

Chichester District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Annual Report 2019-20

Introduction of the Chairman

This was my first year as Chair of the Committee. I pay a special tribute and thank you to Clare Apel who has been Chair of the Committee for a number of years.

I would also like to thank David Hyland for his valuable advice, support and assistance during a large part of the year. We very much welcome Pam Bushby who now provides that support alongside Louise Rudziak. Katherine Davis continues to provide support from members services for which we are very grateful.

Overview and Scrutiny is a very important Committee for our Council as it aims to challenge, question and support the Executive in policy development and scrutinise our partners. We also seek to ensure the Council is operating efficiently and effectively. In 2019-20 this we have done, with a new diverse and well balanced set of committed Councillors. The committee welcomes a robust debate and it is important that it is seen to be effective in its scrutiny role.

During the year we look at a range of topics with a view to positively affecting how the Council works and how we work with our partners. With our partners we will continue to challenge them on specific areas of their work.

It is also important that Cabinet Members are invited in front of the Committee but with a clear brief of the points we wish to cover. This will continue.

It became clear during the year that we needed to be more strategic in terms of what comes to the Committee and to focus on specific issues and reduce long reports that have no formal outcome. I was also helped by attending a positive training course in January 2020. Committee members have reviewed the overall operation of the Committee to ensure we are really affective. Some of our plans have been slowed down by the affects of the Covid-19 pandemic but the Committee will continue to evolve.

To enable the Committee to take a deeper look at issues on the Council we will continue to set up Task and Finish Groups and identify other ways to scrutinise Council operations.

We will also continue to encourage members of the public to ask questions at the Committee and invite outside representatives to provide valuable insight into our District.

As Chair of Overview and Scrutiny I will continue to operate across the District and be a positive influence for change.

In recent weeks , as Chair of Overview and Scrutiny, I have been privileged to be consulted on a range of issues where urgent Council decision needed to be made. Hopefully working with Officers, the Council Leader and Cabinet members we have made the right decisions.

Adrian Moss
Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny

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 divisional manager 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 2019-20

The 2019-20 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 of the Committee were consulted on the development of this work programme.

Setting the Overview and Scrutiny work programme for 2020-21

Prior to the formal member's workshop on 24th March 2020, when the committee was due to work with officers to plan the agenda for 2020-21, the Committee ran two private sessions to review the operation of the Committee. All members contributed to this debate and identified the specific topics that they wished to be addressed 2020-21. This outcome was reported back to officers.

The formal workshop was ultimately cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Instead the draft Council Work Plan 2020-21 was emailed to the Committee to identify any issues where scrutiny would add value to Council decision making. The affects of the Covid-19 pandemic will have an effect on the topics addressed by the committee in 2020-21.

The impact and influence of scrutiny

OSC held four ordinary meetings in 2019-20 (One meeting was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic). One special meeting was held to consider the appointment of a development partner for Southern Gateway and parking proposals and off-street parking charges. 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.

There were no call-ins this year.

A total of 3 recommendations were made by the Committee to the Cabinet or Leader during the year. All 3 recommendations were agreed by Cabinet. 1 further recommendation related to the Off-Street Parking Proposals. The Committee resolved to uphold the Cabinet decision on 5 November 2019 and that the OSC produce a report to cabinet with its response to the proposed car parking charges increases consultation, which was produced by the Chairman and circulated to members outside of a formal meeting and not as a recommendation.

OSC members nominated to non OSC task and finish groups:

- Old Bakery Options Appraisal TFG – Alan Sutton.
- Novium Task and Finish Group – Alan Sutton.

Members' training and development

- Following the May 2019 elections all Chichester District Council members were invited to attend an OSC induction on 18 June 2019.
- Mr Moss attended The Leadership Essentials: Effective Scrutiny 2 day programme is for new and aspiring scrutiny chairs or TFG review lead members Local Government Association conference on 22-23 January 2020.

