



WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committees

Annual Reports 2017-18

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**Foreword by Councillor John Kaiser,
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny
Management Committee**

Welcome to the Annual Reports of Wokingham Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees for 2017-18. The reports describe how the Overview and Scrutiny Committees reviewed the delivery of key services and highlighted topics of importance raised by local residents and community groups.

The 2016/17 annual report highlighted a number of major challenges facing both central and local government. Most of these challenges remain. Wokingham Borough Council has found savings of £46m since 2010 but continues to face further significant funding reductions from central Government. At the same time demand for services continues to increase due, for example, to the implications of an ageing population and the growing number of children in care. The Council faces further challenges from new housing development in the Borough and the need for supporting infrastructure such as roads, schools and community facilities.

In order to meet these challenges the Council has to be more innovative and ensure that its decisions focus on key priorities and the needs of local communities. The role of Overview and Scrutiny is to ensure that those decisions are effective and transparent, delivering value for money for local Council Tax payers. Overview and Scrutiny also monitors decisions made by other public service providers such as the NHS and the police. It aims to ensure that decision makers are open and accountable to the residents of the Borough.

During the past year the Council's four Overview and Scrutiny Committees have considered a wide range of issues relating to public services across the Borough. The Committees have also questioned the Leader of the Council and Executive Members about the performance of key services and future priorities. Members also contributed to the major review of Overview and Scrutiny carried out by one of the House of Commons' Select Committees. Looking forwards, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees will continue to hold key decision makers to account. They will also increase their focus on pre-decision scrutiny and policy development by conducting research, talking to residents and making recommendations to improve policies and key public services which impact on all the Borough's residents.

For most of 2017/18 the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee was chaired by Keith Baker. I would like to thank Keith, the Overview and Scrutiny Members and the Officers and residents who contributed their time and effort during the year.

**John Kaiser,
March 2018**

SECTION 1 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Overview and Scrutiny is a key element in the system of checks and balances which ensure that Wokingham Borough Council and its partners make and implement effective decisions for the benefit of the residents of the Borough. The Council's Executive is empowered to take decisions within the financial and policy framework set by the full Council. Non-Executive Members of the Council are appointed to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review those decisions and the way they impact on the performance of key services.

The Council's Overview and Scrutiny function is delivered by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and three Committees focussing on Children's Services, Community and Corporate Services and Health issues. Overview and Scrutiny Committees make recommendations for improvement to full Council and Executive and to partner organisations.

The report sets out the range of issues and submissions considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in 2017/18, including:

- Implementation of the Council's 21st Century organisational change programme.
- Review of performance indicators which highlight how services are performing.
- Review of the findings of Ofsted inspections of schools and Children's Services.
- The process for updating the Local Plan and listening to the views of Town and Parish Councils, residents and other local stakeholders.
- Performance of health services, including hospitals, GPs and the ambulance service and proposals for closer working between health and social care.
- Implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement and the Wokingham town centre regeneration project.
- Effectiveness of the Borough's Community Safety Partnership and local policing.

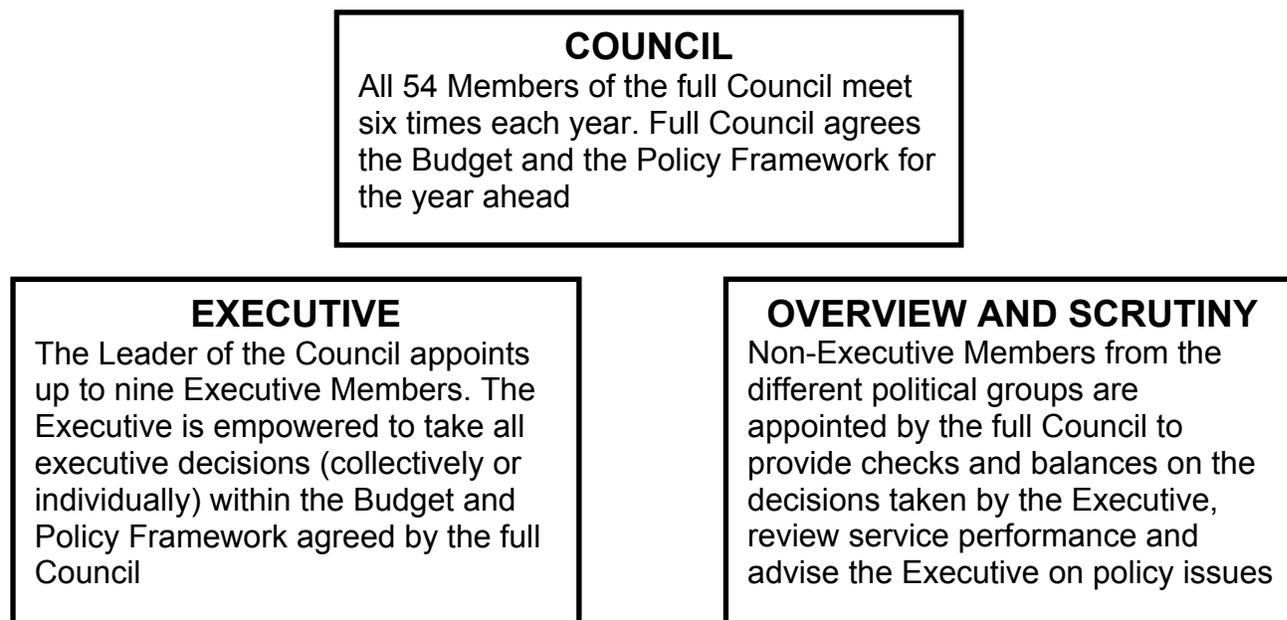
Effective Overview and Scrutiny utilises information and ideas from a wide range of sources including residents, service users and community groups. During 2018-19 Members involved in Overview and Scrutiny will continue to hold the Council and its partners to account, providing "critical friend" challenge to the Council's Executive and other public service providers. In so doing Members will seek to reflect the aspirations and concerns of local residents and communities. Particular focus will be placed on improvements to pre-decision scrutiny and input to support new policy development.

