

Annual Scrutiny Report

2013/2014



Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to introduce the 2013/2014 Annual Scrutiny Report. The report highlights the key areas of work that each Panel and the main committee have concentrated on during the past municipal year.

The Main Committee and each of the panels have had a busy year. This report highlights their key achievements. I hope it accurately reflects the level of detailed work undertaken by the panels and Committee.

Issues I would like to highlight in particular are: the excellent work of the Health Scrutiny Panel on Accident and Emergency provision at Wexham Park Hospital. A very professional and thorough examination of the issues by a specially formed Task and Finish Group. The panel also looked in detail at the Hospital Quality Issues at Wexham Park Hospital and are committed to scrutinising this area on a continuing basis. The Neighbourhoods and Community Panels impressive commitment to examining all areas of housing services continues. With close scrutiny of the Housing Allocations Policy and the Management of Houses in multiple occupancy as two main examples. The Education and Children's panels continues its high quality

scrutiny into wide ranging issues. Such as continuing to provide key challenge to the work being done on the Improvement Plan. They have also looked in detail at the role of Grammar Schools in the town as well as the very important area of childhood immunisations.

The Main Committee conducted a comprehensive review and analysis of childhood obesity in the borough and produced a set of practical and workable solutions.

I hope the report does justice to the quality of the work carried out by the panels this year and gives an insight into the diverse nature of the areas which have been scrutinised.

I would like to thank my own Vice Chair as well as the Chairs and Vice Chairs of all the panels for their support and leadership throughout the year. On behalf of all the Chairs and Vice Chairs I would also like to thank sincerely all members, officers and partners who have contributed to the work of the Overview and Scrutiny function over the past year.

Cllr Patricia O'Connor



Introduction

In 2002, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister set out what Overview and Scrutiny is, its powers and work.

"Overview and Scrutiny is potentially the most exciting and powerful element of the entire local government modernisation process. It places Members at the heart of the way in which Councils respond to the demands of modernisation. In addition, Overview and Scrutiny is the mechanism by which Councils can achieve community leadership, good governance and by which Councillors can become powerful and influential politicians."

In order to do this, Scrutiny Committees have three key roles:

- Holding the Cabinet to account
- Policy development and review
- External scrutiny

Through requesting information and questioning decision-makers an Overview and Scrutiny Committee can review the quality of local services, hold decision-makers to account (whether the Cabinet or other statutory bodies such as NHS Trusts), and put forward ideas for developing and improving services.

The Centre for Public Scrutiny has set out the four principles for effective scrutiny as:

- critical friendship to decision-makers
- engaging the public, enabling the voice of the public and communities to be heard in the process
- owning the process with non-Executive Members driving the scrutiny process
- making an impact through driving forward improvements in public services

To achieve the desired quality of effective scrutiny, an Overview and Scrutiny function must:

- be independent
- be robust, rigorous and challenging
- fully engage all non-Executive Members
- come from a positive culture that supports and promotes the process
- involve local citizens and service users
- ensure that its purpose is clear and widely understood
- demonstrate the value added
- be creative in its ways of monitoring service performance
- have dedicated resources
- bring the conclusions of its Reviews to the attention of Full Council
- have a comprehensive Member Development programme

The questions an Overview and Scrutiny Function must ask itself in terms of its own effectiveness are:

- Is it effectively holding decision-makers to account?
- Is it helping to improve services?
- Is it building links between the Council, its partners and the community?
- Is it helping to improve the quality of life for local people?
- Is it adding value?



The Annual Report looks to assess the effectiveness of the work done by the Overview and Scrutiny Function at Slough Borough Council in the 2013/14 municipal year.

Overview and Scrutiny at Slough Borough Council

The Overview and Scrutiny Function at Slough Borough Council is made up of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and three standing Panels: Health Scrutiny Panel, Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel, and Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel.

The Panels enable greater focus on specific subject matter, while the overarching Overview and Scrutiny Committee focuses on cross-cutting issues, corporate, financial and performance management of the Council. The Committee and Panels look to work closely together, using joint meetings where appropriate, to develop their work programmes and effectively scrutinise the work of the Council and its partners.

Members on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and three Panels receive research and administrative support from a dedicated Scrutiny Officer; with Democratic Services also providing committee administration to the main Committee and Health Scrutiny Panel.

Getting involved

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and all three Panels meet in public, and welcome members of the public who wish to observe proceedings.

The agendas and related papers are published on the Slough Borough Council website five working days in advance of any meeting and are available to download for free.



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Membership

Councillor O'Connor (Chair)
Councillor Smith (Vice Chair)
Councillor Bal
Councillor Davis
Councillor Hussain
Councillor Malik
Councillor M Mann
Councillor Minhas
Councillor Nazir

Constitutionally, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will undertake the following:

- review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the Executive, Committees and Council Officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time;
- review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets, data quality and/or particular service areas;
- question Members of the Executive, Committees and Directors about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects;
- make recommendations to the Executive and/or appropriate Committee and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process;
- review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the Committee and local people about their activities and performance; and
- question and gather evidence from any person (with their consent).

