

# **WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committees**

### **Annual Reports 2019/20**

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**Foreword by Councillor Pauline Helliars-Symons,  
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny  
Management Committee**

Welcome to the Annual Reports of Wokingham Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees for 2019/20.

The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees is to hold decision makers to account, both inside and outside the Council. The Committees also play a role in developing and reviewing policy and ensuring that the Council and its partners are working effectively to improve services for residents, businesses and visitors to the Borough.

The 2018/19 Annual Reports highlighted a number of major challenges facing the Borough. Most of these challenges remain, with some new ones added to the list. The challenges include financial uncertainty, demand and cost pressures, the funding of social care, health and social care integration, housing numbers, traffic congestion, Climate Emergency and the ongoing impact of Brexit.

In order to meet these challenges the Council will be more innovative and commercial in its approach, ensuring that its decisions focus on residents' key priorities as set out in the new Community Vision and Corporate Delivery Plan. At the same time, the Council will have to focus hard on efficiency, inclusion and sustainability in order to meet the targets in the Climate Emergency Action Plan.

Overview and Scrutiny aims to ensure that decisions are effective and transparent and that public services deliver value for money for local Council Tax payers. In order to achieve this aim the Committees receive regular performance management reports and, in 2019, carried out detailed Scrutiny of the Budget process and the Council's spending plans for the next three years.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committees will continue to demonstrate their value by making recommendations for improvement to services and policies which enhance the quality of life of all the Borough's residents.

The Annual Reports provide a small selection of highlights from the past year which reflect the hard work and commitment of residents, community stakeholders, Members and Officers who contributed to the work of the Committees.

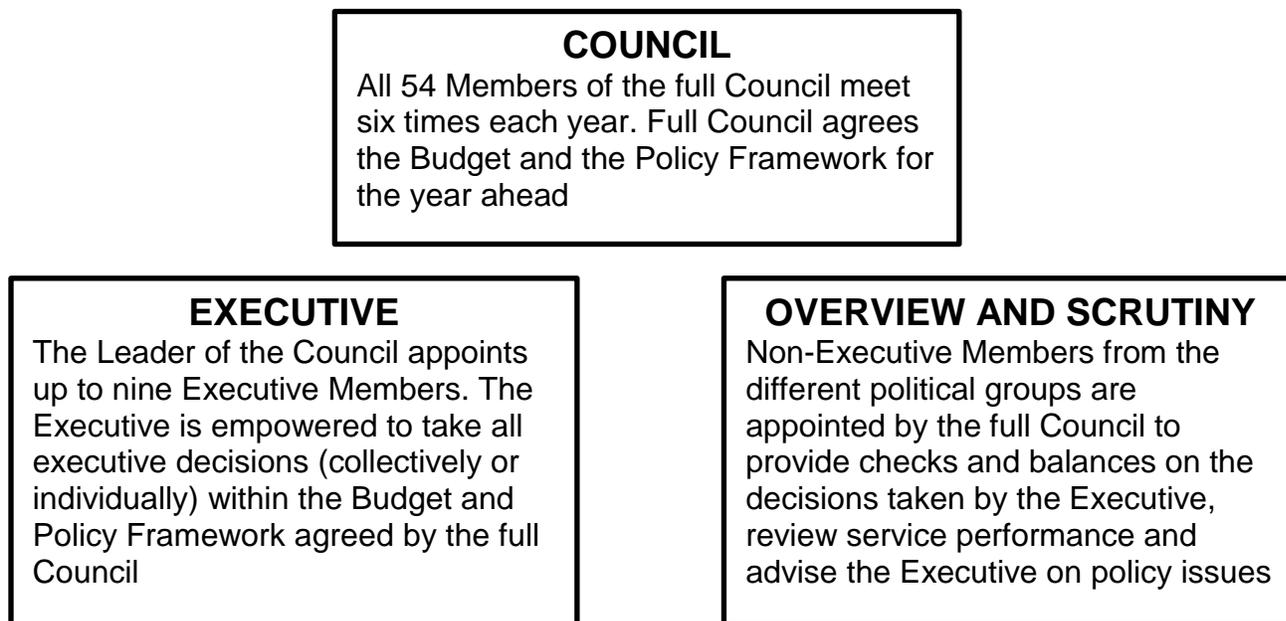
**Pauline Helliars-Symons,  
March 2020**