Members of the public are welcome to suggest issues for consideration by Overview and Scrutiny and to attend meetings which are usually held in the evening at the Council offices in Shute End.

SECTION 2 – INTRODUCTION TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

Wokingham Borough Council is a large, complex organisation with a thousand employees and an annual budget in excess of £100m. The Council's Vision is to make the Borough "a great place to live, an even better place to do business". The Council makes major strategic decisions which affect the long-term future of the area and its communities. It also makes decisions on a daily basis which affect the lives of some of the Borough's most vulnerable residents. In order to ensure that the Council spends public money wisely and makes well informed decisions about key services it is essential that an effective system of checks and balances is in place.

The Council's Executive is empowered to take decisions within the financial and policy framework set by the full Council. Non-Executive Members of the Council (representing each of the political groups) are appointed to the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees to review those decisions and the performance of key services. The relationship between Council, Executive and Overview and Scrutiny is illustrated in the diagram below:

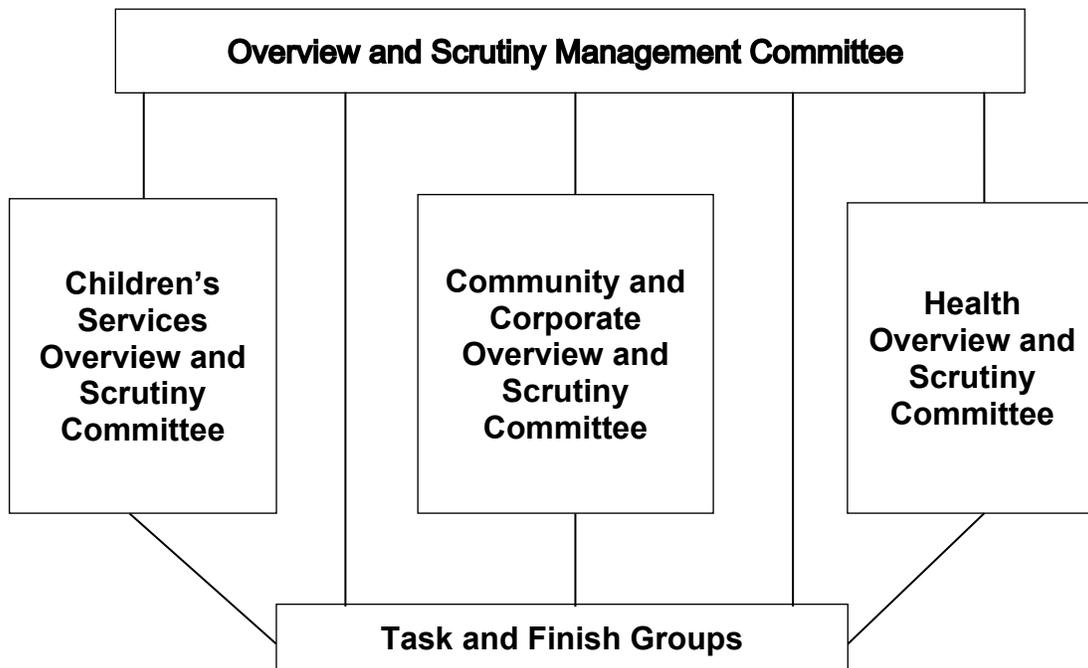


In order to deliver the Overview and Scrutiny function the Council has established the following Committees:

- Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee – responsible for overseeing the Overview and Scrutiny function and developing an annual work programme for each of the Committees.
- Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee – responsible for scrutiny of services relating to schools, safeguarding and child protection, looked after children and children with special educational needs and disabilities.

- Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee - responsible for scrutiny of Council services, crime reduction and community safety and flood risk management.
- Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – responsible for scrutiny of local NHS bodies, public health arrangements and the work of the Local Healthwatch service.

The Committees consider issues at their regular meetings or by setting up time-limited Task and Finish Groups. The Council’s Overview and Scrutiny structure is illustrated below:



The role of Overview and Scrutiny Members is to ask questions to assure themselves that there are systems in place which ensure that they will be able to trust the data they receive, to know that the systems are recording the right things, to know that major issues are not being ignored and that emerging risks are recognised and acted upon without delay.

Overview and Scrutiny is not about the investigation of minor matters or individual complaints. The Council has a separate corporate Complaints procedure which is used to investigate individual complaints about services. Similarly, Overview and Scrutiny does not look at quasi-judicial matters such as planning or licensing issues. Finally, Overview and Scrutiny is not used for raising issues of a party political nature as these matters can be addressed through debate at full Council meetings.

SECTION 3

REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



**Councillor John Kaiser, Chairman
Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

During the 2017/18 the Management Committee considered a number of issues which impact on the residents of the Borough. These included the performance of key services, the Local Plan update, economic development and the implementation of the 21st Century Council organisational change programme. The Committee also considered the “call-in” of Executive decisions relating to the proposed relocation of Wokingham library to the new Carnival Pool facility and the acquisition of units at Peach Place for key worker housing.

The Committee questioned the Council Leader and Executive Members about priorities for the year ahead and the performance of key services. This helped to strengthen the working relationship with the Executive which is crucial as a key element of Overview and Scrutiny is the ability to influence decision makers at the Council and other public service organisations.

As mentioned above, Members submitted evidence to the inquiry into Overview and Scrutiny carried out by the House of Commons Communities and Local Government Select Committee. The Select Committee highlighted the importance of an organisational culture which underpins constructive challenge and democratic accountability. It made a number of recommendations relating to lines of accountability, access to information, the role of scrutiny Chairmen, Officer support and extending the scope of scrutiny to monitor commercial bodies and Local Enterprise Partnerships. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee broadly supported the recommendations and will seek to apply the learning from the inquiry into the development of Overview and Scrutiny function at Wokingham Borough Council.

As we move into the new Municipal Year the Management Committee will continue to focus on initiatives to strengthen the Overview and Scrutiny process. This will include greater emphasis on pre-decision scrutiny and measures to achieve greater involvement by residents and local community groups in the development and monitoring of key public services.

John Kaiser

Remit of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee oversees the Council's Scrutiny function and is responsible for developing and co-ordinating the work programmes of the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Committee also organises a training programme to ensure that non-Executive Members involved in Scrutiny have the requisite skills and knowledge to carry out their roles.

Membership

Councillor John Kaiser (Chairman).
Councillors Parry Batth, Lara Blumenthal (Vice-Chairman), Lindsay Ferris, Kate Haines, Pauline Helliard-Symons, Ken Miall, Ian Pittock, Malcolm Richards, Chris Smith, Bill Soane, and Shahid Younis.

Substitute Members: Councillors Philip Houldsworth, Abdul Loyes, Imogen Shepherd-Dubey and Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey.

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Highlights from the Year

Consideration of 'Call-Ins'

The Committee held two special meetings to consider call-ins relating to decisions made by the Executive. The first call-in related to the decision to relocate Wokingham library into the new Carnival 2 leisure facility. The Committee concluded that the decision had been taken in line with the Council's Constitution and the relevant decision making principles. The second call-in related to the proposal to purchase units in the Peach Place development for use as key worker housing. Again the Committee found that the decision was compliant but also recommended that the Executive ensure that any future affordable housing scheme which departed from the Council's normal procedures be supported by details of how the scheme was different and the benefits provided for the Council.

Leader and Executive Member Sessions

The Leader of the Council and the Executive Members attended meetings of the Committee to discuss priorities for the year ahead and issues which may benefit from pre-decision scrutiny. The Committee found these sessions a useful way to develop better working relationships and inform the work programmes for the year ahead. These sessions will be repeated in 2018/19 and will also include a session with the Council's Chief Executive.

Performance Management

The Committee received the quarterly report setting out details of the Council's performance against a number of financial, staffing and operational/project indicators. The Committee made further representations about the timeliness of the performance management reports and

suggested that Officers consider ways to improve both presentation and timetabling. It was noted that the Council's 21st Century Council change programme included IT investment that would enable the production of more timely performance reports.

