



**Gloucestershire**  
COUNTY COUNCIL

**Gloucestershire County Council**  
**Scrutiny Annual Report**  
**2016**

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## Democratic Services Team

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## Foreword

**Brian Oosthuysen**  
**Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny**  
**Management Committee**



Once again this annual report demonstrates the real variety of subjects that our scrutiny members have got involved in over the last year.

Good Scrutiny is about adding value and, through a combination of task group reviews, updates at committee and innovative workshops and seminars, members have been able to make a difference in the areas that really resonate with the public.

As the Council continues to work in the context of constraints on public sector funding accompanied by growing demand for key council services, scrutiny has been at the heart of attempting to think differently and find new ways to support the most vulnerable in our county.

The examples within this report highlight some of the work carried out by members. The scrutiny principles of holding executive members to account and being a critical friend are embedded within the Council far beyond the formal scrutiny process. Councillors work outside of committees to discuss issues with Cabinet Members and with officers in order to ensure they are up to speed with the issues that are important to their constituents. Full Council provides its own opportunities through member questions and motions that often identify issues to feed back into the scrutiny process.

As we look ahead to the new Council in 2017, I would urge members to use this report to reflect on the successes achieved through good scrutiny and to recognise the challenges we face in ensuring good governance and accountability as Local Government continues to change and evolve.

I would like to thank all members who have been involved in scrutiny over the past year, in whatever form. In particular, I would like to acknowledge the work of the Chairs of all the committees: Cllr Rob Bird (Environment and Communities), Cllr Iain Dobie (Health and Care), Cllr Tim Harman (Children and Families), Cllr Joe Harris (Gloucestershire Economic Growth), Cllr Nigel Robbins (Audit and Governance), and Cllr Roger Wilson (Police and Crime Panel). I would also like to thank the officers throughout the County Council and our partners for the support they provide to members.

**Jane Burns**  
**Director: Strategy and Challenge**  
**Corporate Lead for Scrutiny**



Scrutiny in Gloucestershire is well developed and continues to evolve. We are fortunate to have close working with district colleagues and other partners.

Joint scrutiny bodies in the form of the Joint Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee, Health and Care Scrutiny Committee and Police and Crime Panel demonstrate the way in which common goals can be achieved through partnership working.

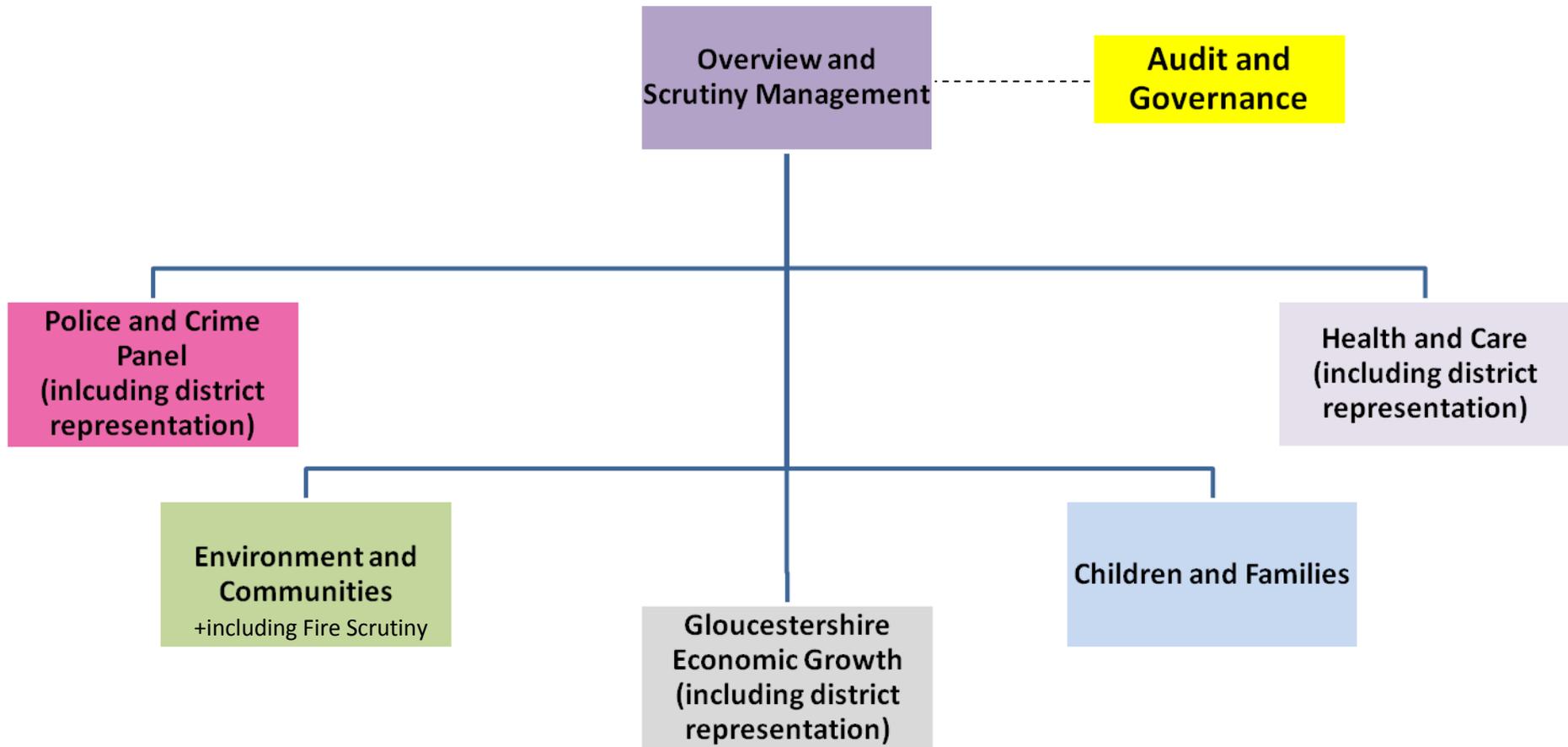
This report details some of the scrutiny work that has been undertaken this year by all the committees and working groups. Members are interested in a wide range of subjects including topical issues. Scrutiny makes a real difference, as can be seen from the pages which follow and the detailed reports and recommendations they produce. It is pleasing to know that Gloucestershire Scrutiny is at the very forefront of best practice nationally.