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

Areas of focus	Outcomes-achievements
Pallant House Gallery Monitoring Report Sarah Peyman	The Committee received the annual Pallant House Gallery report and summary of the year presented by Mr Simon Martin, PHG Director. Mrs Peyman confirmed that having reviewed the monitoring framework she had no concerns with the performance of Pallant House Gallery. The Committee welcomed the open invitation from Mr Martin for a familiarisation visit to the Gallery over the summer. In response to concerns raised by Mr Martin about the condition of the roof, which was leaking, the Chairman advised that the matter would be looked into as soon as possible and officers would be in contact with their thoughts and ideas The Committee agreed that performance is in line with the monitoring framework. In future a light touch report will be presented to the Committee with no PHG officer attendance required.
Leisure Services Performance Review	The Committee was satisfied that the contractor is achieving satisfactory levels of performance against the outcomes and the key

Sarah Peyman	performance indicators set out to be delivered in the period May 2018 to March 2019 and congratulated officers on the wellbeing activities to encourage people to take up sporting and other leisure activities.
Economic Development Strategy and Inward Investment and Growth Strategy Melanie Burgoyne	The Committee was consulted on the draft Economic Development Strategy and draft Inward Investment and Growth Strategy, prior to the strategies being considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 5 November 2019. The Committee made a number of comments and suggestions which it was agreed by the lead officer would be taken into account in developing the new strategies.
Social Prescribing Elaine Thomas	The Committee received an outline of the evaluation report for the first year 1 of the Chichester Social Prescribing service. The service was aimed at giving the right support at the right time to those in need of the service. It was hoped that members agreed that the evaluation reflected the success of the project so far, with the caveat that the service was new and there was a lot more work to be done. The Committee expressed their support for the project the success of year 1 of the service and the outcomes of the service were noted and the next steps in the evaluation report agreed. They asked for their thanks to be passed on to officers for such a good report.
Universal Credit review Marlene Rodgers	The Committee received an overview of the impact the rollout of Universal Credit (UC) review in the District. The report explained that other councils had introduced an Anti-Poverty Strategy and advice from officers that it may be worth giving consideration to, particularly as UC rolls out further and Council Tax Reduction becomes associated with housing benefit. It was considered that the introduction of an Anti-Poverty Strategy would be a positive move. It was agreed that the subject matter should be broadened out, as a general anti-poverty strategy, to look at the social issues and challenges in these areas faced by those in the District in receipt of Universal Credit, food banks etc. This has been added to the work programme. The Committee agreed that the impacts of Universal Credit continue to be monitored to inform service delivery of Revenues, Housing and Communities; that officers continue to consider how adverse effects can be mitigated by the provision of Council Services and partnership working; and that relevant Council policies be revised to ensure that they support those that are vulnerable to welfare reform.
Visit Chichester Monitoring Report Sarah Peyman	The Committee thanked Mr Hobbs, interim Chairman and the CDC appointed representative for Visit Chichester, and Ms Adlam, Destination Marketing Executive, for their summary of what Visit Chichester was doing for the District in terms of tourism and were pleased to hear the positivity, enthusiasm and vision for Visit Chichester. The Committee agreed that a member presentation would be beneficial with the aim of encouraging members to promote Visit Chichester to their parishes as ambassadors to the District. The annual update report from Visit Chichester for 2018-19 was noted and it was agreed that Visit Chichester is achieving performance in line with the Service Level Agreement.

