

COUNCIL MEETING – 28TH APRIL 2022

AGENDA ITEM NO. 8

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – ANNUAL REPORT 2021/22

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In accordance with the Council's procedures for monitoring the overview and scrutiny process, this report reviews the work that has been undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2021/22. The Committee's focus has been to keep a watching brief on the Council's activities and local facilities, performance and providing comments and ideas, which would help to shape the Council's future policy and services. The Report covers the issues discussed, the processes followed, and the outcomes achieved during the year.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES AND WORK PLAN

- 2.1 The Committee was established as part of the review of the decision making structure which took effect from May, 2018. The Committee's breadth of activity includes all Council services and services provided by other organisations which impact on the Borough and its inhabitants.
- 2.2 The progress meeting (consisting of Cllrs. Gaynor Austin, Diane Bedford, Stephen Masterson and, myself) has been used for discussion and consideration of processes and priorities. It also monitors the work plan and undertakes agenda planning.

3. COMMITTEE ISSUES

- 3.1 Over the year, the Committee has endeavoured to ensure that it has kept the Council's activities under review. One particular area of focus over the year is to develop the Committee's role in carrying out external scrutiny. Training for the Committee on scrutiny has taken place remotely with South East Employers. It has also been important to ensure that there is no duplication of work with the Policy and Project Advisory Board and this issue will continue to be monitored during the 2022/23 Municipal Year.

- 3.2 The main areas of focus in 2021/22 were:

Registered Providers – Through the Task and Finish Group (consisting of Cllrs. Diane Bedford, Terry Bridgeman, Rod Cooper, Keith Dibble, Nem Thapa and myself) the Committee has continued the review of registered during the 2021/22 Municipal Year. It was agreed that the scrutiny of performance and

activities should be limited to three registered providers (VIVID, Stonewater and Metropolitan Thames Valley for 2021/22) per year and that the areas for questions should focus on strategic issues including, climate change, deprivation and the impacts of the pandemic. The 2021/22 annual report was considered by the Committee at its last meeting of the Municipal Year at which the recommendations were endorsed to continue with the review programme in 2022/23.

Community Safety and Policing – at the meeting in July, 2021 the Committee heard from Police representatives and the Safer North Hampshire team on current issues across the Borough. Specific queries raised by Members were also addressed. A watching brief on community safety and policing matters will be maintained during 2022/23.

Food Waste – Communications and Education Plan – at its meeting in August, 2021 the Committee received a presentation on the communications and education plan for the new food waste service. The plans were endorsed, and a watching brief has been kept on the roll out and this will be maintained during 2022/23. A briefing note on progress has recently been shared with the Committee and it is intended that a full review will be included in the Work Plan for 2022/23.

Community Service Organisations – at the October, 2021 meeting of the Committee, Citizens' Advice Rushmoor and Rushmoor Voluntary Services provided a report on service provision, governance arrangements, impacts on services during the pandemic, future work and challenges. In order to measure the performance of both organisations effectively, service level agreements will be established over the next 6-9 months and the Committee will consider the provisions set out, in the agreements, during 2022/23.

Supporting Communities Strategy and Action Plan – a review was undertaken of the Council's Supporting Communities Strategy and Action Plan at its meeting in December, 2021. Current work and past achievements were outlined and noted. Following the refresh, scheduled to take place during Summer, 2022, the Committee will be requesting that the Strategy and Action Plan is reviewed again.

Primary Care Networks – In February, 2022 the Committee received a report from the Clinical Directors for both Aldershot and Farnborough on services provision, impacts of the pandemic, future working and collaborative working with the Council. The Committee felt the engagement was successful and will consider this further in due course.

Council Tax Support Scheme – A Task and Finish Group (consisting of Cllrs. Diane Bedford, Jonathan Canty, Christine Guinness, Lee Jeffers, Mike Roberts and myself) has carried out a review of the Council Tax Support Scheme. A report was submitted to the Cabinet and the Council in January 2021 and February, 2022 respectively, where it was agreed that the existing level of support should be retained for 2021/22 with a fundamental review to be carried out in 2022/23.

Educational Improvement – A Task and Finish Group was set up at the start of the 2021/22 Municipal Year (consisting of Cllrs. Gaynor Austin, Diane Bedford, Charles Choudhary, Nadia Martin and Steve Masterson and myself). Even though the Group hasn't met during the year, due to the pandemic, a full Committee meeting was held with the County Council Executive Lead for Children's Services (Cllr Roz Chadd) in February, 2022. At the meeting an update on attainment levels for 2021 and prospects for 2022, skills issues/gaps and collaboration with districts were discussed. Moving forward a meeting will be scheduled with specific local head teachers.

Cabinet Champions – The Committee received a presentation from the three Cabinet Champions at its meeting in March, 2022. Each Champion detailed the work/activities they had undertaken during 2021/22. The work and activities of the Champions would continue to be scrutinised during 2022/23 when the Committee are keen to establish a more robust process.

Climate Change Action Plan - at its meeting in March 2022, the Committee received a presentation on progress with the Climate Change Action Plan. The Action Plan was currently undergoing a review and a watch brief would be maintained during 2022/23.

3.4 Other items considered during the year are Rushmoor Housing Limited Shareholders Report and the Council's Pay Policy Statement.

4. **CONCLUSIONS**

4.1 The Committee has worked well during the year and carried out a range of activities, which have a significant impact on the Borough and the Council. The work of the Committee will be reviewed at the start of the 2022/23 Municipal Year to ensure that the Work Plan is realistic, and the focus is on issues where it can make a difference.

4.2 Finally, and importantly, I feel that the Committee has worked effectively together during the year. All Members have contributed at meetings, and I would like to express my thanks for their support and especially the two Vice-Chairman. In addition, I am also grateful for the support given by the officers to the Committee and myself as Chairman.

5. **RECOMMENDATION**

6.1 The Council is asked to note and endorse the Committee's work.

CLLR. M. SMITH
CHAIRMAN - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE