

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY UPDATE

14 February 2018

## 1 Introduction

This report summarises the activities of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee during January. Individual reports from the scrutiny chairs are referenced as follows:

<b>Section 2</b>	Cllr Patrick Molyneux, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
<b>Section 3</b>	Cllr Brian Robinson, Chair of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Section 4</b>	Cllr Carole Allaway Martin, Chair of the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Section 5</b>	Cllr Robert Bird, Chair of the Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Section 6</b>	Cllr Dave Norman, Chair of Economic Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee
<b>Section 7</b>	Cllr Will Windsor Clive, Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel

## 2 Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (24 January) – Cllr Patrick Molyneux

### 2.1 Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy

On 10 January, the Committee held a 'Budget Scrutiny day' where Cabinet Members and Directors for each scrutiny committee were invited to discuss the budget. OSMC members were in attendance throughout the day in order to identify any recurring themes and trends. Following that day, a report was compiled and circulated to Members for their comments and amendments. This report aimed to draw out the key observations and comments made in response to the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy. Cabinet would agree a proposed budget on 31 January to be approved by full Council on 14 February 2018. The Committee were asked to agree their report to be presented to Cabinet.

Members noted that the Cabinet papers had been published with an updated MTFS and Council Strategy. The Committee stated that they were pleased that the comments made by OSMC during the Budget Scrutiny day on the need for investment in Children's Services had been taken on board by the Cabinet.

The Committee agreed that the draft report was an accurate record of the Budget Scrutiny day. It was therefore resolved that the Committee agreed the Budget Scrutiny Report to go to Cabinet. (The report can be read within the annexes to the Medium Term Financial Strategy in the Council papers).

In addition to the report the Committee agreed that they would recommend to Cabinet that the funds received as a result of the Business Rates Retention Pilot be displayed clearly and transparently within the budget. They requested a briefing at a future Committee meeting on the Pilot.

### **3 Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee (11 January) - Cllr Brian Robinson**

#### **3.1 Children's Services Improvement Board Update**

The committee engaged in a robust discourse with the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People. Whilst informative committee members did not feel that the report had given a clear picture of whether we were already seeing improvement in performance/practice.

The Cabinet Member reported that previously some agencies had misunderstood the thresholds. Before the Ofsted inspection there had been an 80% attrition rate in the number of contacts received. This had been due to a misunderstanding by some partner agencies as to our thresholds and how they were applied. Workshops had been held with partners to help with their understanding. Liquid Logic has also been reconfigured to enable better tracking of referrals through the system. Contacts are down from 2314 in March 2017 to 929 in December 2017.

The number of children in need is coming down; the number of children in care is going up; and the number of children subject to a child protection plan has also gone up. These are positive indicators as this means that children are not languishing in the system inappropriately but are where they should be. There are also no cases being managed by managers, and as of December 2017 individual Social Worker caseloads had reduced to the target figure of 18.

The DfE had visited the council in December 2017. They recognised that there have been improvements in some areas but also identified the areas where work was still required. This report has not been shared with the committee as it has not as yet been released by the Improvement Board Chairman.

The committee was also updated on workforce issues. It was also explained that work was in place to re-design children's services to enable better delivery of

services. This would be more expensive, but would enable a better management structure, but more importantly a more effective service for our children and young people.

The committee would continue to closely monitor this work.

### 3.2. Quality Audit Framework: Progress Update Report

The committee had received an initial update on this area at its meeting in November 2017. Members had been disappointed with the picture of practice that that report had described and were disappointed that quality audits were not embedded within practice.

The report received this month demonstrated that there has been a lot of activity to improve this position. There is now a core group of 11 auditors, and Consultant Social Workers are working directly with front line social workers. An external consultant is moderating audits, and has identified that these were good or satisfactory. However, it also identified variable practice and that more developmental work is required.

The committee noted the next steps identified in the report and will want to see improvement in practice identified in future reports.

### 3.3. Adoption and Fostering Services

The committee received a detailed presentation from the Head of Service – Permanence. The presentation slides are available on the council's website.