21st Century Council

The Committee considered an update on the Council's 21st Century Council change programme. Submissions were made by the Lead Member, the Chief Executive, Programme Manager and UNISON. The Committee requested an analysis of the lessons learnt from Phase 1 of the programme and the ways in which Phase 2 would be strengthened as a result. Further updates would be considered as the programme progressed.

Local Plan Update

The Committee received a progress report on the Local Plan Update. Parish Council representatives attended the meeting and submitted a question about the Council's 5 year land supply and the actions of developers who were in effect "land-banking" and submitting further applications. The Committee supported the Council's actions in seeking co-ordinated lobbying of the Government by the Borough, Town and Parish Councils.

Member Training

The Committee recognises the importance of ongoing training and development to ensure that Members' skills and knowledge are constantly upgraded. In June 2017 a training session was held which examined key elements of effective Overview and Scrutiny including preparing for meetings, questioning techniques and the development of key lines of enquiry. Representatives from Bracknell Forest and West Berkshire Councils attended the training session to bring a different perspective on the challenges facing Overview and Scrutiny.

Work Programme 2018/19

The Committee will scrutinise the following issues in 2018/19:

- Evidence from the Leader, Executive Members and Chief Executive on priorities, policy development and performance of key services;
- Updated Council Plan and Corporate Peer Review Action Plan;
- The 21st Century Council change programme;
- Progress on delivery of the four Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) and the Local Plan Update;
- £500m infrastructure investment (including the SCAPE contract);
- The Council's annual Budget Consultation exercise;
- Operation and performance of Council-owned companies;

- Compliance with the Council's statutory duties under the Equality Act;
- Reviewing the Assets Review Programme and the Property Portfolio Investment Fund;
- Outcomes from the Traffic Congestion working group;
- Effectiveness of the Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership;
- Planning processes relating to the implementation of planning conditions and TPOs;
- Overview and Scrutiny Member training and support.

The Committee will also consider adding items to the Work Programme as a result of consultation with residents, community groups and partners organisations.

SECTION 4

REPORT OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



**Pauline Helliar-Symons, Chairman
Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Committee's work is split almost equally between children's social work and educational attainment. As well as monitoring all the recommendations put in place by earlier Committees and Task and Finish Groups, the new work that has come its way is outlined below. This is in addition to the normal performance monitoring that we do at each meeting. This keeps the Committee in touch with how the service and schools, especially the ones that have had Ofsted inspections, are performing.

We also monitor what the Service is doing to help schools requiring improvement or schools causing concern to improve. This is now more complex, with the advent of new academies and free schools, as we have little control over what they do, yet the Local Authority is still accountable for their educational outcomes.

Following a recommendation from the Coombes School Task and Finish Group, the Committee now has established standing part 2 sessions to review schools causing concern. Local ward Members are invited to attend the meetings and take part in the discussions.

Another innovation is the introduction of regular updates by the Executive Member for Children's Services. The Committee receives and considers information on the development of new and existing policies, including arrangements, timescales and consultations. The Committee is able to have an input in the early stages of policy development.

The Committee also continued to monitor the Social Worker recruitment and retention strategy and was pleased to note that the rate of Social Worker retention is much improved. This is the result of continued efforts to improve and develop the strategy.

All members of the Committee and their substitutes attend training at the start of the first meeting each year as Children's Services is an area that is constantly changing and we are keen to keep up to date with new legislation and service developments. Training is also arranged during the year if specific needs arise.

It has been particularly heartening this year to have had a Committee most of whose members had experience from previous years. This adds both to the stability and consistency of our work, much of which is about examining developments, trends and progress; and to

maintaining the knowledge of a very complex area of work by these Members so that they can delve deeper. This is difficult to achieve if the membership keeps changing as it used to.

I would like to thank all members of the Committee, and the substitutes who have frequently been asked to attend, for their commitment to and interest in the work that we do, and for all the positive and genuinely useful contributions that they have made.

Pauline Helliard-Symons

Remit of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutiny and assisting with policy development in relation to services for children and young people. This includes schools, early years' settings and children's centres, safeguarding and child protection, children in care and services for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

Membership:

Councillor Pauline Helliard-Symons (Chairman).
Councillors Parry Bath, Laura Blumenthal (Vice-Chairman), Kate Haines, Ken Miall, Bill Soane, Shahid Younis and Beth Rowland.

Substitute Members:

Councillors Lindsay Ferris, Emma Hobbs, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey and Chris Smith.