Scrutiny members still strive for improvement and are prepared to learn from the work going on elsewhere, and adapt to changes locally to ensure we are still responding to the areas of most concern to the public. One of our core principles is that scrutiny gets involved where it can best make a difference.

As we move into the 2017 Elections we will want to make sure the scrutiny structure we have in place and the culture of scrutiny throughout the organisation remains fit for purpose. This will be a good foundation from which to build whatever the future holds for Gloucestershire.

On behalf of the officer team I would like to thank scrutiny members for their continued interest and dedication to scrutiny.

# Scrutiny Structure



## Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee

The committee is responsible for managing the council's overview and scrutiny process and ensuring that it is operating effectively and is making a difference for local people. It is also the 'home' committee for support services.

The membership of the committee includes the chairs of the other overview and scrutiny committees and they report on their committee's activities at each meeting. The role of the committee also includes commissioning task groups and determining call-ins of cabinet decision.

Chair- Cllr Brian Oosthuysen  
Vice Chair – Cllr Shaun Parsons  
Lead Member – Cllr Iain Dobie

Senior Democratic Services Adviser - Stephen Bace [stephen.bace@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.bace@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01452 324204

Jane Burns, Director: Strategy and Challenge

## Children and Families Scrutiny Committee

The committee is responsible for overview and scrutiny of matters relating to children and young people. Its remit covers a wide area including schools, children's centres, adoption and fostering, child protection, childcare, early years education and advice to families.

Chair – Cllr Tim Harman

Lead Members – Cllr Lesley Williams, Cllr Chris Coleman, Cllr Richard Leppington

Senior Democratic Services Adviser – Andrea Clarke [andrea.clarke@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:andrea.clarke@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01452 324203

Linda Uren, Commissioning Director; Children and Families

## Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee

The committee is responsible for overview and scrutiny of environment related issues. Its remit covers a wide area including highways, waste management, planning, transport and climate change. It also includes scrutiny of the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service, emergency management, trading standards, registration service and coroners, as well as libraries and lifelong learning.

Chair – Cllr Robert Bird  
Lead Members – Cllr John Cordwell and Cllr Graham Morgan.

Senior Democratic Services Adviser – Joanne Moore [joanne.moore@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.moore@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01452 324196

Nigel Riglar, Commissioning Director:  
Communities and Infrastructure

Stewart Edgar – Chief Fire Officer

## Health & Care Scrutiny Committee

The committee is responsible for the overview and scrutiny of health and adult social care services and public health. The committee (on behalf of the local authority) is a statutory consultee for any significant health service change proposals in Gloucestershire. When (health) service changes are proposed the committee will offer constructive challenge to ensure that proposals are properly thought through, in particular that they are clinically led, to ensure that they are to the benefit, not detriment, of the people of Gloucestershire. The committee has co-optees from all the district councils.

Chair – Cllr Iain Dobie  
Vice Chairman – Cllr Roger Wilson

Senior Democratic Services Adviser – Andrea Clarke [andrea.clarke@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:andrea.clarke@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01452 324203

Margaret Willcox, Commissioning Director: Adults  
Sarah Scott – Director of Public Health

## Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel

The Police and Crime Panel is a joint body of the local authorities served by Gloucestershire Police. The Panel is to maintain a regular check and balance on the performance of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The functions of the Panel are to be exercised with a view to supporting the effective exercise of the functions of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The Panel is under a duty to support, as well as challenge, the Commissioner.