The Ofsted Inspection report classified the Adoption Service as Good. It was clear from the discussion at the meeting that this service is committed to delivering the best placements for our children. It is important to understand that adoption is not the only route to permanence planning. Courts required that precedence be given to permanence in kinship arrangements wherever realistically possible. This means that there has been an increase in Special Guardianship Orders.

Members were informed that the early permanence programme was making a real difference to both children and foster carers, as was effective use of the Adoption Support Fund. It was concerning to hear that there is uncertainty with regard to the Adoption Support Fund post 2020. It was also disappointing to hear that each year the criteria for this fund had been tightened.

The regional adoption arrangements, Adoption West, were explained, and the committee agreed to receive an update later this year to see how the new arrangements were working.

The Fostering Service is also a service committed to delivering the best outcomes for our children and young people. Recruitment of foster carers is a challenge. In particular, the service struggles to find enough placements for teenagers, parent and baby placements, children with very complex needs and those with high risk behaviours.

Following consultation with foster carers changes to the payment structure will come into effect from April 2018. These changes will make the process fairer, less bureaucratic and more efficient.

The Head of Service informed the committee that she was aware that a Foster Carer union had been established and in relation to this was working with the Fostering Network. The service had also been mindful of this when looking at the payment structure. She informed members that at a recent meeting with Foster Carers they had indicated that they were satisfied with their current remuneration package.

#### **4 Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee (9 January) – Cllr Carole Allaway Martin**

##### **4.1 Health and Wellbeing for the future: Community Hospital Services in the Forest of Dean - Consultation Outcome Report**

Committee members engaged in a detailed debate on this issue. The summary below has been sent to the Gloucestershire Care Services NHS Trust and Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group Boards to inform their decision making process on this matter.

*The committee is a statutory consultee on any substantial development of the health service in Gloucestershire. The consultation on Health and Wellbeing for the future: Community Hospitals in the Forest of Dean was launched at the meeting of the committee on 12 September 2017, and the outcome report of this consultation was received at the committee meeting on 9 January 2018.*

*The preferred option that was consulted on was to invest in a new community hospital in the Forest of Dean which would replace the Dilke Memorial Hospital and Lydney and District Hospital. The committee's role in this stage of the development of this proposal was:-*

- *to confirm whether it was satisfied that the consultation process was undertaken in line with statutory requirements and was appropriate and proportionate; and,*
- *to feedback on key issues that it would wish to have fully considered by the Gloucestershire Care Services NHS Trust (GCS) and Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Groups (GCCG) Boards within their decision making process.*

*The committee received a detailed presentation from the GCCG and GCS on the consultation process (including the engagement activity) and the main findings from the consultation.*

*The concerns raised by committee members during the debate reflected those identified in the consultation outcome report:-*

- *The number of beds*
- *Transport issues*
- *Housing developments (including the impact of the removal of tolls on the Severn Bridge by the end of 2018)*
- *Insufficient detail overall*
- *A lack of clarity as to why the shared investment suggestion is not viable*

*The committee agreed that it was satisfied that the consultation process was undertaken in line with statutory requirements.*

*However, whilst agreeing that the consultation process was appropriate and proportionate, committee members were clear that they had serious concerns with the wider aspects of the consultation, as listed above, and that they expect the GCS and GCCG Boards to give these matters due consideration during their decision making process. The committee is also clear that it expects to be kept informed of progress.*

#### 4.2 South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust - Performance Report

The committee was updated on the Ambulance Response Programme (ARP), in particular the new ambulance response standards. Members will recall that the Trust was part of the initial pilot of the ARP. The committee was informed that the Trust has seen improvements in productivity and efficiency, from the initial pilot, with, on average, less vehicles being sent to each incident, freeing up resources to attend more patients.

Five committee members had recently visited the Trust's Clinical Hub at Bradley Stoke. These members had been impressed with the professionalism of the emergency call handlers and clinicians. They had also been impressed with the

resilience measures that had been built into the design of the building; these measures had proved their worth when there had been a power outage at the Trust's Exeter hub. Additional measures have now been put in place at Exeter. Committee members will receive the outcome report from the official investigation into this matter.

#### 4.3. Quarter 2 Adult Social Care Performance Report

The committee was pleased to hear from the Deputy Director Adult Social Care that he had taken steps to get the reporting line for these reports to be in line with other performance reports.