Representatives of the Church of England Diocese and the Roman Catholic Diocese, together with a Parent Governor are also able to attend meetings of the Committee when Education issues are being considered. At the moment these posts are vacant.

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Highlights from the Year

Performance Management

At each meeting the Committee reviewed the performance of Children's Services in relation to key Performance Indicators. These indicators demonstrate the contribution made by the service to achieving key Council priorities relating to looking after vulnerable people, improving educational attainment and focussing on every child achieving their potential. Members asked detailed questions on the performance indicators and requested further evidence to support the direction of travel set out for indicators in the report. I have asked for the scope of the indicators we look at in the future to be widened still further to include, as an example, the number of young people offending and reoffending.

School Performance Data

The Committee received regular School Performance data reports and summaries of recent School Ofsted reports. The Committee noted that many schools had improved their Ofsted inspection results over the previous year but also challenged the performance of schools that were marked 'Requires Improvement'. The service was reminded that the Council's ambition is for all schools within the Borough to have an Ofsted rating of 'Good' or 'Outstanding'. The Committee noted high achievements and the fact that, on the whole, Wokingham schools

continued to perform well, with 92% of pupils attending schools that were rated good or outstanding.

Child Care Sufficiency

The Committee considered a report which assessed the sufficiency of childcare in the Borough in order to deliver the additional 15 hours of childcare that parents were now entitled to. The Committee was informed that this was a market led provision, and as the Council was not the provider, it had little control over it. The Committee was informed that none of the local providers had indicated that they would not be able to deliver the extra hours, but it was not yet known how much demand there would be for the extra hours. The Committee agreed to monitor the development of the Child Care Sufficiency Strategy.

Peer Review

The Committee received the summary of the findings of a Peer Review which took place in March 2017. The review had identified strengths and recommendations which were in line with the service's own self-assessment. The Committee noted with concern that long waiting times for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) had been highlighted by the review. The Committee was informed that this issue had already been identified and the service was working towards improving the waiting times.

Social Work – Recruitment and Retention

The Committee was pleased to learn that the workforce was currently stable, with more than 80% of permanent staff with tenure of 18 months or more. This was the result of various initiatives to attract and retain Social Workers. However, this would remain a priority and the Committee will continue to receive regular updates to ensure that Social Worker recruitment and retention continues to be effective.

Joint Targeted Area Inspection (JTAI)

The service underwent the JTAI which was an inspection undertaken by four inspectorates: Ofsted (who led the inspection), the Care Quality Commission, Her Majesties Inspectorate of Constabulary and Her Majesties Inspectorate of Probation. The inspection looked at arrangements to safeguard children with a specific focus on “children experiencing neglect”. An action plan was drawn up in response to the JTAI and members from other partners in the MASH have been invited to report on their part to the Committee; there will be 6 monthly updates on what progress is being made.

Policy Update from the Executive Member for Children's Services

A successful innovation this year has been that Councillor Mark Ashwell (Executive Member) attended meetings of the Committee to update Members on the development of new and existing policies. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to give its views and to make recommendations at an early stage of policy development. As an example, the Committee reviewed and made recommendations on the proposals for Foster Carer Council Tax Exemption and Care Leavers Council Tax Exemption.

Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) Annual Report

The Committee considered the LSCB's annual report and noted that there had been significant improvement since the previous report. However, it was identified that mental health services needed to improve in relation to the length of waiting lists. Members welcomed the improvement in '*how we hear the child's voice*', with the Children In Care Council now taking an active part at Corporate Parenting Board meetings.

Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) Annual Report

The Committee received the annual report which contained a comprehensive review of the work undertaken by the Board during the year. The Committee endorsed the new strategic priorities and the Strategic Delivery Action Plan. In addition, the children in care are surveyed annually about what they think of us as corporate parents, and I have asked that the results of this survey be reported to the Scrutiny Committee each year.

Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)

The Committee continued to monitor the development of MASH in the Borough following its launch in 2016. Partner agencies were invited to attend the meeting and give evidence to Members. The Committee was informed that work was being undertaken to improve joint decision making. Further improvements required investment in IT systems and the Committee recommended that the Council continue to invest in the development of MASH.

Work Programme 2018/19

The Committee will scrutinise the following issues in 2018/19:

- Delivery of safeguarding services, including staff recruitment and retention;
- Key Children's Services performance indicators and major projects;
- School performance, Ofsted reports and schools causing concern;
- Feedback from the annual conversation with Ofsted about Children's Services;
- Sufficiency of school places across the Borough;
- Progress relating to narrowing the gap in educational attainment for children from disadvantaged backgrounds;
- Impact of the Council's 21st Century Council change programme on Children's Services;
- Key strategic initiatives such as the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH);
- Impact of demographic and legislative changes on the service.