## SECTION 1 – WHAT IS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY?

Wokingham Borough Council is a large, complex organisation with a thousand employees and an annual budget in excess of £130m. The Borough’s Community Vision (February 2020) is to make the Borough “a great place to live, learn, work and grow and a great 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. Other public service providers such as the NHS, Thames Valley Police and the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service also make key decisions which affect the residents of the Borough. In order to ensure that the Council and other service providers spend public money wisely and make well informed decisions about key services it is essential that an effective system of checks and balances is in place.

A distinction is drawn between “Overview” which focuses on the development of policy and “Scrutiny” which looks at decisions that have been made, or are about to be made, to ensure that they are fit for purpose. In this document “Scrutiny” refers to both Overview and Scrutiny.

The Council’s Executive takes 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:

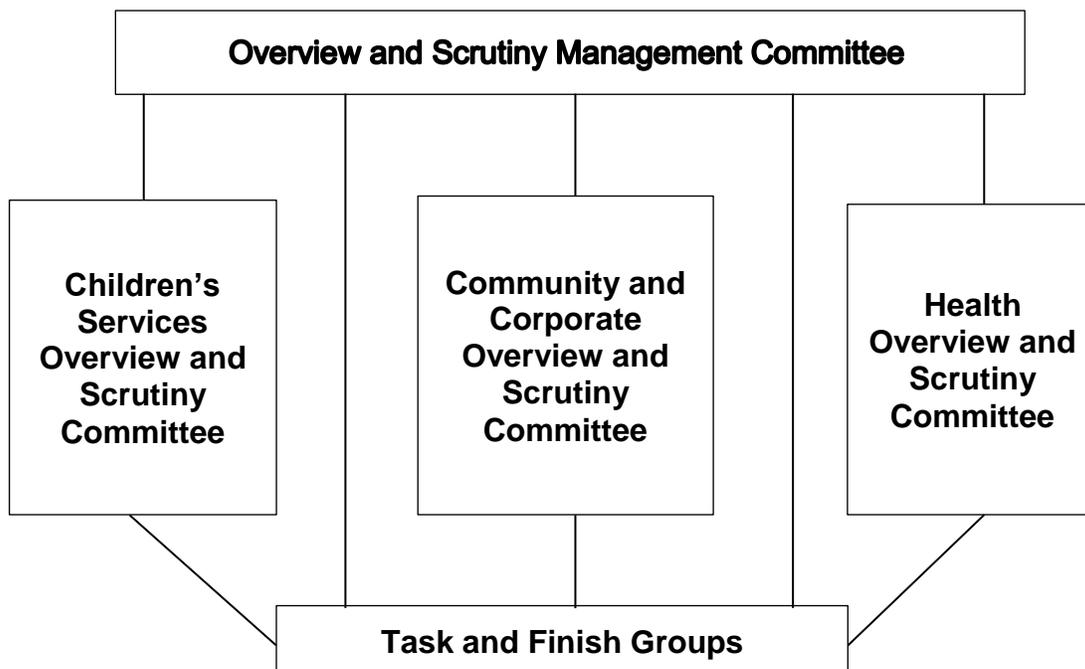


In order to deliver the Overview and Scrutiny function the Council has established the following Committees:

- Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee – responsible for overseeing the 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:



#### **Four Principles of Effective Scrutiny**

- Constructive “critical friend” challenge to the Executive and external service providers;
- Channelling the “voice” of the public and representing all the Borough’s residents;
- Members reaching bipartisan conclusions based on the weight of evidence;
- Driving continuous improvement which promotes community wellbeing and quality of life.