In order to undertake this work, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has appointed three Standing Panels to cover specific remits of works:

- Health Scrutiny Panel - undertaking the Council's statutory responsibility to scrutinise provision of healthcare in the local area, as well as the Cabinet portfolio for Health and Wellbeing.

- Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel - scrutinising the Cabinet portfolio for Education and Children.
- Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel - scrutinising the Cabinet portfolios for Neighbourhoods and Renewal, Community and Leisure, and Environment and Open Spaces.

This delegation of work allows the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to take an overarching view of the work of the council and its partners, as well as specifically focusing on the Cabinet portfolios of Finance and Strategy, Performance and Accountability, and Social and Economic Inclusion.

Review - Childhood Obesity

On 27 November 2012, the Council resolved the following:

"that the health and wellbeing priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy (2011) and other relevant national and regional guidance in relation to improve the health of children be expanded by considering ways to prevent any new premises with A5 from opening within 300-500 metres of any school within the Slough borough borders and that consideration of the issue takes place through referral to the O&S Committee for Member input and appropriate recommendations be made to the Planning Committee on new policy."

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided to undertake an investigation into the scale of the childhood obesity problem in Slough, what current programmes of work were being used to tackle the problem, and what alternative approaches could be used to improve the levels of childhood obesity being seen across the borough.

The Review was broken down into a series of specific questions; with the Committee's main meetings being used to hold evidence gathering sessions which focused on an individual question, calling on expert witnesses in each case to provide information:

- Does Slough have a problem with childhood obesity?
 - Dr Onteeru Reddy - Programme Manager, Public Health and Wellbeing, Slough Borough Council
 - Dr Angela Snowling - Consultant in Public Health (Slough), Slough Borough Council

- What options are there to alter the physical environment?
 - Shabnam Ali - Economic Policy Development Officer, Slough Borough Council
 - Ginny de Haan - Head of Consumer Protection and Business Compliance, Slough Borough Council
 - Paul Stimpson - Strategic Lead Planning Policy and Projects, Slough Borough Council
- What is the role of schools and how can we support them? How can we encourage more physical activity?
 - Laura Brookstein - Network Manager, Slough School Sport Network (SSSN)
 - Alison Hibbert - Head of Culture and Sport, Slough Borough Council
 - Jo Ricketts - Nutritional Adviser, Slough Borough Council
 - Mary Sparrow - Head of Wexham School Specialist Sports College and Chair of the SSSN
- What role can GPs and other primary care professionals play in tackling childhood obesity?
 - Jean Cameron - Development manager, Children's Centres, Slough Borough Council
 - Philippa Collings - Public Health Nutrition Lead, Slough Borough Council
 - Sarah Parsons - Locality Manager from Children and Families Services, Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
 - Dr Sabina Shaik - Paediatric Lead, Slough Clinical Commissioning Group
- Working with local businesses to improve their healthy offers across a range of prices should be a priority.
- There was a tremendous amount of work being done within schools to tackle the problem of childhood obesity and this work should be supported by the council, along with encouraging them to take things further, such as with cooking classes.
- The Committee recognised the scale of work taking place in schools and across the council to increase activity levels amongst children in the borough, and believed that there were two key focus points:
 - Increasing the level of activity in a child's everyday life; and
 - Improved marketing of the leisure offer available in the borough to increase uptake.
- The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) needed to take a more proactive role in tackling the problem of childhood obesity, acting on areas of weakness in practices such as referrals. In particular, improvements needed to be made in how the CCG communicated with other primary care, council and schools programmes of work in this area.

The Committee formed a series of key conclusions:

- The figures for childhood obesity in Slough demonstrated that there were significant levels amongst the child population in Slough.
- With limited national evidence around the effectiveness of A5 hot food takeaway exclusion zones around the borough's schools, currently, and with the current levels of existing A5 businesses and convenience stores within the potential exclusion zones across the borough, the Committee felt that the impact on child access to fast food would be minimal.



In summing up the findings, the Committee recognised the highly sensitive nature of this subject, and the remaining element of stigma which may stop people seeking help for themselves and/or their children; and the need for involvement from all key partners tackle this problem. There was one clear message that came out of the Review, and that was that doing nothing was not an option.