SECTION 5

REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



**Shahid Younis, Chairman
Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
Committee**

During the past year the Committee has continued its focus on the delivery of Council services to ensure that they provide value for money for the Borough's Council Tax payers. Executive Members and Officers were invited to attend meetings of the Committee to give evidence and answer questions on priorities and performance.

The Committee also examined the proposed changes to the relationship between the Council and voluntary sector organisations. The Committee welcomed the proposal to move from short term grants to longer term contracts with associated performance indicators. This will provide greater stability for local organisations and greater clarity about the deliverables expected by the Council.

The Committee considered a range of other issues during the year including flood prevention, community safety and local policing, town centre regeneration, unauthorised encampments and a range of highways issues such as civil parking enforcement.

In developing its work programme the Committee is keen to ensure that the "voice" of local residents and community groups plays a bigger part in its deliberations. The Committee recognises that involving residents, community groups and local "experts" in Overview and Scrutiny reduces the risk of a partisan approach as Members are able to hear directly from those stakeholders whose interests they are representing. The Committee will continue to promote greater public involvement in Overview and Scrutiny over the coming year and will share any relevant learning with the other Committees.

I thank the Members of the Committee, Officers, residents and others who took part in our meetings for their valuable contributions during the year.

Shahid Younis

Remit of the Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for the scrutiny of internal Council operations and partnership working across the Borough. It also has responsibilities under the Police and Justice Act 2006 which involves oversight of the operation of the Borough's Community Safety Partnership. The Committee is also responsible for the scrutiny of flood risk management.

Membership

Councillor Shahid Younis (Chairman).

Councillors Pauline Jorgensen, Abdul Loyes, Ken Miall, Philip Mirfin, Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey, David Sleight and Bill Soane (Vice Chairman).

Substitute Members: Councillors Mike Haines, Clive Jones, Dianne King and Ian Pittock.

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Highlights from the Year

Review of the Voluntary Sector

The Committee received reports on plans to strengthen the Council's relationship with voluntary sector organisations. This involved greater clarity on the services being provided and the funding mechanism to drive improvements and greater joined up working. Moving from short term grants to longer term contracts would bring greater certainty for the organisations and greater clarity on the levels of performance expected.

The Committee welcomed the new way of working and recommended a greater focus on transparency and improved communication with ward Members about voluntary sector activity in their area.

Flood Prevention

The Committee considered an update on flooding issues during the winter of 2016/17 and the ongoing work to raise awareness and share information with partner organisations. Members asked questions about the asset register, local land drainage by-laws and the role of Flood Wardens in providing local knowledge relating to river and stream levels. The Committee requested improved communication with ward Members and Town/Parish Councils about the identity of local flood wardens.

Local Policing

The Committee received a briefing from Superintendent Shaun Virtue, the Local Area Police Commander, on local policing issues relating to the Bracknell and Wokingham Police Area. The

briefing highlighted a number of key issues such as the ongoing threat from drug use in schools, domestic violence and road safety.

The Committee noted the impact of staffing reductions across the Thames Valley for front line services in the face of increasing demand from a growing population. Superintendent Virtue also gave evidence to the Committee in relation to the work of the Community Safety Partnership.

Community Safety Partnership

The Committee scrutinised the work of the Community Safety Partnership over the previous year. Members asked how the partnership and its delivery groups had progressed the four strategic priorities relating to the reporting of domestic abuse, reducing the level of repeat offending, understanding hidden crime and communicating the work of the partnership to make all residents feel safer. Community organisations were invited to give evidence to the Committee about local issues and the effectiveness of local solutions.

Members considered the range of performance indicators underpinning each of the priorities and provided evidence of local issues which impacted on community safety and the work of the partnership. Members also considered the emerging Community Safety Strategy for 2018/21 and the proposed new priorities which had been developed after consultation with local stakeholders.

Town Centre Regeneration

The Committee received an update on the Wokingham town centre regeneration projects relating to Peach Place, Carnival Phases 1 and 2 and Elms Field. Members welcomed progress on the projects but noted the impact of the projects, in conjunction with the Market Place regeneration, on local businesses and retailers. A representative from the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce addressed the Committee and highlighted the importance of clear information and timeframes to enable local businesses to plan for the future.

The Committee agreed to monitor progress on the regeneration projects during 2018/19 and to seek further evidence of their impact on local businesses.

Civil Parking Enforcement

The Committee received an update on the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) which went live in October 2017. The update included performance data which underpinned the new service. This indicated that the contractor (NSL) had performed well against the objectives and assumptions set out in the business case. Members asked about the benefits of the new arrangements, customer feedback and partnership working with Town and Parish Councils. Members also received an update on work to develop a new parking strategy for the Borough which would be the subject of public consultation prior to adoption by the Council.