#### **Limitations**

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 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 2

### REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



**Pauline Helliard-Symons, Chairman of the  
Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee**

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has three principal roles. Firstly, to develop and oversee the work programmes of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Secondly to investigate specific issues of concern raised by local residents and community stakeholders. Thirdly, to ensure that Scrutiny Members receive training and support to enable them to carry out their work effectively.

In May 2019 the Government published statutory guidance on the operation of Overview and Scrutiny. A key message in the guidance was the importance of organisational culture to the success of Scrutiny. The Committee addressed this issue by developing a protocol which clarified and strengthened the working relationship between the Council's Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

The Committee considered a wide range of issues during the year including performance of key services, Climate Emergency, traveller encampments, waste and recycling, equalities and the Council's Continuous Improvement Programme. The Committee also monitored progress following its major review of the Grounds Maintenance service.

The Committee also set up two Task and Finish Groups during the year. The first Task and Finish Group scrutinised the Council's approach to the adoption of roads and open spaces following new housing development. This Task and Finish Group received evidence from a wide range of bodies including Town and Parish Councils, major housing developers and Thames Water. The second Task and Finish Group, established in February 2020, will scrutinise the Council's Climate Emergency Action Plan.

As we move into the 2020/21 the Committee will continue to focus on initiatives to strengthen the Overview and Scrutiny process. This will include greater emphasis on pre-decision scrutiny, greater involvement from residents and community groups and further training and support for Overview and Scrutiny Members.

Finally, I would like to thank the Members, Officers, residents, Town and Parish Councils and community groups who contributed their time, effort and knowledge during the year.

**Pauline Helliard-Symons**

## **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 and support for the three Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

### **Membership**

Councillor Pauline Helliard-Symons (Chairman).  
Councillors Alison Swaddle (Vice-Chairman), Chris Bowring, Jenny Cheng, Andy Croy, Paul Fishwick, Jim Frewin, Guy Grandison, Sarah Kerr, Abdul Loyes, Ken Miall, Andrew Mickleburgh (from March 2020) Ian Pittock (until March 2020) and Rachelle Shepherd-Dubey.

**Substitute Members:** Councillors Shirley Boyt, Prue Bray, Carl Doran, Lindsay Ferris, Emma Hobbs and Simon Weeks.

**Officer contact:** Neil Carr            neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk

## **Highlights from the Year**

### **Performance Management**

The Committee received quarterly Performance Management reports setting out details of the Council's performance against a number of financial, staffing and operational indicators. Members used the quarterly data to probe on areas of underperformance and select issues for more in-depth scrutiny.

### **Climate Emergency**

The Committee reviewed the Council's initial Climate Emergency Action Plan which highlighted eight key priority areas including transport, domestic and business energy, reducing waste, engaging with young people and the Local Plan Update. The Committee provided challenge in relation to detailed carbon reduction targets, measures to reduce congestion and the potential benefits of a Green Bank. The Committee considered measures to deliver effective ongoing Scrutiny for this key issue which resulted in the establishment of a Task and Finish Group with the aim of scrutinising the Action Plan and the supporting targets and indicators.

### **Grounds Maintenance**

The Committee monitored progress following its major review into the Grounds Maintenance service in 2018/19. The Committee received feedback that the review had highlighted a number of issues which proved useful in strengthening contract management and the contractor's performance. These included earlier preparation relating to staff and machinery, earlier communication with stakeholders, improved IT systems and more collaborative working with the contractor (Tivoli). Lessons learned following the review had been applied to other outsourced contracts with positive results.

### **Food Waste Collection**

The Committee reviewed the operation of the Council's Food Waste Collection service following its introduction in April 2019. The new service supported the Council's aim of achieving the 50% national recycling target and reducing waste following the declaration of a Climate Emergency

in July 2019. The Committee provided challenge in relation to the implications for residents living in flats, publicity for the scheme and communication with residents and elected Members.

### **Estate Infrastructure Task and Finish Group**

The Committee established a Task and Finish Group to review existing policies and procedures relating to the adoption of new roads, drains, open space and play areas linked to new housing development. This followed concern expressed by local residents living on new estates in the Borough. The Task and Finish Group received evidence from a wide range of stakeholders and interviewed six major housing developers. The Group noted the high level of expertise and commitment demonstrated by Council staff. It made recommendations for improvement relating to public awareness, the WBC website, Section 106 agreements and training for Borough, Town and Parish Members.

