hope this is not an event the committee feels I have to do too often.

Yet again this year we have had members of the Cabinet presenting their portfolios which have been varied and useful to see how their areas work in the Council. I thank the Cabinet members for their informative and helpful presentations. I hope this will continue in the future.

Again I would like to thank the members for attending the pre meetings. I know with traffic problems this is not always easy. I sincerely believe these pre meetings help to make the committees run more smoothly.

I went to a Scrutiny seminar at Birmingham University in November. They presented a paper which had been drawn up as a result of the Parliamentary Select Committee looking at Overview and Scrutiny. The conclusion was that Scrutiny is vitally important to a Council and where it is supported and well run it makes a great difference to the efficiency of Councils.

I want to thank Bambi for all her 10 years of service to O and S. She has been an enormous help to the committee and we shall miss her tremendously. The other person who was such a force to this committee was Steve Hansford. It was really sad to see him retire. We all wished him well in his retirement. The shock of his death has been such a tragedy. I will remember his wisdom and help with great pleasure.

Thanks to all the other officers for their help. A big thank you must go to all the members of the committee.

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-or 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 chairman of the committee shall be entitled to address the meeting on the committee's views.

Setting the Overview and Scrutiny work programme for 2017-18

The 2017-18 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 had been 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 on the development of this work programme at a member workshop held on 23 March 2017.

The impact and influence of scrutiny

OSC held five ordinary meetings in 2017-18. The Chairman meets with the committee 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 11 recommendations were made by the committee to the Cabinet or Leader during the year. 9 recommendations were agreed. 1 recommendation has yet to be progressed due to a resourcing issue and 1 recommendation was not progressed by Cabinet.

Mrs P Plant was nominated by the committee to be its representative on the corporate Leisure Contract Management Task and Finish Group. Mr N Galloway was nominated by the committee to be its representative on the corporate Novium Options Task and Finish Group as well as an observer on the Growth Board.

Members' training and development

- Mrs C Apel, C Neville and Mrs P Plant attended a Regional Scrutiny Networking Seminar (led by Mr S Quigley) at CDC on 12 October 2017.
- Mrs C Apel attended an INLOGOV seminar 'Scrutiny in Challenging Times' at the University of Birmingham on 12 October 2017.
- C Neville attended a Centre for Public Scrutiny course 'Scrutinising Complex

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

Areas of focus	Outcomes-achievements
Preparing a Vision for Chichester City Centre	The committee was consulted on and contributed to the development of the Chichester City Centre Vision which was agreed by Cabinet on 11 July 2017.
Supporting Chichester BID	<p>The committee considered the support provided to the Chichester BID to deliver joint projects and requested that regular briefings and updates on issues which the BID wished to promote were provided to members in the monthly Members' Bulletin and that early consultation was carried out with the BID in relation to proposals which affected the city such as transport issues, Local Plan development and Southern Gateway.</p> <p>Outcomes: Mr Dignum gave a full briefing to the BID Board at its meeting on 18 July 2017 about the Vision, the Chichester Local Plan Review insofar as they affected the city centre however transport issues was a matter which fell within the remit of West Sussex County Council.</p> <p>The Leader of the Council and the Divisional Manager for Place attend the BID Board meetings and regular meeting are held with the Chairman of the BID and the Chief Executive, the Director for Growth and Place and the Divisional Manager for Place.</p> <p>The BID are leading on a number of projects relating to the Chichester Vision and the Chairman of the BID is part of the Chichester Vision Delivery Steering Group.</p>
SDNPA Development Management Agency Agreement	<p>This issue was requested to be scrutinised by Mr A Shaxson.</p> <p>The committee considered the S101 Agreement and Service Level Agreement and noted the position with potential new delegated arrangements from 1 September 2017. It was concerned at the lack of consultation with district and parish councillors and recommended to the SDNPA that that Authority considered the preparation of a Communications Protocol (with district and parish councillors) with the local authorities to whom it contracts development management matters, for inclusion within the agency arrangements. The committee also recommended to the Cabinet that if the response on this recommendation to the SDNPA was not favourable, that a Communications Protocol (with district and parish councillors) be developed by CDC with the SDNPA and that it be brought back to the OSC for consideration in 6 months' time.</p> <p>Following a meeting arranged by the SDNP with district council members (whose wards fall within the park area) in early October 2017 to discuss communication issues the committee considered</p>