Work Programme 2018-19

The Committee will scrutinise the following issues in 2018/19:

- Effectiveness of the Borough's Community Safety Partnership and local policing arrangements;
- Council Revenue and Capital Budget monitoring;
- Wokingham Town Centre regeneration projects;
- The Council's relationship with the voluntary sector and Town/Parish Councils;
- Highways and Transport issues such as Civil Parking Enforcement, road maintenance, cycling facilities and the re-let of major highways contracts;
- Effectiveness of flood prevention measures;
- Waste and recycling (including the collection of food waste from 2019);
- The proposed Coppid Beech park and ride facility;
- The impact of changes to train services;
- Measures to increase public engagement with the Overview and Scrutiny function.

SECTION 6

REPORT OF THE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



**Ken Miall, Chairman
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The demands confronting NHS and social care services continue to grow. Medical advances mean that our residents are living longer, but are frequently living with long term chronic conditions such as dementia, diabetes and heart disease. This has significant resource implications. The average 65 year old costs the NHS 2.5 times more than the average 30 year old. For an 85 year old the cost is five times as much. The impact of poor diet and lifestyle choices add further demands. At a time of rising demand for health and social care services the state of the national finances has meant increasingly tight funding settlements. Increasing demand and limited resources are resulting in pressures in the system as evidenced by missed targets, difficulties in seeing a GP, increased demand for A&E and a growing number of carers helping relatives with increasingly complex needs.

In response to these challenges it is essential that decision makers are able to understand local needs and deliver safe, effective services which achieve value for money. The role of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) is to ensure that residents' views are heard and reflected in the development of these key services. The Committee also monitors the ongoing integration of health and social care, scrutinises service performance and acts as a "critical friend" challenging the information provided to it by a range of service providers.

During the year HOSC addressed a wide range of issues, some of which are detailed below. The Committee also continued to work closely with key health and social care service providers, the Wokingham Health and Wellbeing Board, the Borough's Clinical Commissioning Group and the local Healthwatch team. A challenge we face with Wokingham being a small unique Borough is that HOSC often addresses issues relevant to our particular area and not others or vice versa. When dealing with the larger external organisations it is often the case that we are able only to access data for the UK as a whole or grouped figures for the wider Berkshire West area. This is where providers such as Wokingham Healthwatch can allow us to concentrate on the matters that affect our residents the most.

I would like to record my thanks to the HOSC Members, Officers, external partners, residents and community groups who contributed to the work of the Committee during the year.

Ken Miall

Remit of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) reviews and scrutinises matters relating to the planning, provision and operation of health services in the Borough. This includes acute and community health services, family and public health services and the work of the Local Healthwatch team.

The Committee exercises powers conferred through the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013. The Committee also scrutinises social care services and other health related services jointly commissioned by the Council and local health bodies.

Membership

Councillor Ken Miall (Chairman).

Councillors Parry Batth, Laura Blumenthal, Kate Haines (Vice Chairman), John Jarvis, Clive Jones, John Kaiser, Malcolm Richards, Chris Smith, and Bill Soane.

Substitute Members: Abdul Loyes, Imogen Shepherd-DuBey, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey and Alison Swaddle.

All attendees at HOSC meetings, including members of the public, may ask questions after each report/presentation is delivered.

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Highlights from the Year

Safeguarding Adults

The Committee considered annual reports from the Borough Council and the West Berkshire Safeguarding Adults Board. The reports highlighted high levels of commitment and innovation from staff which had been validated by an external peer review. Members note that the number of safeguarding concerns continued to increase year on year, with over half the concerns being raised by health and social care staff. Members sought assurance about the repeat concerns and were informed that governance and operational systems were in place to identify concerns which were repeated.

NHS Dental Services

The Committee received an update on the provision of NHS dental services in the Borough which confirmed the level of provision and accessibility on a ward by ward basis. Members noted the fact that improving access to NHS dental services was a national priority. 45.5% of the Borough's population had attended an NHS dental practice in the two years prior to May 2017.

Health and Wellbeing Board

Councillor Julian McGhee-Sumner, then Chairman of the Health and Wellbeing Board, attended a HOSC meeting to update Members on progress made against the key priorities in the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy. These were: enabling and empowering resilient communities; promoting and supporting good mental health; reducing health inequalities and delivering person-centred integrated services. Members asked about the reducing outcomes from the “Step Up, Step Down” project and performance in the Borough relating to bed blocking.

Optalis

The Committee considered an update on Optalis, the Council-owned company providing care and support services to older people and adults with a disability. With effect from 1 April 2017, the company was jointly owned by the Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. Members asked about the allocation of company resources between service delivery in Wokingham and Windsor and Maidenhead and the financial benefits arising from the merger.