The local authorities have appointed thirteen councillors to be Panel members. The Panel has also co-opted two independent members. Gloucestershire County Council is the host local authority for the Panel and will provide administrative and other support to the Panel and its members.

Chair – Cllr Roger Wilson  
Vice Chair – Cllr Barry Kirby

Senior Democratic Services Adviser – Stephen Bace [stephen.bace@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.bace@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01452 324204

Stewart Edgar, Operations Director

## Audit and Governance Committee

The committee provides independent assurance of the adequacy of the risk management framework and the associated control environment. It assesses the Authority's financial and non-financial performance to the extent that it affects the Authority's exposure to risk and weakens the control environment. The committee also oversees the financial reporting process and ensures that Members maintain high standards of probity in their public life by carrying out investigations in respect to allegations of misconduct by a Member or co-opted Member.

Chair – Cllr Nigel Robbins

Democratic Services Adviser – Andrea Griffiths  
[andrea.griffiths@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:andrea.griffiths@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01452 324206

Jo Walker, Director Strategic Finance  
Jane Burns, Director: Strategy and Challenge

## Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee

The committee is responsible for reviewing the decisions of the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee. It is also responsible for reviewing the overall impact and delivery outcomes of the Gloucestershire Strategic Economic Plan and to make recommendations to the Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Community Interest Company and Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee on issues and improvements. All district councils have co-opted members on to the committee.

Chair – Cllr Joe Harris  
Vice Chair – Cllr Dawn Melvin

Senior Democratic Services Adviser – Joanne Moore [joanne.moore@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.moore@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01452 324196

Nigel Riglar, Commissioning Director:  
Communities and Infrastructure

Pete Carr, Deputy Chief Executive:  
Gloucestershire Local Enterprise Partnership

## Scrutiny, making a difference

Over the course of 2016, members have carried out scrutiny of a wide variety of topics and issues through committee meetings, time-limited task group work, workshops and briefings. This report contains some examples, detailing outcomes from the work and demonstrating where scrutiny has made a difference.

### A429 Fosse Way

A scrutiny task group was established to look at safety and congestion issues on the A429 Fosse Way, with the 8 Gloucestershire County Councillors whose divisions are located in the Cotswold District forming the membership of the group.

The review aimed to promote road safety and it considered the strategic role of the A429. Recommendations included adopting an 'Asset Management' approach for the future maintenance and traffic management of the A429 and A433 highways, as well as lobbying local MP's to engage in the re-classification of the A429 as a trunk road. This was in order to secure additional funding for improvements to the highway and traffic management. In addition, concerns were expressed around the lack of comprehensive traffic data and the need for the County Council to engage with neighbouring authorities to pursue joint long term activities and aspirations.

The task group proposed a series of recommendations, with particular emphasis on the need to better understand road safety issues on the A429. Cabinet was supportive of the recommendations but advised that the normal budget setting cycle and processes would need to be followed where funding might be required to take forward some of the recommendations. It was also suggested that the recommendations be referred to the Gloucestershire Road Safety Partnership to seek advice on the suitability of reducing speed limits along the length of the A429 corridor, and on the Cirencester ring road.

### Access to the Forest of Dean

The Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee acknowledged that the Forest of Dean District was vulnerable to the geographical restrictions imposed by the River Severn and noted the impact of new development. It was noted that access was limited to two main road links and a single rail link, with members expressing concern about increased congestion and the impact on business and tourism.

Members set up a task group to look at widening the council's understanding of issues affecting access to and from the Forest of Dean District, considering the impact of new development on access routes and the economic impact of issues affecting access routes.

During the course of the review, members received assurances from Highways England that, for the foreseeable future, both River Severn Road Crossings were well maintained and did not require replacement.

The task group proposed a series of recommendations, including; i) promoting opportunities to improve direct rail links to Bristol, Cardiff and London from improved connectivity via the Severn Tunnel; ii) undertaking a feasibility study of the cost benefits of investing in a dedicated cycle infrastructure for the Forest of Dean; and iii) undertaking more work on investigating the economic feasibility of creating a third river crossing on the River Severn as part of a long term objective.

### Ambulance Response Times

At the meeting of Council on 2 December 2015, members gave their full support to Motion 759 relating to ambulance response times. The motion requested that the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee explore the option of creating a county-wide ambulance service with recommendations for council to debate.

The committee identified that there were two key questions: Should Gloucestershire, again, have its own ambulance service? And how to address the response time challenges in the rural areas of the county? The committee established a working group to answer these questions.