<p>Annual Review of Business Improvement District (BID)</p> <p>Tania Murphy</p>	<p>The Committee noted the report relating to the Chichester Business Improvement District (BID). Mr Hicks, Chichester Business Improvement District Chairman highlighted the importance of the BID's partnerships in particular with the Council.</p> <p>The Committee recommended that a group led by the Council should be set up to actively address issues about aspects effecting the survival of the high street and representatives from the Committee will discuss the matter with the Leader and the relevant Cabinet member</p>
<p>Chichester Festival Theatre Monitoring Report</p> <p>Sarah Peyman</p>	<p>The Committee received the annual report from Chichester Festival Theatre and noted its performance in line with the agreed monitoring framework. The work of the CFT was commended for the District.</p>
<p>Reducing Single Use Plastics – Monitoring and Review</p> <p>Alison Stevens/ Stephanie Evans/ Tom Day/ Amie Huggett/ Andy Double</p>	<p>The Committee noted the progress on the Single Use Plastics Action Plan.</p> <p>The Committee requested that in the budget making process Cabinet considered increasing the resources available to officers to deal with the issues arising from the production of single use plastics.</p>
<p>Parking Proposals and Off-Street Parking Charges</p> <p>Tania Murphy</p>	<p>Following consideration by Cabinet on 5 November 2019, at the Chairman's request, the proposed Car Parking Charges 2020 to 2022 were brought to Overview and Scrutiny Committee to enable a wider view of Car Parking charges to be debated by councillors and invited outside bodies.</p> <p>The Committee resolved to uphold the decision made by Cabinet, which was as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the proposal be approved as set out in 5.1 of this report to increase car parking charges with the additional amendment of a £2 per hour rate for both Little London and Baffins Lane car parks, which subject to consultation responses be implemented from 1 April 2020 for a two year period. 2. That the Director of Growth and Place be authorised to give appropriate notice of any revised charges or changes as set out within this report pursuant to the Off-street Parking Places (Consolidation) Order 2018 and Road Traffic Act 1984. 3. That the consolidation of all Parking Orders since 2012 into one document be approved. This document will further clarify the provision for electric payments and the exemption from daily charges for Blue Badge holders (with the exception of Pay on Foot parking) which subject to consultation be implemented from 1 April 2020. <p>The outcome of the meeting was that no specific recommendations were made but the Committee wished to make a range of observations. It was agreed that the Chairman would produce a report to Cabinet, to take into account the Committee's discussion on the proposals, to feed into the council's parking charges consultation. A draft was circulated to members of the Committee for comment. Concerns were expressed in the report that the new Car Parking charges were being proposed for the next two years, whilst the new</p>

	<p>Council had not had a more open debate. It was suggested that charges should be fixed for one year.</p> <p>Cabinet resolved to increase the charges for a one year period instead of a 2 year period due to the changes in the high street to be followed by a further review prior to any changes for 2021/22 followed by a further public consultation.</p>
<p>Southern Gateway – Appointment of a Development Partner</p> <p>Jane Hotchkiss</p>	<p>The Committee considered the appointment of a Development partner following the evaluation of the final bids before consideration by Cabinet.</p> <p>It was agreed that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee should have quarterly progress meetings on the project with the selected developer.</p> <p>The Committee recommended to Cabinet that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. following “standstill” and dealing with any issues arising, and confirmation that West Sussex County Council have cleared their own governance processes, including call-in, that the Council select Developer A on Heads of Terms shown in Appendix 1 to deliver the Southern Gateway Masterplan regeneration project pursuant to the outcome of the Evaluation Report at Appendix 2 once matters of detail are finalised with the bidder; and 2. liaise and agree with the selected developer an appropriate means of consultation so as to engage and involve both Councillors and the community as detailed design and other proposals are developed. <p>The Chairman was in attendance at the Cabinet meeting and requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendations be referred to in making recommendations to the Council. Mrs Lintill, Leader, clarified that the recommendations from OSC and the Chichester District Growth Board had been noted.</p>
<p>Education Provision in the Chichester District</p> <p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>There were no representatives present from West Sussex County Council; Mr Wagstaff, Director of Education and Skills, had sent apologies and confirmed his attendance at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 17 March 2020*.</p> <p>It was agreed that a formal letter from the Committee should be sent to Mr Wagstaff, including both the public questions and the points raised by the Committee. A letter dated 10 February 2020 was sent to Mr Wagstaff and copied to: Ms Becky Shaw, Chief Executive Officer; Mr Paul Marshall, Leader of WSCC Mr Nigel Jupp; and Cabinet Member for Education and Skills.</p> <p>The Committee agreed that (taking into account legal advice) a letter from the OSC should be sent to Ofsted asking them to look at WSCC’s Education provision. A letter dated 19 February 2020 was sent to Chris Russell, Regional Director - South East Ofsted.</p> <p>A letter dated 19 February 2020 was also sent to Mr David Barling, Chair of WSCC Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee, explaining why Mr Wagstaff had been invited to attend the Committee.</p> <p>*A letter dated 24 February 2020, was received from Tony Kershaw, Director of Law and Assurance at West Sussex County Council, explaining why the County Council’s Director of Education and Skills, Mr Wagstaff will not be attending the Committee as requested.</p>