The Deputy Director informed the committee that the use of residential care had stabilised in this quarter. The committee reiterated its concerns with regard to performance against targets related to the reassessment of needs. Members were informed of the activity that is in place to address these issues and the challenges around how these metrics were measured. It was agreed that more detail on this work would be included in the performance report to be received by the committee in March 2018.

#### 4.4. GCCG Chair/Accountable Officer Report

The committee questioned whether the Winter Plan was working. Members were informed that it has been challenging, particularly between Christmas and New Year, but this was the most robust winter so far for Gloucestershire. The Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (GHNHSFT) informed members that the Trust was the last in the region to escalate to level 4, and were back to level 2 in 2 days. The 4 hour A & E standard had been met in November 2017, and this continued into December 2017.

Members will be aware that NHS England had issued a directive for the cancellation of all non-urgent operations. The committee was informed that GHNHSFT had been allowed to apply local discretion and had therefore continued to perform operations; out-patient clinics had also continued. 80 routine operations had been performed every day. This did mean that 14 were cancelled but due to winter planning patients had been given advance notice. GHNHSFT was also the only major centre undertaking trauma and orthopaedic operations on 2 January 2018.

## **5 Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee (17 January) - Cllr Rob Bird**

### 5.1 Motion 798: Gloucestershire Flood and Community Resilience

David Parish, Strategic Flood Risk Management Officer, and John Beard, Assistant Chief Fire Officer, presented a report to the Committee on Gloucestershire flood and community resilience. The report can be accessed at the following link:

<http://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=673&MId=8742&Ver=4>

Motion 798: Gloucestershire Flood and Community Resilience was referred to the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee by full Council at its meeting in September 2017. The Committee considered the motion and agreed that a report outlining Gloucestershire's flood resilience, Gloucestershire's role as lead local flood authority, and how the flood levy has been used, would be brought to the Committee meeting in January 2018.

Cllr Kate Haigh attended the meeting, as the proposer of the motion, to contribute to the debate.

The Committee was informed how flood risk has been managed since the extreme flooding event experienced in Gloucestershire in July 2007, and recognised that there has been over £98 million of public and private investment in Gloucestershire flood alleviation projects over the last 10 years.

A number of current and proposed Gloucestershire County Council flood risk management schemes were highlighted to the Committee, particularly that flood alleviation schemes at Podsmead and Hucclecote are being investigated.

The Committee noted the strategies that have been implemented to improve local resilience to flooding, including improvements to the Emergency Management Centre and rest centres, and promoting community resilience by providing guidance in the form of a booklet and a website.

Members discussed the report in depth, and recognised that Gloucestershire's flood resilience had improved significantly since 2007. It was felt that communities are better prepared and more aware of flooding now than in 2007, and several members thanked officers at Gloucestershire County Council and across partner agencies for their work to develop schemes to protect local communities from flooding.

Although significant progress has been made to improve the County's resilience to flooding, the Committee also acknowledged that further measures are required to protect homes that are still at risk from flooding. The Committee noted that there is an increasing interest in the development of upper catchment soft flood alleviation schemes, and noted that the Stroud Valleys Rural

Sustainable Drainage project has received national recognition as a model of best practice.

Cllr Haigh expressed her concern regarding the reduction in employees at both the district and county councils to support local communities in the event of another extreme flooding event, and where communities without parish councils can seek support on flooding.

It was explained that in the case of an extreme flooding event, Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service can have up to 300 boots on the ground within 30 minutes and that all firefighters are trained in water awareness. It was also explained that in the absence of parish councils, the district councils have a responsibility to support local communities, and that there are other local community groups that can assist in a response to a flood.

It was agreed that these points of clarification to Cllr Haigh's concerns will be included in the report and attached to the minute book.

The Committee noted the report.

## 5.2 Road Safety Review

The Committee received an update from John Beard on changes being made to the delivery of road safety initiatives. Following the withdrawal of the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner from the Road Safety Partnership in 2017, a review of road safety and related activities was carried out. The review was also an opportunity to consider the challenges facing Gloucestershire over the next five to ten years and to ensure road safety functions are integrated effectively to address these challenges.