The working group held a one day session with the commissioner (Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group) and provider of the ambulance service (South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SWASFT)). Having considered all the information, particularly the potential benefits generated by economies of scale, the group agreed that the recommendation to council was that the establishment of a county-wide ambulance service was neither viable nor desirable and should not be progressed. The group did support the addition of the Gloucestershire Flag and name to SWASFT vehicles based in Gloucestershire.

The Ambulance Response Programme, which is currently being piloted by three ambulance service Trusts, including SWASFT, has the potential to improve response times in the county; utilise resources more effectively; and deliver improved health outcomes for patients. The group offered its full support and asked that an update be provided to the March 2017 committee meeting. The group also made a variety of recommendations looking to highlight other issues that impact on the ambulance service's ability to deliver required outcomes.

## **Audit and Governance**

Members have carried out work across a wide remit, including approval of the Annual Statement of Accounts for 2015/16 and the Annual Governance report from Grant Thornton, the council's external auditors.

Officers were asked to act upon recommendations within external audit reports on Gloucestershire County Council and the Pensions Fund, with the committee ensuring transparency and accountability following up on progress.

Further work has been carried out considering the Internal Audit Charter, Freedom of Information Annual Report and Risk Management report. The committee also received a report detailing the Council's arrangements for handling complaints including the Local Government Ombudsman's Annual Review and Annual review of the code of conduct for members.

## **Budget Scrutiny**

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee considered performance and financial information throughout the year with specific issues fed back to the service specific scrutiny committees through the Chairs.

During the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy the committee holds briefings with directors and cabinet members to understand any upcoming issues locally and any developments nationally that will impact upon the budget. Once the budget is out for consultation, scrutiny committees are key consultees, feeding back into the process ahead of the budget being agreed by full Council in February.

## **Care Leaver Services**

Children and Families Scrutiny Committee wanted to gain an understanding of how young people are supported as they leave the care system.

The Care Leaver Service is part of the Over 11s Children in Care and Care Leaving Service; Prospects provide the leadership to this service but the majority of staff are employed by the council. There have been changes to the local authority responsibilities this year to include extending support up to age 25 for all care leavers, the requirement to publish the local offer, and extending corporate parenting responsibilities beyond the local authority to include government departments and agencies.

The Ambassador for Vulnerable Children and Young People (co-opted committee member) was able to give members first-hand experience of these services. He also informed members of the key messages coming through a recent survey of care leavers relating to their relationship with their social worker(s).

A significant challenge for the service is being able to offer the consistency in support (from the social worker) that young people need and want. This will be even more of a challenge given the extension of support to age 25 which means that a young person could be with the service for 15 years. The Committee will continue to monitor progress in this area.

## Care Quality Commission (CQC) Inspection of 2Gether NHS Foundation Trust (2G)

The Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee met with the CQC Lead Inspector to discuss the Inspection. The committee was also joined by the Chair and Chief Executive of 2G. The Trust had received an overall rating of Good. Two service areas - acute wards for adults of working age and psychiatric intensive care units (PICU's) and mental health crisis services and health based places of safety – were rated as Outstanding. 2G is the only mental health trust in the country to have achieved outstanding ratings in these areas.

The Inspection had identified areas where work was needed to bring the service up to the required standard. In total there were 15 'must do' actions and 58 'should do'. The Trust is required to submit an Improvement Plan to the CQC on these matters and was on schedule to deliver this within the required timeline. Some of these actions have already been completed.

The committee congratulated the Trust on the outcome of the inspection and agreed that the ratings indicated that there was a strong leadership and a committed and motivated workforce at the Trust.

## Climate Change

Following a motion at full Council, a task group was set up to review the conclusions and recommendations of the Fifth Assessment Report (AR5). The task group aimed to understand what was meant by mitigation and adaptation strategies and to reflect on and evaluate what the Council had achieved so far in addressing climate change. In addition, it would consider the Council's role in developing strategies to address climate change to develop a 'low carbon economy' and to reduce greenhouse emissions.

The task group recognised the commitment by the Council and many other local organisations in addressing climate change, but believed more could be done, including the Council taking a leading role in Gloucestershire to contribute to the terms agreed at the Paris Climate Conference in December 2015, and in limiting global warming.

One recommendation within the group's report, proposed the inclusion of a statement in the foreword of the LTP and in the council's performance indicators, to accentuate the urgency of the need to reduce carbon emissions in Gloucestershire.

## Community Pubs

In response to a motion to Gloucestershire County Council in November 2014, the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee considered an economic analysis of the local pub and restaurant sector, including the contributions pubs and restaurants make to the Gloucestershire economy. A cross party task group was established in July 2015.

Following discussions with non-profit charity organisation, 'Pub is the Hub', representatives from the organisation met with members to discuss how they could support the review, including offering to undertake strategic mapping of Gloucestershire to identify priority areas. The organisation has worked for several other local authorities in the past 15 years, attempting to support and encourage local pubs to diversify and better serve local communities. The organisation also provides workshops and assistance to local communities to apply for grants.