<p>Housing Strategy 2020-2025</p> <p>Ivan Western/ Linda Grange</p>	<p>The Committee considered the draft Housing Strategy. The Chairman reminded the Committee that Hyde were attending a future Overview and Scrutiny meeting and that the concerns raised, regarding what work has been done to ensure tenants experience a consistent and adequate level of service from Hyde, could be put directly to them at that meeting.</p> <p>The draft Housing Strategy was recommended to Cabinet and Council for adoption and approved.</p> <p>OSC created a Task and Finish Group to look at the potential formation of a housing company. However, the first meeting of the Group was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In the meantime number of background papers have been sent to the members of the Group.</p>
<p>Update on Sickness Levels within the Council</p> <p>Joe Mildred</p>	<p>Following consideration of a report on the levels and management of sickness levels within Chichester District Council, the Committee had recommended that the Absence Management Policy be re-written, some specific work be undertaken on the management of stress in the work place and that an on-going focus should be given to the management of sickness levels and associated concerns be undertaken. These recommendations have now been implemented with the relevant follow up reports overseen by the Joint Employee Consultative Panel.</p> <p>The Committee was informed, having requested an update on sickness levels following the review, that a particular focus has been given to ensuring a consistent application of the policy and managing stress levels is maintained. The latest figures are positive and show that the average number of sick days has reduced. If the figure was calculated using data provided from existing employees it would be 5.6 days per annum. In addition to the report Mr Mildred informed the Committee that individual cases are monitored on a case by case basis. Mr Mildred, Mr Ward (Director of Corporate Services) and the HR team meet monthly to review these cases and look at patterns within teams.</p> <p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee noted the latest levels of staff sickness.</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 C Apel, Mr K Hughes and Mr A Sutton Corporate Governance and Audit Committee Members: Miss H Barrie (substitute for Dr K O'Kelly), Mr A Dignum (Chairman) and Mr T Johnson</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 projected revenue budget variations for 2019-20 and 2020-21.</p> <p>Outcomes – Member involvement with the budget spending plans, in terms of testing the changes in the budget from 2019-20 to the draft budget 2020-21, prior to presentation of the Budget to Cabinet in February 2020. The group was satisfied with the explanation of</p>

the projected variances on the 2019-21 budget. OSC noted the report.

Community Safety Review Task and Finish Group

Mrs T Bangert, Mr A Moss, Mr A Sutton (Chairman) and Mrs C Apel (substitute for Mr A Moss)

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 2020. Ms P Bushby, Divisional Manager for Communities, outlined the CSP annual report 2019/20, CSP performance plan 2018/21 and CSP spending plan 2019/20.

The following witnesses gave evidence:

- Councillor Roy Briscoe, Cabinet member for Community Services & Culture gave an update on the role of the Police & Crime panel at the first meeting and was present by invitation at the second meeting.
- Jim Bartlett, Contextual Safeguarding Manager, WSCC provided a briefing, update and question and answer session on the West Sussex Community Safety Agreement and West Sussex County Council Structures.
- Inspector Sharon Sawyer (Sussex Police) gave a presentation, update and question and answer session on the Policing Structures and Plans for Chichester District.

Outcomes – The TFG concluded that the required level of scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) had been achieved and that the performance of the CSP and Police is very good, and that evidence of effective partnership working in the district had been demonstrated, in a changing scene.