	<p>the issue further and requested that a report come back to the committee in 12 months' time with an update on progress.</p>
Chichester In Partnership (CIP)	<p>The committee reviews the achievements and business plan of this partnership annually to ensure that it is achieving the outcomes it sets. In June 2017 and in May 2018 the committee noted the progress achieved by the partnership in delivering its outcomes and noted the following year's Business Plan.</p> <p>The return on investment achieved by the Choose Work project was particularly commended.</p>
Cultural Grants TFG - final report	<p>The review of Cultural Grants was noted, along with the 2016-17 annual reports from both organisations and the following year's Service Level Agreements.</p> <p>At a further meeting the proposed Funding Agreements for Chichester Festival Theatre and Pallant House Gallery were considered. The monitoring arrangements for both organisations were endorsed by the committee and Cabinet.</p>
Review of Housing Allocations Scheme	<p>The committee recommended to the Cabinet Member for Housing Services that a corporate task and finish group be established to review the Quality Standards of existing affordable housing stock in the district and the overall demand for the type and volume of new affordable housing in rural and urban areas.</p> <p>The task and finish group has met on six occasions and has been taken on a tour of Hyde properties (both new and relets). A report is currently being drafted. This will feed into a more comprehensive review of the allocations scheme and the development of a new housing strategy.</p>
Leisure Services Performance Review	<p>The committee was satisfied that the contractor was achieving satisfactory levels of performance against the outcomes set out to be delivered in the period May 2016 to March 2017.</p>
Southern Gateway, Chichester - Implementation	<p>The committee considered amendments to the draft Southern Gateway Implementation Plan and agreed that Mr N Galloway be appointed to the Chichester Growth Board as an observer.</p> <p>The first Growth Board meeting is scheduled for 4 August. The committee will receive a copy of the draft development brief for consideration before it is recommended to Cabinet in the autumn of 2018.</p>
Consultation Review	<p>The committee resolved that a task and finish group be established to develop a council protocol on public consultation and to consider the resources and budget and the monitoring process.</p> <p>Draft Terms of Reference have been developed for consideration by the O&SC on 19 June 2018. The Task & Finish Group will work in conjunction with officers to review the council's wider Communications Strategy including options around how the council consults with its residents, businesses and visitors.</p>

Housing Strategy Update	The committee was updated on progress made in delivering the council's Housing Strategy for the period 2013-2018 and made a number of comments and suggestions which it was agreed by the lead officer would be taken into account in developing a new Housing Strategy.
East Pallant House Options (EPH) Appraisal	<p>The committee considered the options for the Council's future office accommodation and recommended to Cabinet that East Pallant House should continue to be used as its primary office accommodation and that capital costs associated with the refurbishment of office space for commercial let be funded from the identified spend in the asset replacement programme.</p> <p>Cabinet agreed with this recommendation and requested that officers continue to identify opportunities to provide office accommodation for partners, voluntary sector or commercial organisations as those opportunities arise to ensure office space is fully utilised and operating costs are kept to a minimum, while being mindful of staff welfare in any re-planning.</p> <p>The council has let part of East Pallant House to a local charity, providing them with 10 desks to house their administrative function. This allows them to transform their existing premises to become a 24 hour service provision for their clients, whilst providing an income to the Council.</p>

Task & Finish Groups

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

Budget Task and Finish Group

Overview and Scrutiny Members: Mr J Ransley, Mr S Lloyd-Williams (Chair) and Mrs P Plant

Corporate Governance and Audit Committee Members: Mrs P Tull, Mr G Barrett and Mr G Hicks

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 projected revenue budget variations for 2017-18 and 2018-19.

Outcomes – Members involvement with budget scrutiny prior to presentation of the Budget to Cabinet in February 2018. The group was satisfied with the explanation of the projected variances on the 2018-19 budget.

Community Safety Review Task and Finish Group

C Neville (Chair), Mrs C Apel 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 2018. Ms P Bushby, Community Intervention Manager, outlined

the CSP annual report 2017/18, CSP performance plan 2017/18 and CSP spending plan 2017/18.

The following witnesses gave evidence:

- Mrs Eileen Lintill, Cabinet Member for Community Services 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.
- Acting Chief Inspector Kris Ottery of Sussex Police described the structure of the local Police force, working in a combined Chichester and Arun area and the new role of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO).
- Questions were sent to Ms Emily King, the Principal Manager Community Safety and Wellbeing at WSCC to be answered.

Outcomes – The TFG felt able to reassure the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that the required level of scrutiny of the CSP had been achieved, that the performance of the CSP was good and that evidence of effective partnership working in the district had been demonstrated. The TFG felt the reasons for the increase rise in crime rates had been suitably explained due to a number of factors including increased reporting of historic offences and changes to the reporting method of certain categories of offence.

Corporate Plan Task and Finish Group

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

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.

Outcomes – The group considered that there were good explanations for areas of the Corporate Plan where targets had not been met. Some were outside our control, others showed great council input making a difference and some needed a little more time. While requests were made for further scrutiny or information, there was a feeling that the limited number of concerns raised from a huge range of projects showed the Council's high standards and care in carrying out its Corporate Plan priorities.

WSCC Select Committee liaison

C Neville is the council's representative on the West Sussex County Council Health and Adults Social Care Select Committee (HASC). She has reported back to the committee on health issues affecting the 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. No joint issues have been considered this year.