Changes to the delivery of road safety initiatives include mainstreaming road safety functions within the core work of the Council by relocating staff into the teams responsible for highways, integrated transport and development management. A new ThinkTravel Coordinator post will also be created to ensure that work streams across the team are effective, and Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service will continue to work with partners to explore and deliver educational packages.

The Committee discussed the report. It was noted that blue light collaboration will continue moving forward, and noted that a Gloucestershire Emergency Services Collaboration Governance Board has been set up.

The Committee noted that the review and all subsequent changes will be fully implemented by the end of the 2017/18 financial year.

### 5.3 Chief Fire Officer Report

The Committee received a report from Stewart Edgar, Chief Fire Officer, detailing information on the portfolio of services provided by the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council.

In particular, members were informed that the Service is currently undertaking recruitment for retained and whole-time firefighters. It was explained that the Service is hoping to recruit between 10 and 14 whole-time firefighters, and that they are currently at the final interview stage.

The Committee was also informed that the Food Standards Agency has indicated that funding for inspections to determine the level of compliance at animal food manufacturers and production facilities is likely to be reduced in 2018. It was clarified that this will not affect the base budget for Trading Standards.

Members noted that the consultation on a revised Fire and Rescue National Framework document was launched on 27 December 2017 and ends on 14 February 2018. It was agreed that the submission by Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service will be circulated with the Committee.

Members were informed of several recent fire incidents, which included a house fire at Cirencester and at Coney Hill Road in Gloucester. The Committee also discussed the Severn Trent water leak which affected homes in Tewkesbury on 15 December 2017, and was informed that a de-brief of the incident is being arranged.

### 5.4 Commissioning Director's Report

Nigel Riglar, Commissioning Director: Communities and Infrastructure, updated the Committee on current issues.

In particular, members asked questions regarding the A417 Missing Link, the procurement of Euro 6 lower emission buses for a replacement Park and Ride Service in Cheltenham, Traffic Regulation Orders, and the impact of the collapse of Carillion in Gloucestershire.

Following a discussion on the Great Western Rail franchise consultation, it was agreed that the draft response from the Council to the consultation will be circulated with the Committee for comments following the Lead Cabinet Member meeting on 5 February 2018.

Members were also updated on the Air Pollution and its Impact on Public Health Task Group, noting, in particular, that a positive and informative Air Pollution Stakeholder Workshop had taken place on 16 January 2018, the outcomes of which will inform the recommendations of the Task Group.

## 5.5 Work Plan

At its meeting on 7 March 2018, the Committee will receive a report from the Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood on measures to improve the inspection and fixing of pavements, as part of the Committee's consideration of Motion 787: Pavements, and an update on progress with the A429 Task Group recommendations.

It was proposed that items on the A417 Missing Link and on the libraries review be considered at one of the meetings in the upcoming months, and that an item on the Dynamic Purchasing System for Transport be added to the work plan for consideration at a future meeting. The Air Pollution and its Impact on Public Health Task Group will also be reporting at either the May or July 2018 meeting.

## **6 Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (29 November 2017) – Cllr Dave Norman**

### 6.1 District held meetings

Reflecting on the outcomes of the meeting held at Tewkesbury Borough Council on 22 October 2017, the committee noted that the next 'district' based meeting would be held at the Cotswold District Council Offices on Thursday 22 February 2018. This would be followed by a meeting at Cheltenham Borough Council on 31 October 2018. .

### 6.2 Gloucestershire Connects Study

The committee received information on the Gloucestershire County Council commissioned study of 'What is the future role for road and rail to support strategic connectivity in Gloucestershire by 2050'.

Project Director at SYSTRA Consultants, Martin Revill, gave a short overview on the background and aims of the study and invited scrutiny members to discuss initial themes and potential challenges emerging from the first phase of the work. A detailed presentation was delivered to the Economic Growth Joint Committee earlier that day, at which scrutiny committee members had been encouraged to attend.

Key issues highlighted during the discussion included, access to the Forest of Dean, ongoing improvement works on the A417, rail links, and improvements to key junctions on the M5 Motorway. Focussing on the impact of housing and commercial development across the county, the committee suggested considering Gloucestershire's river network as part of the study.