The Committee made the following recommendations, but as yet, have not had the opportunity to evaluate the implementation of these and their effectiveness:

- a) That the Cabinet agree the prioritising of work currently underway to improve the scope of healthy offers across a range of price levels by local retailers, specifically within the vicinity of local schools.
- b) That, in the municipal year 2015/16, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the childhood obesity levels data from areas that have introduced exclusion zones around schools, to assess evidence of their impact and re-consider the options for such a policy to be introduced in Slough.
- c) That the council work with all schools to encourage the inclusion of cooking classes and nutritional education in the curriculum for all schools in the borough.
- d) That the Slough Headteachers look to prioritise their School Transport Plans, co-ordinating with each other for maximum effect, and raising the profile of the options available to parents.
- e) That the council, through the Transport Working Party, provide support to the schools for initiatives to improve the use of sustainable travel to and from schools, recognising not only the health benefits, but also the congestion and environmental benefits improved School Transport Plans can have.
- f) That the council look at its methods of advertising the local leisure offer, particularly the available open spaces for 'unorganised' sporting activities, and include details of how improvements can/have been made when the Overview and Scrutiny Committee review the initial effectiveness of the new Physical Activity and Sport Strategy 2013-15 in autumn 2014.

- g) That the Cabinet commission officers to undertake a piece of work reviewing the balance of the leisure offer in the borough to ensure an appropriate mix for both boys and girls.
- h) That a formalised process for information sharing on initiatives to tackle childhood obesity be developed between the CCG, children's centres, health visitors, SBC's Culture and Sport team and schools. This Review recommends that the CCG leads on this, to ensure their engagement, as they would be able to develop an overall picture of health and refer patients to the most appropriate services or initiatives that are available.
- i) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive an update in January 2015 from the CCG on the progress made to implement the areas of work recognised as needing improvement:
 - referrals, and the monitoring of progress through the system following a referral;
 - the introduction of a system of regular health checks for children up to the age of 16 across all surgeries; and
 - the need for closer liaison with Public Health, Health Visitors and School Nurses, and Children's Centres.
- j) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee write to the Care Quality Commission to request that the new inspection regime for GP practices include assessment of their provision for tackling childhood obesity as it is a contributory factor in so many related serious illnesses.

The Committee will be monitoring the acceptance and impact of its recommendations over the coming years to assess whether the levels of childhood obesity in the borough decline, and what role this Review has played in supporting that decline.

Other specific focuses of work

Budget Pressures

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been monitoring the work taking place to meet the challenges of service provision in an era of tightening budgets.

The Committee have regularly received quarterly performance and finance monitoring reports where the Committee have questioned the plans that have been put in place to draw back a predicted overspend during the financial year.

In addition, the Committee also reviewed the likely impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy of the Government's Spending Review, noting that all savings proposals and growth items being developed as part of the budget process were under review, and adjustments made to incorporate known budget pressures. With such a challenging financial outlook, the Committee registered particular concern at the decreasing levels of the Revenue Support Grant, and that despite some predicted modest growth in business rates, that the levels of savings that the council would need to find up to 2017/18 would be in the regional of £30m. The Committee is committed to continuing to monitor how these savings will be found, looking at ways to minimise the impact on service delivery.

Leisure Services Strategy/Future of Montem Leisure Centre

The Committee has been keeping a watching brief on the development of proposals for the future provision of leisure services in the borough. With the plans at an early stage, this is an issue that the Committee hopes to influence in terms of the direction taken.

Thus far the Committee considered the development of an overarching leisure strategy to address the community needs and priorities for the Council's role in increasing levels of physical activity in Slough, a subject the Committee has been particularly passionate about in light of its findings during its Childhood Obesity Review.

The Committee expressed specific views around:

- the development of the leisure strategy which should detail the research undertaken into the reasons for falling, or static, rates of participation and setting out effective ways of increasing the

number of physically active people in Slough, particularly in the key priority groups identified;

- the continued efforts which needed to be made to work with schools, clubs and other providers to maximise public access to local leisure facilities and wider access to facilities not currently open to the public; the Committee stressed that Council facilities not duplicate other provision;
- the importance of small, accessible and local play space for children in residential areas, suitable for ball games and informal play;
- the need for the swimming offer provided in any new facility to be as attractive as possible to encourage a broad range of users, with consideration given to such measures as free swimming for children; and
- the need to keep the broader picture regarding the increasing pressure on the council's budget firmly in mind when considering the options, and especially in the preparation of any business case for new leisure and community facilities.

This is an ongoing piece of work.

Note: The full work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the 2013/14 municipal year is attached as Appendix A.



Health Scrutiny Panel

Membership

Councillor S Dhaliwal (Chair)
Councillor Strutton (Vice Chair)
Councillor Chohan
Councillor Davis
Councillor Grewal
Councillor Plimmer
Councillor Sandhu
Councillor Shah
Councillor Small
Arvind Sharma (Healthwatch Slough)
Councillor Hazel (Buckinghamshire County Council,
Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee appoints the Health Scrutiny Panel to undertake its constitutional role looking at the specific Cabinet Portfolio for Health and Wellbeing. In addition, the Health Scrutiny Panel also undertakes the statutory Council responsibility to scrutinise the provision for healthcare in the local area.