### **Member Training**

The Committee recognises the importance of ongoing training and development to ensure that Members' skills and knowledge are constantly upgraded. In June 2019 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. Further training sessions were arranged to support Members involved in Budget Scrutiny and members of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **Scrutiny Impacts**

Assessing the impact of Overview and Scrutiny is not easy. An effective Scrutiny function influences decision making and policy development in a variety of ways. The development of robust challenge, questioning and examination of the issues helps to drive better decision making with greater transparency and accountability. Effective Scrutiny should have a defined impact on the ground, with the Committees making recommendations that make a tangible difference to the work of the Council and other public service providers.

Over the past year the following impacts are highlighted:

- Grass Cutting Review – recommendations led to improved service delivery, improved working relationship with the contractor and improved information for residents and Members. Lessons learned from the review were applied to other major outsourced contracts with positive results.
- Task and Finish Group report on estate infrastructure – the report highlighted the high quality service already provided by WBC. It recommended improved information/maps on the WBC website and greater clarity on the responsibilities of WBC, housebuilders and homebuyers. The Task and Finish Group focussed on an issue of public concern and made constructive recommendations for improvement.
- Executive-Overview and Scrutiny Protocol – improved working relationships – clarity about roles and responsibilities. The protocol promoted greater parity between the Executive and Overview and Scrutiny functions and highlighted the benefits of a positive, supportive organisational culture which is essential for effective decision making and Scrutiny.

## SECTION 3

### REPORT OF THE CHILDREN'S SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



**Alison Swaddle, Chairman of the 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.

The Committee has a standing Part 2 session to review schools causing concern and at risk of underperforming. Local ward Members are invited to attend the meetings and take part in the discussions on this item.

All members of the Committee and their substitutes are invited to 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.

I would like to thank all members of the Committee, and the substitutes 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.

**Alison Swaddle**

## **Remit of the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutiny and 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:**

Councillors: Alison Swaddle (Chairman), Jenny Cheng (Vice-Chairman), Prue Bray, Andy Croy, Pauline Helliard-Symons, Ken Miall, Andrew Mickleburgh, Malcolm Richards

**Parent Governor:** Darryl Ward

### **Substitute Members:**

Councillors: Emma Hobbs, Barrie Patman, David Hare, Sarah Kerr, Shirley Boyt, Carl Doran

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

**Officer contact:** Luciane Bowker [luciane.bowker@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:luciane.bowker@wokingham.gov.uk)

## **Highlights from the Year**

### **Performance Management**

At each meeting the Committee reviewed the performance of Children's Services in relation to Key Performance Indicators. Members challenged the Service, asking for the most up to date information to be presented. This issue has been acknowledged and the Service is striving to provide the most up to date information where possible. The layout of the reports has also been updated and now includes trends and narratives.

### **Schools' Performance**

The Committee received regular Schools' Performance data reports and summaries of recent School Ofsted reports. In the Part 2 session of the meeting the Committee continued to challenge the Service regarding 'schools that are causing concern' and how the service is supporting those schools to improve. Local ward Members are invited to attend this session. In view of the fact that the Local Authority has limited powers in relation to academy schools, the Committee decided to invite the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) to attend once a year as a standing item. The Committee is seeking quality assurance in relation to the academy schools in the Borough. The Committee also continued to closely monitor the improvement plan for the Northern House School.

### **Ofsted SEND Inspection**

The Service underwent a SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disability) Ofsted inspection in March 2019, and a number of improvement areas were identified. The Committee continued to monitor the improvement plan that resulted from the inspection, including the development of a SEND Strategy. Part of the strategy includes the creation of more places in

Addington School and a bid to create a new special school in partnership with Reading and West Berkshire. The Committee will continue to monitor the implementation of the strategy.