### 6.3 Education, Employment and Skills

The committee considered the ESF Skills and Employability Update Report presented to the Economic Growth Joint Committee meeting earlier that day. Members were asked to refer any questions to Pete Carr, Lead Commissioner - Skills and Employment.

To aid member's understanding of progress on some of the LEP European ESF, (European Social Fund), Funded Projects currently underway in Gloucestershire, the committee received detailed presentations on the Learn Direct, (Work Start Gloucestershire), Project and on the South Gloucestershire and Stroud College EDGE and GOAL Projects.

The presentations received mixed responses, with robust questioning from the committee on some of the financial and operational aspects of the projects. Since the meeting, the committee has received open invitations to visit both organisations.

### 6.4 Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee/GFirst LEP Update

Having noted the reports considered at the Economic Growth Joint Committee meeting held earlier that day, the committee made specific reference to concerns about the impact of Brexit on the economic growth for Gloucestershire, and the award of European Funding.

Requesting information on the consequences of leaving the European Union, and having considered a proposal that the committee write to Gloucestershire MP's to lobby the government on promoting continued funding, post EU departure, the committee was advised that, until a comprehensive assessment of the financial position could be made in March 2019, it would be very difficult to consider the likely outcomes.

David Owen, Chief Executive of Gloucestershire GFirst LEP and Nigel Riglar, Commissioning Director: Communities and Infrastructure, noted the committee's concerns and agreed to produce a briefing note on suggested key lines of enquiry for consideration at the committee meeting on 14 March 2018.

At the Group Leader's meeting on 1 December 2017, it was suggested the Economic Growth Joint Committee lead on this aspect of work, with input from the Scrutiny Committee. A report will be presented at the Joint Committee meeting on 14 March 2018.

## **7. Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel (18 December 2017) – Cllr Will Windsor Clive**

### **7.1 Introduction**

The Panel understood that the confirmatory hearing for the appointment of the Chief Constable was required by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011. The Police and Crime Commissioner would be invited to speak to the Panel to outline the selection process and to introduce the candidate. The candidate would then have the opportunity to address the Panel, and members could ask questions of the candidate relating to professional competence and personal independence. The Panel would then go into exempt session to make its decision on whether to recommend the appointment, recommend against the appointment or to use its power of veto.

### **7.2 Understanding the recruitment process**

The Commissioner explained that this was an important day for the Constabulary, and introduced Rod Hansen as his preferred candidate for the position of Chief Constable. Mr Hansen had been fulfilling the role on a temporary basis for the previous ten months. The Commissioner outlined the selection process as detailed in the report provided to Panel members. He informed members that the process had followed the guidance of the College of Policing and the papers included a report from an Independent Member.

One candidate had applied for the position; this reflected that the pool from which an appointment could be made from was very small. There had been a lot of interest from Deputies from other Forces who had asked questions on the process and about Gloucestershire Constabulary. The Commissioner suggested that the fact that only one individual had applied could be due to an awareness that there was a strong internal candidate.

The preferred candidate had gone through a written application process and met all the criteria. He had met with a staff forum to answer questions and had faced a very testing media interview that he had performed strongly in. In addition, he had appeared before the Commissioner's Forum.

### 7.3. The Preferred Candidate

Mr Hansen answered questions from the Panel on operational independence, the recent HMIC reports and his vision for the Constabulary going forward. Mr Hansen spoke at length about the measure he was taking to help support staff and improve wellbeing. Ultimately he was looking to bring stability to the Constabulary.

Panel members commented on their disappointment that there had not been a wider pool of applicants but felt that the correct process had been followed.

Members discussed recent HMIC reports which had criticised senior management oversight, but noted the responses made by Mr Hansen in relation to recent challenges. One member stated the importance of ensuring that in future appointments there was encouragement of applications from candidates outside of the Constabulary in order to allow the opportunity for 'new blood'.

Members stated that the candidate had demonstrated professional competence and personal independence. They welcomed the full answers provided by the candidate to their questions and commented that he had given an excellent account of himself.

It was therefore agreed that:

The Panel unanimously recommend the appointment of Rod Hansen as Chief Constable and congratulate him on his presentation.