Review - Accident and Emergency Provision at Wexham Park Hospital

For the past 18 months, in particular, the condition of Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments across the UK have come up intense scrutiny, with growing pressures culminating in a level of crisis during the winter of 2012/13, a situation that was expected to be repeated in the winter of 2013/14. A Review by The King's Fund in the autumn of 2012 had found that the number of people facing long waits when attending A&E had risen by 21% over the previous year, and the national target for 95% of patients to be seen within four hours was not being met at a number of hospitals, Wexham Park Hospital amongst them.

In addition to the above performance information, on the 17 July 2013 the Care Quality Commission (CQC) published its findings from an inspection of Wexham Park Hospital in May 2013. This inspection raised a number of serious issues relating to the A&E department around:

- patients' privacy, dignity and independence not always being respected;
- patients not always having their care needs adequately assessed, planned, and delivered;
- the standards of cleanliness and infection control in some areas;

- there not being enough qualified, skilled and experienced staff to meet people's needs;
- the failure of the Trust to ensure the quality of patient care in managing the high demand in A&E and the knock on effect on in-patient beds; and
- the accurate and appropriate maintenance of patient records.

The Task and Finish Group decided to break the Review down into the following key areas:

- Demand and Capacity
- Resources/Staffing
- Patient Flow
- Unnecessary attendances at A&E

(The Task and Finish Group recognised the importance of patient views, unfortunately, with Healthwatch only newly established the timing of the Review did not allow for a joint piece of work to gather patient views. This is likely to be looked at as part of follow up work.)

The Task and Finish Group undertook a series of meetings to look at performance data for the A&E department and to gather information from two expert witnesses:

- Grant MacDonald (Deputy Chief Executive, Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust)
- David Williams (Director of Strategy and Development, East Berkshire Clinical Commissioning Groups)

The Task and Finish Group formed a series of key conclusions:

Capacity and Demand

- That the nature of demand for unscheduled care means it cannot be regulated, making capacity planning extremely challenging, with two specific aspects involved:
 - Increasing capacity within the A&E department
 - Increasing capacity of admitting departments
- That Wexham Park Hospital had undertaken a reorganisation of its A&E department to increase capacity whilst improving its ability to deal with issues around patient dignity and privacy.

- That the reorganisation of the layout of the department had not yet provided a collecting area for patients who were returning to the department from having tests done.
- That steps were being taken to increase admitting ward capacity, but that this would take time.
- That a 'whole system' approach was needed to ease the capacity issues within the Hospital system.

Staffing

- That Wexham Park Hospital's A&E department worked on a staffing rota split into 5 overlapping shifts, with staffing levels above the national average when compared against the national acuity tool.
- That, despite the above average staffing levels, there needed to be improvements in the optimisation of staff within individual shifts, especially when it comes to the wider patient experience.
- That there needed to be a refocus on the traditional wider elements of care, in addition to high quality clinical treatment.

Patient Flow

- Patient flow is key to improving patient experience and a measure of staffing effectiveness.
- At the time of the Review, Wexham Park Hospital was trialling a new triage process known as 'Rat-ing' (Rapid Assessment and Treatment). It is expected that the Health Scrutiny Panel will review the results of this trial.
- That the lack of an effective electronic patient record system was an issue that should be addressed by Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust as a priority.

Avoiding Unnecessary Attendances

- That the Slough Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) is vital to ensuring that only those who truly need to use A&E attend.
- That primary care options needed to be more effective, accessible and better understood by the local population, through such measures as:
 - additional appointments;

- linking the GP appointment system with NHS 111; and
- using the 'Talk Before You Walk' campaign to signpost residents to the most appropriate service for their need.

In summing up its findings, the Panel welcomed the collaborative approach to tackling these issues, and the steps that had already been taken to improve the situation. There was an overall recognition of the need for the system to work as a whole to tackle the problem primary, secondary and community/social care.

The Task and Finish Group made the following recommendations, but as yet, have not had the opportunity to evaluate the implementation of these and their effectiveness:

- a) That the Health Scrutiny Panel assess the impact of the redesign of the A&E department's layout on the capacity of the Department to manage high levels of demand over the winter period following the end of the financial year 2013/14.



