

Joint Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2014/15

Report by the Director for Digital and Resources

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 As part of good practice and a requirement in the Council's Governance Action Plan, the Councils are required to produce a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual report for 2014/15.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee has once again undertaken a great deal of work during 2014/15 as part of the 'Holding to Account/Challenge' role. A summary of that work is contained in the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Annual report for 2014/15 which is attached as an appendix to this report. As well as being a requirement of the Governance Action Plan, it is good practice to produce an Annual report on the work of Overview and Scrutiny which can help publicise and promote the work undertaken amongst the local community and local partners.
- 2.2 A topic suggestion form is included as part of the Annual report to allow members of the public and/or local partners to put forward suggestions for future scrutiny reviews. This will encourage people to take part in the scrutiny process and also help in enabling people to take part in the democratic process and influence decision making.

3.0 Proposals

- 3.1 The draft Annual report is submitted to the Committee for its approval in accordance with the terms of the Council's constitution.
- 3.2 The final Annual report will be made available on the Council's websites. Paper copies can be made available upon request.

4.0 Legal

- 4.1 The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee is required to produce an Annual report in accordance with good practice and the Governance Action Plan. The

Council meetings in July will be required to receive the Annual report in accordance with the Council Constitutions.

5.0 Financial implications

5.1 There are no direct financial implications to consider within this report. All copies of the Annual report will be in electronic form.

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 That the Committee approves the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual report for 2014/15.

6.2 That the Committee recommends the report be submitted to Full Council(s)

Local Government Act 1972

Background Papers:

None

26 June 2015

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Schedule of Other Matters

1.0 Council Priority

1.1 The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers issues which are Council priorities.

2.0 Specific Action Plans

2.1 Matter considered and no issues identified.

3.0 Sustainability Issues

3.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

4.0 Equality Issues

4.1 Matter considered. Some of the issues which the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has considered do have equalities implications.

5.0 Community Safety Issues (Section 17)

5.1 Matter considered. Some of the issues considered by the Committee during the year do have community safety implications.

6.0 Human Rights Issues

6.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

7.0 Reputation

7.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

8.0 Consultations

8.1 Matter considered. Some of the issues considered by the Committee during 2014/15 have involved consultations.

9.0 Risk Assessment

9.1 Any areas of risk are identified within the appendices to this report.

10.0 Health & Safety Issues

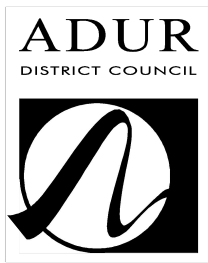
10.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

11.0 Procurement Strategy

11.1 Matter considered and no issues identified

12.0 Partnership Working

- 12.1 Matter considered. The majority of issues considered are joint Adur and Worthing issues and also the Committee does undertake some joint work in partnership with other Councils.



Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual report 2014/15

Message from the Chairmen

In 2014/15 the Joint Committee has maintained its valuable role as the watchdog of both Councils, ensuring that the Joint Cabinets (Joint Strategic Committee) are scrutinised for the the decisions made on behalf of the residents and to ensure that there is a greater transparency of the process.

The Joint Committee has played its part in scrutinising a number of issues. Successes in 2014/15 include:-

- Interviewing and 'holding to account' the Adur and Worthing Council Leaders and Executive Members to ensure that they are delivering on the Council's priorities, their decision-making on service provision is transparent and provides value for money for the benefit of Adur and Worthing residents.
- Reviewing and 'holding to account' the work of the Adur and Worthing Community Safety Partnership and its Chairman in accordance with powers under the Police and Justice Act 2006.

- Monitoring the progress in implementing the recommendations from previous joint reviews on Fuel Poverty, Economic Recovery and Planning Enforcement.
- **Reviewing the progress made to improve the ICT infrastructure to prevent a recurrence of the ICT failure which hit both Councils in previous years.** As part of this, the Committee has been briefed on the implementations of changes to the Councils Digital transformation including the development of a digital strategy.
- Scrutinising the Council's first Public Health Plan which had been produced in responses to legislative changes in public health.
- Continuing to monitor **West Sussex County Council's implementation of a new Age of School Transfer Policy** in Worthing. This follows on from a review of the Age of School Transfer Policy in Worthing which was undertaken by the Committee.
- Scrutinising the Councils **outline budget forecast and budget strategy for 2015/16 to 2019/20.**
- Continuing to review the provision of the **Worthing allotments service** and in particular the production of an allotments strategy for Worthing allotments.
- Monitoring the way in which both Councils let contracts and the improvements that have been made to the service in the previous 12-18 months to ensure value for money.
- Providing policy advice to the Joint Strategic Committee on the **Open Space, Sport & Recreation Facilities study review.**