Having completed the review, the task group is currently working with the 'Pub is the Hub' organisation to provide support via District and Parish councils in helping local community groups consider ways of developing local pubs as assets of community value. A workshop event for District and Parish Councils will be held at Shire Hall in March 2017.

## Community Safety in Gloucestershire

The Police and Crime Panel received a report which provided a review of Gloucestershire's 'Community Safety Landscape' in order to assess current strengths and areas for improvement. The review had been a part of Gloucestershire's bid to become a Combined Authority.

Three options were outlined within the paper: The first retained Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) in each district with the Chairs meeting every 2 months; the second option included the development of the Gloucestershire Community Safety Partnership working in close partnership

with six CSPs; the third option involved the merger of the six current CSPs into one overarching Gloucestershire Community Safety Partnership with six District Multi-Agency Forums to implement delivery on the ground.

Some members of the Panel spoke positively about the review and stated their full support for option three. Other members expressed their concerns regarding where safeguarding sat within the structures and whether a case had really been made for one overarching partnership. The comments of the Panel were submitted as part of the consultation.

### **Confirmatory Hearings (Office of PCC)**

On 9 September, the Police and Crime Panel held confirmatory hearings for the positions of Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner and Chief Finance Officer. Both appointments were supported but concerns were expressed regarding the appointment process carried out by Police and Crime Commissioner.

### **Consultation**

Following a motion at full Council, a task group was set up to help shape the County Council's consultation policies and practices and feed into the review of the consultation protocol. The work would look to identify areas of good practice and provide constructive challenge to existing processes. In particular, members were keen to help increase the County Council response rate to consultations.

Following a discussion with a representative from the Consultation Institute, members considered some case studies and reviewed the draft protocol making recommendations on increased member involvement at an earlier stage in consultations.

### **Draft Local Transport Plan (LTP) Consultation Response**

A statutory requirement of the Local Transport Act 2008 requires local authorities to produce a Local Transport Plan, outlining each authority's long-term transport strategy. In compliance with this legislation, Gloucestershire County Council, as local transport authority, is required to review and update the Local Transport Plan for

Gloucestershire. The review process for the current LTP, (adopted in 2011), had reached its conclusion with the final report presented to Full Council in June 2016.

In March 2016, the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee received an analysis of the representations received during the final stages of the consultation processes. In noting the feedback provided at the meeting, the Draft LTP Response Report was amended to include several minor changes.

### **Draft Minerals Local Plan**

Cllr Nigel Moor, Cabinet Member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure presented the Draft Local Plan Document to Environment and Communities Scrutiny to seek member's views before consideration by Cabinet at its meeting on Wednesday 20 July 2016.

As the local Mineral Planning Authority, the County Council has a statutory responsibility for preparing the local development plan for minerals, with the new plan seeking to provide the policy framework for making decisions on planning applications for mineral development from 2018 to 2032, in line with government policy included in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The proposed plan included 10 allocations for possible aggregate working, (sand & gravel or limestone), and a suite of policies for use in determining future mineral-related planning applications.

Following a full and in-depth discussion, several members expressed particular concern about the council's proposed policy on oil and gas exploration, (Policy MW06).

With the majority of the committee, (5 members), voting in support, and 4 members voting against the proposal to amend Policy MW06, it was agreed to submit a statement to Cabinet opposing the exploration and production of oil and gas through the deployment unconventional techniques. Members were advised that, at that time, there were no formal proposals for hydraulic fracturing.

Cllr Moor maintained that the draft policy represented a prudent and balanced approach to updating the Minerals Local Plan. He explained that, to go against government guidance could render the plan 'unsound' by the Independent Inspector. In such circumstances, the Minerals Local Plan could not be adopted. Furthermore, the plan would have no weight in respect of matters deemed unsound, placing significant risk to the council when considering applications for hydraulic fracturing.

At the Cabinet meeting on 20 July 2016, Cllr Moor announced he would not be prepared to embark on a course of action that might result in significant abortive costs to the council. Whilst he respected the committee's views, if members wished to oppose proposed policy MW06, they should do so by making individual cases to the Planning Inspector.

Cabinet adopted the draft minerals plan, for consultation, in advance of proceeding to the next stage of the adoption process. Cllr Moor assured members that there would be an opportunity for local communities to comment on the proposals.

## European Union Referendum (Brexit)

In September 2015, Members agreed at a meeting of Full Council to set up a task group to establish and identify the implications on Gloucestershire of the referendum result to leave the EU (so called Brexit).

Members welcomed the report which covered a wide range of potential implications and notes that it was too early to know what will happen. Any significant development will be reported back in due course.

## Flood Issues

At the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee meeting on 13 July 2016, members requested an update on the ongoing work of the Cotswold Flood Action Group. With invitations to Thames Water, the Environment Agency and Cotswold District Council, it was agreed that the update would be considered alongside several other flood related items, as part of a themed 'Gloucestershire Flood Review' meeting.

