

COUNCIL MEETING – 11th APRIL 2019

AGENDA ITEM NO. 7

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE –
ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19**

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 2018/19. The Committee's focus has been to keep a watching brief on the performance of council activities, local facilities 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 Council services and other services provided within the Borough. One of the key roles is to monitor the Council's Performance Management data, which is used to identify specific areas for scrutiny and detailed assessment.
- 2.2 The progress meeting (consisting of Cllrs. Diane Bedford, Terry Bridgeman, Jonathan Canty, Rod Cooper, Keith Dibble 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 The Committee has been developing its work plan over the year and has endeavoured to ensure that it has kept all of the Council's activities under review whilst looking at a manageable number of issues in detail. Under the new structure, it has also been important to ensure there is no duplication of work with the Policy and Project Advisory Board and this issue will be looked at further at the start of the 2019/20 Municipal Year.
- 3.2 In January, 2019 the Committee undertook training on scrutiny which was provided by South East Employers. The outcomes are helping with the process of identifying and delivering reviews and it is likely that further training will be provided to the Committee in the coming year. The outcomes from the training included being clear about the purpose of the scrutiny process and the processes to be undertaken to be effective as well as the need to be conscious

of capacity for both Members and Officers. A flow chart was also presented to assist with reviews.

3.3 The main areas of focus in 2018/19 were:

Performance Monitoring – The Committee has reviewed the Council's performance monitoring data at several of its meetings throughout the 2018/19 Municipal Year. A number of specific areas have then been considered in more depth, including:

- North Hampshire Community Safety Partnership
- Digital Strategy
- Data Protection

Registered Providers – The Committee received the Review of Registered Providers report for 2017/18 and set up a Task and Finish Group (consisting of Cllrs. Diane Bedford, Terry Bridgeman, Charles Choudhary, Rod Cooper, Keith Dibble and myself) to carry out the reviews during 2018/19. A report will be considered by the Committee at a future meeting with recommendations to discuss with the Portfolio Holder.

Aldershot Centre for Health Car Parking – An update was provided to the Committee at its meeting in July 2018 on the current situation relating to parking issues at the Aldershot Centre for Health. The situation improved during the interim period in which the Council was operating the car park and a watching brief is being kept on the situation.

Waste Contract – An update was given at the July, 2018 meeting on the waste contract provided by SERCO. As a result, a Service Contracts Task and Finish Group (consisting of Cllrs Diane Bedford, Jonathan Canty, Keith Dibble, Veronica Graham-Green, Clive Grattan and myself) was established to consider in more detail certain elements of the contract. A report will be made to the Committee at the beginning of the 2019/20 Municipal Year so that consideration can be given to some recommendations, which may be presented to the Portfolio Holder or Cabinet.

Property Investment – The Committee has scoped a list of areas for scrutiny of the Council's property investment processes and a presentation was due to be received at the March, 2019 meeting. This will now be presented at the first meeting of the 2019/20 Municipal Year in order for full scrutiny to be undertaken.

Council Tax Support Scheme – A Task and Finish Group (consisting of Cllrs. Diane Bedford, Jonathan Canty, Jennifer Evans Veronica Graham-Green, Clive Grattan and myself) has carried out a review of the Council Tax Support Scheme. The work included a consultation to obtain views on the existing scheme and options for the future. A report was submitted to the Cabinet and the Council in February, 2019 where it was agreed that the existing level of support should be retained for 2019/20. The Task and Finish Group would meet again in June, 2019.

Educational Attainment – An initial presentation on the results for 2018 at key stages 2 and 4 and some background information was given to the Committee in November, 2018. Further scoping work is being carried out, including discussion with schools and pulling together further data sets. A Task and Finish Group is being set up to meet at the start of the 2019/20 Municipal Year.

Traveller Incursions – In response to a request from the Committee a presentation was received at the December, 2018 meeting on the process for dealing with traveller incursions. Some cost analysis work was carried out relating to costs incurred to evict travellers and the Committee requested emphasis should be given to prevention measures in the longer term.

Cabinet Champions – The Committee received a presentation from the three Cabinet Champions at its meeting in January, 2019. Each Champion detailed the work/activities they had undertaken during 2018/19 and Members have requested that all Members should be given the opportunity to suggest topics/areas to be covered by Champions moving forward, which could be considered as “Council Champions”.

Call in Aldershot Regeneration Site Assembly – At its January, 2019 meeting, the Committee considered a call in request relating to Aldershot Regeneration Site Assembly work and the purchase of a particular property to enable the regeneration project to move forward. The call-in request was rejected and the decision made by Cabinet at its meeting in January, 2019 took effect from 1st February, 2019.

4. **CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1 In spite of the Committee being new, it 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 developed in 2019/20 when we can draw on this year’s experience.
- 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 who have chaired the task and finish groups. 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