The following key issues were identified by members of the TFG for further consideration;

- The role of members in engaging and raising the awareness of crime within their communities.
- Modern Slavery within the district – particularly around Gypsy and traveller sites.
- Impact of the Dark Web
- Managing public expectation
- Inviting Katy Bourne to attend a future OSC meeting

The nature of the statutory duty to review performance does constrain the topic. The speakers invited were to evidence those specific elements, however in future opportunity could be taken to explore other areas of work in more detail and introduce other partners and witnesses to the committee.

(This TFG was due to report its findings to the Committee on 17 March, but was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic).

Consultations Task and Finish Group

Mrs C Apel, Mr A Moss (Mrs P Plant, Mrs C Neville and Mr N Galloway – Ex OSC members)

Areas of focus – To contribute to the review of the council's Communication Strategy reporting back to Overview and Scrutiny on 18 September 2018. To review and approve associated policies – such as social media, consultation, advertising and sponsorship. To consider the options around how the council consults with its residents, businesses and visitors.

A report was previously taken to this Committee to update members on the improvements

that had been made to the consultation process and to inform them that a meeting had been arranged between the Task and Finish group and the appropriate officers from Planning to further review concerns relating to the way the council consult on planning matters. The Committee agreed that they were happy with the improvements that had been made to general consultations, but that they would like a further update following the meeting with the planning.

The TFG noted the statutory rules that have to be followed and the procedures and processes that the Council have in place for planning consultations, including the added ability for the public to track the progress of planning applications through the Council's My Alerts system.

Outcomes – The TFG agreed the following:

- Development Team and Planning Policy Team to provide an update at a future All Parishes Meeting or similar forum(s) on their work and the statutory guidelines.
- To promote the 'My Alert' service to district councillors and parish clerks and to encourage parish councils to work with us to help promote consultations.
- To explain what pre-planning applications advice is and what it entails as part of future Members' induction process.
- To encourage Members to act as consultation 'champions' and to encourage their local residents to participate.
- To feature the relevant planning team(s) and their role(s) more heavily within the Council's magazine, social media pages and other communication channels.

The Committee noted its satisfaction with the progress made to date and are in agreement with the proposed future improvements.

Corporate Plan Task and Finish Group

Mrs C Apel, Mr A Moss and Mr A Sutton (Chairman)

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 – Overall the Group considered that there were satisfactory explanations for areas of the Corporate Plan where targets had not been met; some were outside the council's control and others simply needed some more time.

With regard to the missed milestones, Mr Buckley undertook to contact the divisional managers to encourage them to keep them up to date and remind them of their duties.

(This TFG was due to report its findings to the Committee on 17 March, but was cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic).

Southern Gateway Task and Finish Group

Mrs C Apel, Mr K Hughes, Mr D Palmer (Chairman), Mr H Potter, Mrs S Sharp and Mr A Sutton

Areas of focus – To understand progress to appoint a shortlisted developer; to review and investigate the current status of the Southern Gateway Project, taking into account the market changes and the status of land availability. To investigate the scope and ambition of the proposals presented to the Council by the short listed bidders.

Outcomes – OSC noted the findings of the Task and Finish Group on the progress of the Southern Gateway project and the final submissions in respect of a development partner which were considered in Part II. The TFG congratulated officers on the work they had carried out, as well as the quality of Developer A's bid. The TFG felt it was important that members should have a handle on progress of the Southern Gateway project going

forward, which was likely to last eight years. It was considered that there had not been sufficient engagement with members during the process. With regard to the future roll of the Committee in the Southern Gateway process, he suggested quarterly progress meetings should take place between the developer and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which was agreed by the Committee.

WSSC Select Committee liaison

Tracie Bangert was the council's representative on the West Sussex County Council Health and Adults Social Care Select Committee (HASC). 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

The West Sussex Joint Scrutiny Steering Group, a group of scrutiny chairmen 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. The Group meets as and when the need arises and a Chairman for the Group is appointed at each meeting. No joint issues have been considered this year.