At the scrutiny committee meeting on 21 September 2016, members considered feedback from the GCC Flood Team, Cllr Shaun Parsons, Thames Water and the Environment Agency. The committee also received statements presented in the absence of project lead members, Cllrs Paul Hodgkinson and Ray Theodoulou, and from Cabinet Member: Highways and Flood, Cllr Vernon Smith.

The consensus of opinion, (incorporating statements from those representatives unable to attend the meeting in person), was that the work of the Flood Action Group had been hugely successful. The majority viewpoint expressed particular satisfaction with the improved dialogue between key stakeholders and agencies, and the engagement of stakeholders with town and parish councils, and with local residents. The discussion also reflected on the progress that had been made in addressing key issues since 2014.

It was agreed that a statement be sent from the Committee to Cotswold District Council, proposing that the GCC Flood Team, GCC 'Cotswold' County Councillors, GCC Cabinet Member: Highways and Flood and key stakeholders continue to work in partnership with Cotswold District Council to coordinate periodical meetings to consider ongoing and future work commitments.

## Fracking

At the Gloucestershire County Council meeting on 23 October 2015, councillors referred motion 756, detailing concerns about the impact of fracking, (hydraulic fracturing for shale gas), on climate change and the Forest of Dean District, to the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee to consider. At the committee's request, a member briefing was held at Shire Hall, prior to consideration of the motion at the planned committee meeting later that day. The aim of the briefing was to assist members in their understanding of issues relating to hydraulic fracturing and other energy extraction options, (unconventional hydrocarbons), before debating the council motion.

The committee considered the council motion in detail, including changes in circumstance since the original motion, and agreed to make a recommendation to Full Council at its meeting on

17 February 2016, recommending that Gloucestershire County Council send a letter to the Secretary of State requesting that the process for exploring hydraulic fracturing in Gloucestershire be halted.

Not all members of the committee supported the recommendation, stating that they would prefer to consider an alternative course of action.

### Highways Satisfaction Levels

At the Environment Scrutiny Committee meeting on 13 July 2016, members considered Motion 772, outlining concerns about Highway Customer Satisfaction Levels.

From the discussion, it was agreed officers would conduct a detailed analysis of satisfaction levels with the county's highways with a report to Council in December 2016.

The results of the review were considered at the Environment and Community Scrutiny Committee on Monday 14 November 2016 and at the Full Council meeting on 7 December 2016.

### Improving Highway Tree Maintenance

At the Full Council meeting on 23 March 2016, members considered 'Motion 766 - Improving Highway Tree Maintenance'. The Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee received a report from the Highways Advisory Group outlining a series of recommendations to be presented to the Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood proposing measures for improving the County Council's tree maintenance programme.

The recommendations included improving information about tree maintenance to help manage public expectation; improving communication with members; considering increasing budget allocations for tree maintenance and ensuring specific training is in place

The Cabinet Member's response was considered at the committee meeting on 22 November 2016 and at the Full Council meeting on 7 December 2016.

### Mobile Phone Coverage

As part of its work, the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee maintains a watching brief on the status and provision of mobile phone coverage in Gloucestershire. At a committee meeting in December 2015, members proposed that the committee invite leading Mobile Network Operators to give an update on current issues at a future meeting.

Alex Jakeman, from national mobile phone company, EE, gave an in-depth power-point presentation on the work of the organisation and the efforts taken by EE to improve mobile phone coverage in Gloucestershire.

Members welcomed the positive outcome of the presentation, including the offer from EE to engage with local communities and work with Gloucestershire councils to resolve specific issues.

The committee agreed to monitor the progress of EE and mobile phone providers working in Gloucestershire, and to consider what support might be available from local planning authorities and LEP's.

### NHS111

The Health and Care Scrutiny Committee met with two representatives from CareUK (provider of NHS111 in Gloucestershire, Swindon, Wiltshire, South Gloucestershire, BaNES, Bristol and North Somerset) to identify whether there had been an improvement in performance against targets. There had been concern regarding NHS111 performance against targets since the implementation of the service in February 2013. CareUK has previously attended the committee to respond to questions on this matter and it was important to identify what progress had been made.

CareUK gave a detailed presentation which demonstrated the actions that have been taken to address performance issues. The data was showing that there had been some improvement and that CareUK was performing above the England average against some targets.

Workforce factors are a significant issue for CareUK as with other Health providers. CareUK

is undertaking a large amount of activity to improve the recruitment and retention of Clinical Advisers, and will also be working with NHS England (NHSE) on the NHS111 Workforce Project.

Whilst recognising that CareUK are working hard to improve performance, the committee remains concerned and will continue to monitor this through the regular performance reports.