- In response to concerns about the **lack of community beds provision in the Adur District**, the Committee has interviewed representatives from the West Sussex Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG). Feedback provided to the CCG will help the NHS understand more about local needs and provide more responsive services.
- Holding to account and scrutinising the work of the **Sussex Police and Crime Commissioner, Katy Bourne, and local Police Commander**.
- Reviewing the **operation of Worthing Theatres and the previous years budget overspends**. This detailed review by both Worthing and Adur Councillors produced a number of significant recommendations which will help improve the budgetary control and working practices within the theatres. The Committee will continue to monitor to ensure the implementation of the recommendations from the review.
- Finally, but by no means least, the Committee has undertaken a **feasibility review of the financial options in selling off the beach huts on the foreshore**. The findings from this review will help the Councils in developing future budget proposals.

**Councillors Liza McKinney and Roy Barraclough
Joint Chairmen of the Adur and Worthing Joint Overview and
Scrutiny Committee in 2014/15**

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

Overview and Scrutiny is a process by which decision-makers are accountable to local people via their elected representatives, for improving outcomes for the District and its residents. The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee does not make decisions but seeks to influence those who do by considering the major issues affecting the areas and making recommendations about how services can be improved.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a number of different roles including:

- **Representing the views and wishes of Adur and Worthing residents about the services which they receive;**
- **Holding the Joint Strategic Committee to account and reviewing its decisions;**
- **Scrutinising the work of the Partnerships in Adur and Worthing;**
- **Helping to develop new policies and reviewing existing ones; and**
- **Monitoring the budgets and performance.**

There is one Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee made up of sixteen Councillors (eight Adur and eight Worthing) representing wards across the District. The Committee as a whole meets at least six times a year and the meetings are open to the public.

Membership of the Committee in 2014/15:

Adur District – Councillors Liza McKinney (Co-Chairman), Ken Bishop, Ann Bridges, James Butcher, Stephen Chipp (Part year), Brian Coomber (Part year), Liz Haywood, Emily Hilditch and Rod Hotton

Worthing Borough – Councillors Roy Barraclough (Co-Chairman), Keith Bickers, Ed Crouch, Charles James (Part year), Dr Heather Mercer, Mark Nolan, Victoria Taylor (Part year), Vino Vinojan and Keith Sunderland

Have your say...

You can find out more about our work on the internet at www.adur-worthing.gov.uk where you can look at the reports we have received, our recommendations and the minutes of our meetings.

Adur District Council and Worthing Borough Council are committed to being more responsive to the way in which they provide services. They want more people to feel that they have the opportunity to influence matters that affect them. The Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee can look at these issues and the Committee would like to give more people the chance to contribute to its work.

Suggest a topic for scrutiny

The Joint Committee reviews its Work Programme throughout the year to make sure that it is working on topics that it can make a major impact on. If there is an issue or service which you think that Councillors should review, please return the form below to tell us about it.

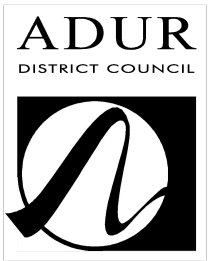
Come along to a meeting

The Committee meets at least six times a year at either the Adur Civic Centre, Ham Road, Shoreham-by-Sea (New Shoreham Centre, Pond Lane with effect from October 2015) or the Town Hall, Chapel Road, Worthing. The meetings are open to the public and details of the meetings can be found on the Council's website at www.adur-worthing.gov.uk

Tell us what you think

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a Work Programme that lists the topics and issues which the Committee is going to look at in the near future (a copy of the current Programme is attached to this report). If you have a particular interest in a topic which the Committee is looking at, the Committee would like to hear from you. If you would like a copy of the Work programme, please contact the Policy Officer using the details below.

To find out more you can contact Mark Lowe, Policy Officer at Worthing Town Hall on 01903 221009 or on mark.lowe@adur-worthing.gov.uk



Worthing

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

TOPIC SUGGESTION FORM

Name

Organisation or member of the Public?

Tel: Email:

1. What is the heading for your topic?

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2. What is the background to the issue? What is the current situation/problem?

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3. How do you think that Overview and Scrutiny can make a difference and add value to this issue?

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Thank you for your suggestion

We will make every effort to cover as many topics as possible as thoroughly as possible. We will, however, prioritise those topics we feel can contribute to and benefit Adur and Worthing residents.

Please return this form to Mark Lowe, Policy Officer at Adur and Worthing Councils, Town Hall, Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 1HA or mark.lowe@adur-worthing.gov.uk