21st Century Council

The Committee considered an update on the potential impact of the Council’s 21st Century Change programme on health and social care services and the integration agenda. The future shape of key services would depend on a number of factors including more schools becoming academies, further reductions in Government funding and the impact of other elements in the change programme. It was essential the Council worked closely with the voluntary and faith sectors, partners and neighbouring authorities. Members stressed the importance of effective communication with residents and safeguards to ensure that vulnerable residents did not “slip through the cracks”.

Healthwatch

At each Committee meeting Healthwatch Wokingham Borough updated Members on its work. Members also considered the Healthwatch Annual Report for 2016/17. During the year, Healthwatch submitted reports on a range of issues including visits to local facilities in the Borough, extra care facilities and the potential joint commissioning of Healthwatch services in Reading and Wokingham. Members expressed concern about the possible joint commissioning on the grounds that the two boroughs faced different health and social care challenges. Members also queried why the potential for joint commissioning with other Healthwatches was not being considered as an option.

Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Sustainability and Transformation Plan

The Committee continued to work with West Berkshire, Reading, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Councils in the joint scrutiny of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Sustainability and Transformation Plan (STP). The STP included key programmes and enabling work streams focussing on prevention relating to child and adult obesity and exercise, urgent care, mental health, workforce issues and digital interoperability.

Work Programme 2018-19

The Committee will scrutinise the following issues in 2018/19:

- Monitoring health and social care outcomes and the performance of the local NHS Foundation Trusts;
- Monitoring the work of the Wokingham Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG);
- Reviewing progress on the integration of health and social care services;
- The provision of effective community mental health services;
- Access to primary care services within the Borough's Strategic Development Locations;
- Monitoring progress relating to the development of community hubs;
- Input into the delivery of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Sustainability and Transformation Plan.

SECTION 7

GETTING INVOLVED IN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The Council is committed to making Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings accessible to all residents of the Borough. A key aim is to increase public involvement in the process and to remove barriers to participation.

Residents can get involved in Overview and Scrutiny by attending meetings - all Overview and Scrutiny meetings are open to the public and are held in the early evening to make attendance easier. In addition, copies of Agendas including reports to be considered are published five working days before each meeting and can be accessed on the Council's website:

www.wokingham.gov.uk/council-and-meetings

Residents can also elect to receive automatic notification when new Overview and Scrutiny Agenda and Minutes are published.

Each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting includes a Public Question Time session which allows residents to raise issues of general interest and/or specific issues relating to the items under consideration.

Members of the public are also able to contribute to Scrutiny reviews by giving evidence either as an individual or as part of a community group. Residents can also request that a specific item is considered by Overview and Scrutiny as a review item. Residents can complete an online Scrutiny review suggestion form at:

www.wokingham.gov.uk/council-and-meetings/decisions/ask-for-a-scrutiny-review

During 2018-19 the Council will be seeking to make more use of local and social media to raise awareness of issues coming before the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and to allow residents to provide comments and feedback.

The Council's Twitter feed is accessible here: [WokinghamBorough@WokinghamBC](https://twitter.com/WokinghamBC)

If you want to learn more about Overview and Scrutiny or want to discuss a specific issue, please contact Neil Carr, the Council's Scrutiny Officer:

by telephone: 0118 974 6058, or

by email: neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk or by post:

Democratic Services, Wokingham Borough Council, Shute End, Wokingham, RG40 1BN.

SECTION 8

DATES OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETINGS IN 2018/19

- **Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

Wednesday 23 May 2018 at 7pm
Wednesday 20 June 2018 at 7pm
Wednesday 18 July 2018 at 7pm
Wednesday 19 September 2018 at 7pm
Wednesday 17 October 2018 at 7pm
Wednesday 21 November 2018 at 7pm
Wednesday 16 January 2019 at 7pm
Wednesday 20 February 2019 at 7pm
Wednesday 20 March 2019 at 7pm

- **Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Tuesday 22 May 2018 at 7pm
Tuesday 18 September 2018 at 7pm
Tuesday 20 November 2018 at 7pm
Tuesday 22 January 2019 at 7pm
Tuesday 19 February 2019 at 7pm

- **Community and Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Monday 18 June 2018 at 7pm
Monday 10 September 2018 at 7pm
Monday 5 November 2018 at 7pm
Monday 14 January 2019 at 7pm
Monday 11 March 2019 at 7pm

- **Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Monday 4 June 2018 at 7pm
Monday 16 July 2018 at 7pm
Monday 17 September 2018 at 7pm
Monday 21 January 2019 at 7pm
Wednesday 6 March 2019 at 7pm

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