### **Non-Emergency Patient Transport Service (NEPTS)**

The committee aims to review performance of this contract on an annual basis with the provider of the service (Arriva Transport Solutions Limited (ATSL)), and the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (GCCG) Commissioning Implementation Manager. (ATSL was awarded contracts by Bath and North East Somerset (BaNES), Gloucestershire, Swindon and Wiltshire (BGSW) Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) for non-emergency patient transport in summer 2013, the service went live on 1 December 2013.)

The committee was disappointed to note that, despite the assurances given last year that there was a robust action plan in place to address concerns, ATSL are still struggling to meet some Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) relating to on-time inbound drop-off/on-time outbound pick-up, and telephone answering. In late 2015 BGSW served contract performance notices on ATSL relating to these KPIs and a further notice has been served this year.

A particular issue is that there is no national guidance for these services including standardisation on KPIs. The committee has written to the Secretary of State for Health on this matter.

It is important to note that the BGSW CCGs are unusual in that they waive normal Department of Health eligibility criteria for dialysis patients and fund transport for those patients who wish to use it. Dialysis transport represents 41% of total activity. The committee felt that this is an area that would benefit from further modelling.

Given members' concerns it was agreed to receive an update in six months. Members will

also be visiting an ATSL control centre to observe how they manage and despatch calls.

### **Out of Hours Service 12 Month Review**

The Health and Care Scrutiny Committee was joined by the SWASFT Executive Medical Director, Head of Operations (Urgent Care) and Operations Manager (Urgent Care) for the review. Most of the challenges that were there at the six month review remained; and the service continues to struggle to meet both local and national targets. SWASFT acknowledged the committee's concerns and informed members that it was working hard to address this position.

Workforce issues again impacted on the delivery of the service; and have necessitated the closure of the Primary Care Centres (PCCs), particularly those in the rural areas, on many occasions.

It was interesting to note that there had been a significant increase in the number of walk-ins to the service and this is having an impact as these had to be managed alongside those that had come through the NHS111 route.

Subsequent to this debate the committee was informed by the Gloucestershire Commissioning Group (GCCG) that SWASFT had withdrawn from this contract and would cease delivery of this service on 31 March 2017. The GCCG will inform the committee of the new provider of this service in due course.

### **Police Precept**

Schedule 5 of the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 sets out the process for issuing a precept, including the Police and Crime Panel's role in reviewing the proposed precept and their power to veto the precept. The Panel is required to review the proposed precept and make a report which may include recommendations.

The Commissioner proposed an increase of 1.24% in the police related Band D Council Tax or £2.58 for the year. The Panel supported the precept but recommended that the Commissioner provide additional clarity on the four year Medium Term Financial Strategy period, including how the projected savings requirements for the three

years 2017/18 to 2019/20 would be met including clarification on the ongoing use of reserves

### **Recruitment and Retention of Children's Social workers**

A task group was requested to look to diagnose some of the challenges in retaining children's social workers, to test the robustness of the current recruitment and retention strategy and to make recommendations on actions that should be taken to improve. Members met with senior officers in Children and Families, Safeguarding, as well as ICT and Property. In addition, Members met with representatives from Essex County Council to understand the changes they are making. Most importantly they met with social workers on the ground.

The report from the group made recommendations to help create a working environment to help the Council retain our social workers and make Gloucestershire County Council a desirable place to work. It also made recommendations to help us recruit social workers. Directly in response to the task group's recommendations, a further £2m additional investment was made into the budget for 2016/17 with further investment proposed for 2017/18. The funding would support 50 additional social workers and associated management and support.

### **Registration Service**

Cllr Nigel Moor, Cabinet Member for Fire, Planning and Infrastructure, presented a positive update on the Council's Registration Service to Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee. In noting the report, and the performance improvement plan introduced to address some of the recent challenges the service had experienced, the committee agreed to support further management projects and initiatives associated with the plan.

### **Reshaping Services for Families and Young People**

The Children and Families Scrutiny Committee received a detailed presentation, from the Lead Commissioner for Early Years, on this

consultation outlining the engagement process, the proposals, and the headlines from feedback received so far.

The Ambassadors for Vulnerable Children and Young People had been involved in the stakeholder events to ensure that the voice of the child was heard and listened to in this consultation.

There have been misunderstandings about this consultation, particularly with regard to the perception that children's centres would close; it was helpful to get clarity on this matter and hear from the Cabinet Member that this was not the intention. Concerns with regard as to the risks attached to this policy direction were discussed, and it was acknowledged that these were fully explored in the Consultation Report received at Cabinet on 8 June 2016.

In the main committee members agreed that this was a positive direction of travel, although it is important to note that this was not the view of the whole committee. The committee added this matter to its work plan in order to follow up on progress.