- b) That the Health Scrutiny Panel undertake a line of questioning in March 2014, when discussing improvements in the quality of care provision at the Trust, on the effectiveness of the discharge processes at the hospital and how the hospital staff and social care staff co-ordinate ongoing care needs.
- c) That the Health Scrutiny Panel monitor the effectiveness of the Trust's plans for recruiting qualified, skilled, experienced staff and retaining them; and how the Trust is being established as employee of choice in a highly competitive market.
- d) That Heatherwood and Wexham Park Trust consider using HCSs, Porters and other support staff in A&E to improve the overall patient experience through the provision of 'hotel'-type strands of work, such as providing drinks to patients or ensuring patients are comfortable and properly clothed etc.
- e) That the Health Scrutiny Panel assesses the impact of the Rat-ing triage system after six months.
- f) That the introduction of an electronic patient records system, currently within the medium term plans of the Trust, is brought forward.
- g) That plans for improving diagnostic and pharmaceutical support in order to speed up the flow of patients through the hospital system are considered by the Health Scrutiny Panel, particular in relation to weekend service provision, in the 2014/15 municipal year.
- h) That the Health Scrutiny Panel review the Urgent Care Action Plan at six monthly intervals in order to assess the impact the changes are having on service delivery and levels of attendances at Wexham Park Hospital Accident and Emergency.
- i) That the CCG review the accessibility of surgery numbers in Slough and work with individual surgeries where the 084 numbers are still in operation to phase these out, and confirm to the Health Scrutiny Panel a timetable for completing.
- j) That a public survey is undertaken one year after the launch of the Talk Before You Walk campaign to begin to assess the penetration of the campaign and the understanding of the messages being given. This can then be used by the Health Scrutiny Panel to inform and evaluate how behaviour may be changing over time to assess the effectiveness of the campaign.
- k) That the CCG consider a pilot scheme, along the lines of that undertaken in Walsall, to introduce a payment to surgeries who will provide an additional three hour evening session, weekly, offering a range of clinical appointments (GP, nurse practitioner, practice nurse) for that period. The advertising of this pilot scheme should be targeted specifically at full-time workers. The pilot would enable an assessment of need for this particular patient-group, and once the need has been judged a decision could be taken as to whether the additional service hours should be permanently introduced across the borough, with surgeries deciding individually whether to opt out of providing the service.

The Health Scrutiny Panel accepted the recommendations relating to it's work programme, and the CCG confirmed that the single GP surgery using an 084 number had agreed to phasing the use of this out to be replaced with a local number. At the time of writing, no formal response to the recommendations had been received from the Slough CCG or Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust.

The Panel will be monitoring the acceptance and impact of its recommendations over the coming year(s) to assess the impact of this piece of work on the use of NHS services across the borough.

Other specific focuses of work

Hospital Quality Issues

In July 2013 the Care Quality Commission (CQC) published its findings from an inspection in May 2013. This report set out actions required under six of the seven standards judged, with enforcement action taken on the seventh. The Health Scrutiny Panel requested that the Chief Executive of the Hospital Trust attend its next meeting to provide an immediate response and details of an action plan to address the concerns raised by the CQC. This initial discussion was followed up in September 2013 with a review of the Action Plan and discussions regarding the progress being made around quality processes, cleanliness and capacity issues. A further CQC inspection in October 2013 raised more concerns, and the Panel has continued to scrutinise the work being done at the Trust to rectify the problems it is facing, through the A&E Review (detailed above) and a further evidence gathering/questioning session at its meeting in January 2014. Further discussions with the Trust are programmed in for the coming months, and this will continue, and likely dominate, the Panel's work programme for the coming municipal year.

Adult Social Care

Whilst the issues at Wexham Park Hospital have, to a large extent, dominated the Panel's work programme this year, it has also kept a watching brief on the changes taking place in Adult Social Care, especially through the Care Bill 2013-14 and the related introduction of the Better Care Fund. The Panel has long had an interest in realising the benefits of more integrated care provision, and whilst it is important to review the fine detail, the Panel welcomes the prospect of realising this arrangement.

On the wider Adult Social Care agenda the Panel:

- reviewed the work of the Safeguarding Board, drawing particular attention to:
- the strong training agenda for staff that was in place, and aimed at improving the identification of abuse, with simple and effective means of making referrals;
- the emphasis being placed on getting the message across and a communications strategy aimed at delivering wider safeguarding messages to Slough residents had been made a priority for 2013/14;
- that health care workers in care homes and providing domiciliary care were subject to strict disciplinary measures and any incidents that occurred were dealt with promptly; and
- that all providers were required to ensure their staff were given the DBS check.
- endorsed the Local Account and priorities for 2013/14; and
- endorsed the refreshed Slough Commissioning Strategy for Older People 2013-2018.

Note: The full work programme for the Health Scrutiny Panel for the 2013/14 municipal year is attached as Appendix B.



Neighbourhoods' and Community Services Scrutiny Panel

Membership

Councillor Minhas (Chair)
Councillor Wright (Vice Chair)
Councillor Dar
Councillor Dhillon
Councillor Malik
Councillor M Mann
Councillor Plenty
Councillor Shah
Councillor Sohal
Naomi Owens (Leaseholder Forum)
Terry Conroy (Slough Federation of Tenants and Residents)
Vivianne Royal (Customer Senate)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee appoints the Neighbourhoods' and Community Services Scrutiny Panel (NCS Scrutiny Panel) to undertake its constitutional role looking at the specific Cabinet Portfolios for neighbourhoods and renewal, community and leisure, and environment and open spaces.

The NCS Scrutiny Panel did not undertake a Review this year, but did create a work programme which included a number of key issues of the local area.