### **Children's Continuous Improvement Plan**

The Committee received information about the Service's priorities and the challenges faced in achieving those priorities with limited resources. The Service's aspiration is to achieve a 'Good' Ofsted rating at the next inspection. The Committee welcomed the appointment of a settled senior management team to support the improvement journey.

### **Take-up of Sports and Leisure Activities by Children and Young People in the Borough**

The Committee received a very informative report containing details of the offer of sports activities in the Borough. The Committee was pleased to note the variety of activities on offer. However, even though the take up of exercise in the Borough is higher than the national average, this is still low. The Committee challenged the Leisure Service to encourage more participation in exercise in the Borough.

### **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)**

The JSNA report contained a list of 50 indicators which highlighted areas of inequalities, population needs, and service gaps across all areas of health and social care. The Committee was concerned with the high number of self-harm related hospital admissions and decided to call a joint meeting of the Children's and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees to look into mental health services in the Borough. This meeting will take place on 31 March 2020.

### **Youth Offending Service**

The Committee scrutinised information in relation to the Borough's Youth Offending Service. This included a review of financial arrangements and offered a summary of partnerships and strategies designed to improve outcomes for young offenders and reduce re-offending.

### **Corporate Parenting Board (CPB) Review**

The Committee endorsed the proposal to improve CPB's structure. The number of CPB meetings has been reduced to four meetings a year, and an operational board has been created to facilitate communication with Children In Care and Care Leavers. The Committee will continue to monitor the work undertaken by CPB.

### **Wokingham Young Carers Service**

The Committee learnt about the offer to young carers in the Borough and suggested that schools and GPs be encouraged to liaise with the Local Authority in identifying young carers.

## **Scrutiny Impacts**

- Performance management – improved layout and content to provide more up-to-date information, trends and service narratives. Improved transparency and accountability.
- SEND Strategy – challenge to the emerging strategy on issues such as the timeliness of Education Health and Care Plans and engagement with parents.
- Continuous Improvement Plan – ongoing scrutiny of the Children's Services Improvement Plan to support the ambition of achieving a 'Good' Ofsted rating.

## SECTION 4

### REPORT OF THE COMMUNITY AND CORPORATE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



**Guy Grandison, Chairman of the  
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.

This year marked the first time that Overview and Scrutiny have looked at the proposed Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) in detail, prior to its journey through the February 2020 Executive and Budget Council meetings. This exercise has added value to the Budget setting process, by way of challenging the Executive Members and Directors to explain the rationale for spending proposals in a clear and understandable way.

The Committee considered a range of other issues during the year including flood prevention, burial ground provision, town centre regeneration projects, WBC's Property Investment Group, and a range of highways issues such as civil parking enforcement and the Borough Wide Parking Management Action Plan Consultation.

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 other stakeholders who took part in our meetings for their valuable contributions during the year.

**Guy Grandison**

## **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 Guy Grandison (Chairman).

Councillors Ken Miall (Vice-Chairman), Keith Baker (from January 2020), Shirley Boyt, Paul Fishwick, Clive Jones, Graham Howe, Abdul Loyes and Malcolm Richards (until June 2019).

**Substitute Members:** Councillors Andy Croy, Carl Doran, Pauline Helliard-Symons, Emma Hobbs, Rachelle Shepherd-DuBey and Caroline Smith

**Officer contact:** Callum Wernham: [callum.wernham@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:callum.wernham@wokingham.gov.uk)

## **Highlights from the Year**

### **Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2020-23**

The Committee undertook a detailed overview of the proposed 2020-23 MTFP. Executive Members and Directors were invited to attend the meetings to present their bids and explain in detail how the requested funding would be used to deliver key services. Members welcomed the inclusion of 'plain English' detailed bid sheets which provided key figures and descriptive narratives in a format that Members and members of the public could understand and interpret. The Committee probed bids within key service areas, including social work staffing within Children's Services, care and support within Adults Social Services, income generation within Corporate Services, and substantial capital bids within Customer and Localities. The role of the Committee was to challenge assumptions within the budget setting process and to make key decision makers think about their proposals from a different perspective. The Committee welcomed this new level of transparency on the proposed MTFP and budget setting process, and hoped that this would continue and evolve in future years.