Housing Services

The Panel has taken the approach of looking at various specific aspects of the Housing Service over the year:

- Sheds with Beds - an ongoing piece of work assessing the impact of the council's programme to identify and close inappropriate accommodation in outbuildings
- Housing Allocations Scheme - the Panel endorsed the council's new Housing Allocations Scheme with a recommendation for the inclusion of a one offer policy, with a 24 month suspension from the Register if an offer was refused. Cabinet amended this to two offers, but agreed with the 24 month suspension.
- Role of wardens/caretakers in supporting neighbourhoods
- Tenant Scrutiny in Slough - looking at the development of the Customer Senate and support structure

- Star Survey - reviewing the key messages from residents about Housing Services.
- Management of Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) - the Panel looked at how we could incentivise becoming licensed for a landlords; how premises were inspected prior to becoming licensed; and how Members could access the register of HMOs on line so they could report any properties which they felt should be considered for inclusion in the register.
- Older People's Housing Offer - a concern for the Panel was how the 'offer' to older people had developed over recent years, and in particular the move to alter the status of some housing blocks so that they were just for older residents, and how changes were consulted on.
- Voids Performance - a major concern for the Panel was the performance of the contractor in turning around empty properties. Linked to this was a broader discussion around the contract the council had entered into for a significant period of time, which did not provide the council with sufficient enforcement over performance. This will be an ongoing monitoring of how this contract is performing and the preparations of a new contract for the future.

Slough's Relationship with Heathrow Airport

The Panel held an extraordinary meeting in October 2013, to look at Slough's relationship with Heathrow Airport. Members considered the results of a small residents' survey, economic studies that had been undertaken by the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership, and the results from a consultant commissioned by Slough Borough Council to look at Slough's specific economic relationship to the airport. Members commented on the importance of Heathrow to the local employment market, especially when looking at the level of potential job losses should the decision be taken to close the airport. The Panel recognised the importance of Heathrow economically when it was calculated at 32% of Slough residents' employment was either directly or indirectly linked with the borough's proximity to the airport.

However, whilst recognising the economic importance of Heathrow's proximity to Slough, Members were concerned that, as yet, little detailed information was available on the noise and other environmental impacts of the current arrangements at Heathrow, concerns that would increase should a decision be taken to expand the airport's capacity. Recommendations were made to Cabinet that pieces of work to rectify this.

Crime and Disorder

The Panel undertook its statutory responsibility to hold a Crime and Disorder Committee during the year in February 2014.

The Panel reviewed the work of the Safer Slough Partnership over the year and the challenges it has faced, highlighting particularly the difficulties faced by a transient population, population density and the relatively young population of Slough.

In assessing the priorities identified by the SSP for the coming year, the Panel was pleased to see that the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment underpinned these, with local targets which included a 2% reduction in burglaries and violent crime. Another priority area Members endorsed was the use of alley gating in crime and anti-social behaviour hotspots, along with a focus on domestic abuse.

The Panel agreed that the SSP was performing well against its targets, but that continued partnership working focusing on joint priorities across the partner organisation, with strong leadership from the council would be key to future success.

Note: The full work programme for the Neighbourhoods' and Community Services Scrutiny Panel for the 2013/14 municipal year is attached as Appendix C.



Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel

Membership

Councillor Sohal (Chair)
Councillor Abe (Vice Chair)
Councillor Brooker
Councillor Carter
Councillor Davis
Councillor O'Connor
Councillor Hussain
Councillor Malik
Councillor Matloob
Lynda Bussley (Primary School Teacher Representative)

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee appoints the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel (ECS Scrutiny Panel) to undertake its constitutional role looking at the specific Cabinet Portfolios for education and children, and opportunities and skills.

The ECS Scrutiny Panel did not undertake a Review this year, but did create a work programme which included a number of key issues for the local area.

Children's Services Improvement Programme

A key focus for the ECS Scrutiny Panel over the year, as with the previous two years, has been the programme of improvement in Children's Services, specifically around services to Looked After Children and Safeguarding. The Panel was disappointed, although not surprised by the findings of the Ofsted Inspection during the year; there was a recognition that, whilst the council is on the right track in terms of improvement, progress has not been sufficient. The Panel has been monitoring the improvement plan closely, receiving regular reports on the overarching programme of work, as well as focusing in on individual aspects such as with Early Help.

As part of their scrutiny of the Improvement Programme, the Panel has continued to closely monitor the work of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and especially their work around identifying and tackling child sexual exploitation. In addition, the Panel has had an initial discussion regarding concerns being raised over the potential levels of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) within the borough and the need for the LSCB to focus on this issue over the coming year.

Grammar Schools

Education has been the other key theme of work the Panel has focused on this year. A particular area of concern for members had been media reports around the numbers of children at Slough's Grammar Schools that were not from the borough itself. This led to a broad discussion in December 2013 on the role of grammar schools in Slough, where the Panel took evidence from two grammar school head teachers, a non-selective secondary school head teacher, and a primary school head teacher.

The discussion focused on how the grammar schools worked as a consortium and established the pass mark for the 11+ exam with a concern at the low numbers of Slough students achieving this; and the decision of Buckinghamshire of introducing a new type of 11+ exam which could not be tutored for. In considering what could make the difference for Slough students in terms of increasing the numbers who take, and pass, the 11+ exam, the Panel endorsed the proposed trial of this alternative 11+ exam in Slough for the coming year. Members also looked at how we could ensure equality of opportunity with the whole system in the borough working together to improve student attainment levels.

Alongside student attainment, the Panel also discussed the difficulties of recruitment, and the need to change the discussion from the focus on numbers attending grammar schools, which implied that the borough's non-selective secondary schools were of a lesser quality which was not the case. The Panel was keen to stress the very good non-selective schools in Slough and the value added scores of these schools demonstrating that the grammar schools were not the only place for aspiration - a message they were keen to hear more.

Childhood Immunisation

The Panel looked at the issue of childhood immunisation twice during the year. The first report they requested came in the wake of national media attention of a number of outbreaks of measles in the spring of 2013. The report to the ECS Panel in July 2013 highlighted the relatively low immunisation rates for the borough and the difficulties Public Health were having in establishing the correct levels due to gaps in the data. The Panel requested that Public Health look at this and report back following Quarter 2. The second report in January 2014 continued to indicate the low levels of immunisation, particularly for MMR2 and the pre-school booster, in Slough.

The Panel noted the work that was still going on to improve the quality of the data available, with an expectation that this would be completed in the following six month, as well as work taking place around introducing a new, and consistent, call/recall system for GPs, and agreed to look at this issue again in the new municipal year.

Note: The full work programme for the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel for the 2013/14 municipal year is attached as Appendix C.



Looking Forward

Coming off an election, the 2014/15 municipal year will be a challenging year for scrutiny, which also offers a number of opportunities as well.

The council faces a number of challenges over the next 12 months, in particular major changes to the way adult social care is configured alongside significant, ongoing budget pressures, and the development of proposals to meet our statutory responsibility to provide sufficient school places as our school-age population increases. These key challenges sit alongside the ongoing challenge for the council to do more with less, and a budget process that is likely to involve difficult decisions going into 2015/16.

New membership on the main committee and standing panels brings in fresh ideas, and skills which can enhance the process of effective scrutiny, alongside the knowledge and skills of those continuing on in the role. The introduction of an engaging Scrutiny Member Development programme will help to tap into those skills as well as develop new approaches, strengthen work programming ensuring the Scrutiny Function delivers defined results, adding value to the work of the council.



Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2013/14

Meeting Date	Meeting Date
4 June 2013	14 January 2014
Administrative Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Appointment of Panels Work programme Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cllr Coad Call-In: SD Decision re. Langley Rd, Station Rd and High Street Langley 	Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preparations for individual electoral registration Bus Station: Lessons Learned Childhood Obesity - Meeting 5: Sign off report
8 July 2013	6 February 2014
Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childhood Obesity - Meeting 1: "Does Slough have a problem with childhood obesity?" Cllr Plimmer Call-In: Leaseholder Annual Service Charge Statements 	Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Q3 Performance and Finance Report Budget Papers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revenue Budget 2014/15 Medium Term Financial Strategy 2014-2018 Treasury Management Strategy Capital Strategy 2014-2019 Administrative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health Scrutiny Panel membership
10 September 2013	4 March 2014
Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childhood Obesity - Meeting 2: "What options are there to alter the physical environment?" Q1 Performance and Finance Report Implications of the Government's Spending Review on medium term financial planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leisure Services Strategy 	Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chief Constable Information Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social Care Bill
7 October 2013	8 April 2014
Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thames Valley Transactional Service Centre: Update Local Asset Backed Vehicle Update 	Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaseholder Services - Update on Improvements Transactional Services - Performance Update Corporate Plan Endorsement Item <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scrutiny Annual Report For Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Loanshark Service
12 November 2013	12 June 2013
Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childhood Obesity - Meeting 3: "What is the role of schools and how can we support them? How can we encourage greater physical activity amongst children and young people?" Q2 Performance and Finance Report Economic Development Strategic Plan 	Administrative Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Election of Chair Election of Vice Work programme Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mental Health In-patient Services Transfer Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Quality Account 2012/13
3 December 2013	
Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Childhood Obesity - Meeting 4: "What is the role of GPs and Primary Care?" Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 	