### **Burial Ground Capacity**

The Committee considered an update on burial ground capacity within the Borough. The update highlighted a lack of Muslim burial plot provision within the Borough and sufficient provision of other burial plots in the medium term. This was, however, reliant on new burial ground provision at Ruscombe and the proposed new crematorium being progressed. Members asked that a further update be provided to the Committee's March 2020 meeting, and considered setting up a task and finish group to explore further options for burial ground provision within the Borough.

### **Market Place Highways Improvement Project**

The Committee considered the final road safety audit and an update on the financing of the Market Place Highways Improvement Project. The Committee had previously considered the lessons learned report and interim road safety audit, and had requested that the final road safety audit and financial position return to Committee. Members probed the safety of the final

delivered scheme and were informed that no serious trips or falls had been reported in recent months. The Committee requested that WBC's consultation and engagement list be regularly reviewed and updated, with Members, Officers and members of the public invited to suggest further relevant groups and organisations to be added.

### **Borough-wide Parking Management Action Plan – Results of Member Consultation**

The Committee received an update on the results of the initial Member consultation regarding the Borough-wide Parking Management Action Plan. Members were informed that the absence of a defined and comprehensive parking service plan had contributed to the confusing parking management landscape for the Council's residents. This had made a clear case to develop a comprehensive and inclusive Borough-wide Parking Management Action Plan. The Committee asked that the Executive Member for Highways and Transport engage with the Town and Parish Councils with regards to the developing plan, and the consultation be re-opened to both newly elected and existing Members.

### **Civil Parking Enforcement**

The Committee received an update on the Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) strategy which went live in October 2017. The update gave details of improvements to the traffic flow within the Borough made by challenging drivers' previous parking behaviours and increasing awareness by way of warning notices. The Committee asked for more detail with regards to plans for proposed CCTV installation at schools to increase parking compliance. Members probed the high levels of parking charge notices issued at country parks within the Borough and requested more data to this regard.

### **Property Investment Group**

The Committee received an update on WBC's Property Investment Group (PIG). Members probed the strategy of the PIG, including debt repayment rates and the management strategy, which involved both entry and exit of investments. The Committee were informed that the PIG was forecasted to return approximately two percent on investment per annum.

### **Scrutiny Impacts**

- Budget and Budget setting process transparency – information regarding the Budget and the Budget setting process has been thoroughly reviewed by the Committee, and made publically available in an easy to read 'plain English' format. Transparency around crucial issues such as the Budget forms an essential part of the checks and balances that Overview and Scrutiny oversees.
- Close working relationship with Executive Members and Directors – Executive Members and Directors were invited to, and attended, a number of Committee meetings. Answers to Member queries were frank and detailed, providing a solid foundation for transparent Overview and Scrutiny.
- Oversight of delivery of key Council Services – continued monitoring of key Council Services to ensure that they are delivering value for money for residents. Probing Services to think about service delivery and value for money is key in delivering cost effective services for residents.

## SECTION 5

### REPORT OF THE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



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

This year the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee has focused on health and social care matters that affect residents, working closely with key partners.

Briefings were received from a number of bodies including the NHS Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group and the Council's Planning and Health Liaison Teams. The Committee also invited the Executive Member for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Services and the Director of Adult Services to the March 2020 meeting to discuss Adult Social Care and the challenges around this area, locally.

Throughout the year, the Committee maintained its focus on significant issues of concern for local residents such as the availability of GP appointments and the impact of delayed transfers of care.

Members continued to receive updates on the work of Healthwatch Wokingham Borough, the independent consumer champion created to gather and represent the views of Wokingham Borough residents, at most meetings.

In February 2020, the Committee arranged a training session, provided by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, which focussed on emerging national and local issues relating to health and social care and gave Members the opportunity to discuss potential future Scrutiny items.

Finally, I would like to thank the members of the Committee, Officers, residents and other stakeholders who took part in meetings for their contribution throughout the year.

**Ken Miall**

## **Remit of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) scrutinises issues relating to the planning, provision and operation of health and wellbeing services in the Borough. This includes acute and community health services, adult social care services, family and public health services and health related services commissioned jointly by the Council, health bodies and the voluntary sector. The Committee exercises powers conferred to it through the Health and Social Care Act 2012 and the Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013.

### **Membership**

Councillor Ken Miall (Chairman).

Councillors Abdul Loyes (Vice Chairman), Rachel Bishop-Firth, Jenny Cheng, Jim Frewin (January 2020), Guy Grandison, Clive Jones, Adrian Mather, Bill Soane and Alison Swaddle

**Substitute Members:** Gary Cowan, David Hare, Emma Hobbs, Tahir Maher and Malcolm Richards

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

**Officer contact:** Madeleine Shopland [madeleine.shopland@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:madeleine.shopland@wokingham.gov.uk)

## **Highlights from the Year**

### **Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board**

The Committee has continued to scrutinise the work of the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board. The Committee requested a further update on the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2018-21 priority of reducing social isolation and loneliness. Members were briefed on the work that the Council and its partners were undertaking to reduce social isolation and loneliness, including the SHINE Over 60s programme and Ageing Actively Wokingham.

### **Better Care Fund**

The Committee received a report highlighting Wokingham's Better Care Fund Programme performance for 2018-19 (financial year), including progress of integration, challenges, performance metrics and finances. Members were informed of which schemes were progressing well and were pleased to note that the Falls and Frailty initiative had reduced conveyance to hospital rates by 30%.

### **Delayed Transfers of Care**

The Committee received a presentation on delayed transfers of care and how the Health Liaison Team worked with hospitals (primarily Royal Berkshire and Frimley) to agree and arrange safe and timely discharges from the hospitals.

### **Introduction to the Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership**

The Berkshire West Clinical Commissioning Group provided a presentation on the development of Primary Care Networks and Neighbourhoods within the Wokingham Borough

and linkages with the wider geographical framework – Health and Wellbeing Boards, Berkshire West Integrated Care Partnership and the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West (BOB) Integrated Care System.

### **Health and Planning**

Members were briefed on the impact of health and wellbeing matters in the planning process. They were informed that the Council tried to have conversations with partners such as the NHS as early as possible regarding the potential allocations to inform and influence service provision.

### **Healthwatch**

The Committee received frequent updates on the work of Healthwatch Wokingham Borough, including updates on issues such as consultation on the NHS Long Term Plan, community investment projects, helping patients take their medication and medicine compliance aids.

### **Children and Young People Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health**

HOSC and the Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be holding a joint meeting in late March to look in more detail at the issue of children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing and services available locally. In addition, the JSNA highlighted that the rate of self-harm related hospital admissions among 15-19 year olds in the Borough was significantly worse than the national average. Members have requested an update on what action is being taken to establish the reason behind this increase in self-harm related hospital admissions, and to reduce the rate.

### **Suicide Prevention**

The Committee requested an update on suicide prevention measures and agreed to monitor future progress on this issue.

### **Access to GP Appointments**

Throughout the year, Members continued to explore the issue of the availability of GP appointments, which was a key concern for many residents.

### **Scrutiny Impacts**

- Channelling the voice of local residents, ensuring that their needs are considered as part of the commissioning and delivery of health services which are effective and safe. Working with Healthwatch Wokingham to raise the profile of issues raised by local service users.
- Developing an overview of the integration of health, public health and social care. Scrutinising the work of the Wokingham Borough Wellbeing Board and the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy with a focus on priority issues such as isolation and loneliness.
- Promoting transparency and accountability by scrutinising performance data relating to local health services and service providers. Triangulating the performance information provided against the experience of service users and carers for example in relation to delayed transfers of care.

## SECTION 6

### 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](http://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](http://www.wokingham.gov.uk/council-and-meetings/decisions/ask-for-a-scrutiny-review)

During 2020/21 the Council will continue to use 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](mailto:neil.carr@wokingham.gov.uk) or by post:

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