Health Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2013/14

Meeting Date	Meeting Date
12 June 2013	21 November 2013
Administrative Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election of Chair • Election of Vice • Work programme Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health In-patient Services Transfer • Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Quality Account 2012/13 	Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dementia Care Strategy • Public Health Strategy • Healthwatch Business Plan
24 July 2013	13 January 2014
Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care Quality Commission Findings: Wexham Park Hospital (introduced under Members Questions) • Heatherwood/Wexham Park and Frimley Park merger • Shaping the Future: implementation of changes and impact • Health Scrutiny/Slough Wellbeing Board Protocol 	Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Care Bill and Health Integration • Carers Commissioning Strategy • Tuberculosis in Slough For Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental Health In-patient Services Transfer • A&E Review Report
17 September 2013	24 March 2014
Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult Safeguarding Annual Report 2012/13 • Public Local Account • Older People's Strategy • Heatherwood/Wexham Park CQC Report and Action Plan 	Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality and Improvement at Heatherwood and Wexham Park Trust • Clinical Commissioning Group • Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust • Healthwatch Slough • Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Quality Account 2013/14 For Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winterbourne Action Plan Implementation

Neighbourhood and Community Services Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2013/14

Meeting Date	Meeting Date
19 June 2013	8 January 2014
Administrative Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election of Chair • Election of Vice Chair • Work programme Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheds with Beds: Update on Progress • Waste Strategy 2013-2028 	Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of Benefits Changes incl. impact of London Boroughs policies on housing • Management and Prevention of rent arrears/voids/damage to housing stock For Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management of service charges for Council tenants
5 September 2013	27 February 2014
Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Allocations Scheme • Role of wardens/caretakers in supporting neighbourhoods • Tenant Scrutiny in Slough 	Crime and Disorder Committee Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Safety Partnership incl. Prostitution • Domestic Violence For Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Indicators for Interserve Contract
30 October	2 April 2014
Extraordinary Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heathrow Airport Expansion: evidence gathering 	Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Working Party - Progress Report
6 November 2013	
Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Star Survey • Management of Houses of Multiple Occupancy • Older People's Housing Offer • Call-in: Management/Control of Highways yellow line/disabled bay line painting contract 	

Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Panel Work Programme 2013/14

Meeting Date	Meeting Date
1 July 2013	30 January 2014
Administrative Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election of Chair • Election of Vice Chair • Work programme Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Churchmead School: update on improvement • Childhood Vaccinations 	Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child-focused overview of messages from Ofsted Inspection and 2014 calendar year priorities • Corporate Parenting Review and Proposals • SEN: impact of changes in legislation • Childhood Immunisation: Progress
10 October 2013	19 February 2014
Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement Plan: Update • Early Help in Slough: Getting it Right for Children project update • Annual Report of Independent Reviewing Officers/Child Protection • LSCB Annual Report incl. CSE update Members Question: FGM	Extraordinary Meeting Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formal feedback from Ofsted Inspection
5 December 2013	12 March 2014
Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grammar Schools in Slough: role, relationship with non-selective schools, impact on attainment and accessibility • School Places: Plans for the Future • Vulnerable Children and Education Information Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Learning and Skills Services Update • School Results: Preliminary • Schools Services: Contract Update 	Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Results: Validated • Churchmead: Update on Improvements • Community Learning and Skills Services
	16 April 2014
	Scrutiny Items <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slough Local Safeguarding Children Board - Ofsted Inspection Findings For Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statement of Purpose for Breakaway

This document can be made available on audio tape, braille or in large print, and is also available on the website where it can easily be viewed in large print.

Annual Scrutiny Report 2013/2014

If you would like assistance with the translation of the information in this document, please ask an English speaking person to request this by calling 01753 875657.

यदि आप इस दस्तावेज़ में दी गई जानकारी के अनुवाद कए जाने की सहायता चाहते हैं तो कृपया किसी अंग्रेजी भाषी व्यक्ति से यह अनुरोध करने के लए 01753 875657 पर बात करके कहें.

ਜੇ ਤੁਸੀਂ ਇਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ ਵਿਚਲੀ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦਾ ਅਨੁਵਾਦ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਸਹਾਇਤਾ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ, ਤਾਂ ਕਿਸੇ ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਬੋਲਣ ਵਾਲੇ ਵਿਅਕਤੀ ਨੂੰ 01753 875657 ਉੱਤੇ ਕਾਲ ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਬਾਰੇ ਬੇਨਤੀ ਕਰਨ ਲਈ ਕਹੋ।

Aby uzyskać pomoc odnośnie tłumaczenia instrukcji zawartych w niniejszym dokumencie, należy zwrócić się do osoby mówiącej po angielsku, aby zadzwoniła w tej sprawie pod numer 01753 875657.

Haddii aad doonayso caawinaad ah in lagu turjibaano warbixinta dukumeentigaan ku qoran, fadlan weydiiso in qof ku hadla Inriis uu ku Waco 01753 875657 si uu kugu codsado.

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز میں دی گئی معلومات کے ترجمے کے سلسلے میں مدد چاہئے تو، براہ کرم ایک انگریزی بولنے والے شخص سے 01753 875657 پر کال کر کے اس کی درخواست کرنے کے لئے کہیں۔