### **Review of Minor Illness and Injury Units (MIUs) in Gloucestershire**

The Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection of Gloucestershire Care Services NHS Trust had identified that the staff structure in place in the (Stroud and Cirencester) MIUs overnight was unsafe, for staff and patients, and required the Trust to address this issue as a priority. This would require the Trust to have two Advanced Nurse Practitioners (ANP) on the overnight rota as opposed to the Health Care Assistant and ANP that was then current practice. A review was therefore carried out, followed by an engagement exercise with the public which identified the possible options to be taken forward. These options did not include retaining the status quo.

The Trust presented data to demonstrate that the overnight footfall at both Stroud and Cirencester Hospitals was, in their view, not sufficient to make an overnight service viable. The Trust also emphasised the national workforce challenges relating to nurses. The outcome of the engagement exercise indicated that the preferred option was to change the opening hours of these two MIUs to 8am to 11pm. The Trust was clear

that this was not a cost saving exercise and that this proposal would incur additional costs.

The committee was aware of the public concern in these two districts with regard to these proposals; and also heard from Stroud representatives on the committee. This proposal had not been identified by the Trust as a substantial variation. The committee's role was therefore limited to that of critical friend.

Going forward the committee will wish to understand the impact of this change; and receive the outcome of the review of urgent care in the county which will identify the location of the urgent care centres.

## Safeguarding

The Children and Families Scrutiny Committee works to a safeguarding framework to ensure that over the period of the Council members are informed of, and can scrutinise, safeguarding matters.

This year the committee received the Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board (GSCB) Annual report, presented by the Independent Chair and looked at how services are planned and commissioned,, how training/learning is structured and how its impact is measured. The committee aims to ensure that it meets with frontline staff as well as senior officers to gain a broader understanding of practice. The co-option of the Ambassadors for Vulnerable Children and Young People has also been very beneficial in supporting members understanding of these issues from the child/young person's perspective.

The Independent Chair of the GSCB was very clear about the pressures on the system across all partners. How to best support older young people was a significant issue including with regard to child sexual exploitation, and understanding domestic abuse issues between teenagers.

The Independent Chair was also clear that the quality of safeguarding work is currently not of a consistently high enough standard.

The committee will continue to closely monitor this area of work.

## Schools: The Gloucestershire Picture

The picture of educational provision in Gloucestershire is a mix of academies, maintained schools, free schools and alternative provision. The Children and Families Scrutiny Committee wanted to get a clearer understanding of the overall picture; and also gain an understanding of what impact the Education Excellence Everywhere white paper could have on the education landscape of the county. Performance in Gloucestershire schools is good and something that the county should be proud of – 94.1% of primary aged school children and 90.3% of secondary aged young people attend good or outstanding schools. However there are schools at both primary and secondary level that are in special measures; and there is particular concern with regard to the low performance at secondary level in the Forest of Dean (this is also where most of the schools in special measures are located).

The committee also received a detailed presentation on the future funding of schools and high needs. The government is also currently consulting on early years funding. It is important to note that whilst the new funding formula will be good for most schools, due to the application of, in particular, the sparsity factor there will be some schools that lose out. Officers feel that overall Gloucestershire schools will gain but that not all schools will see an increase. It is important to note that the local authority (LA) role in school funding ends from 2019/20.

A particular concern for members is the issue of accountability. The picture is complex and not especially transparent. The committee was informed that the Education Select Committee is raising concerns relating to transparency. This is a complex area and the committee discussed inviting the Regional Schools Commissioner to a future meeting to discuss these issues.

The committee will revisit this matter at a future meeting.

## **SEND – Outcome of the Joint Ofsted/CQC Local Area Inspection**

The Children and Families Scrutiny Committee welcomed the Head of Educational Needs and Disability, and the Lead Commissioner Children's Health and Maternity, to the meeting to discuss this matter.

The committee was reminded that this SEND process was introduced by government in 2014 and the committee has received an annual update each year to check on progress. In 2015 committee members received positive feedback on how officers were implementing this process directly from a parent representative.

The committee was in receipt of the Inspection Letter which detailed the main findings, and identified the strengths of the system in Gloucestershire, and those areas where further development is required. The strengths identified by the inspectors included that there is a clear vision, effective working with parents and carers, the supported internship programme, the local offer, and the access to services. Areas that need development include the need to ensure the involvement of all parents and carers in the process, that there is help available to access support, to further the provision for older young people (19 to 25) and to continue to drive up academic performance.

There was concern that there were long waiting times (up to one year) for families to receive support from the children's NHS community learning disability team. Officers accepted that this was unacceptable, and informed the committee that just prior to the inspection a review had been carried out which had identified a gap in capacity. An action plan is in place to address this issue; this was being led by the Joint Commissioner Learning Disabilities as part of the Building Better Lives work.

This is a complex area and the committee would continue to monitor progress through its quarterly performance reports and through its annual update.

## **Tri-Force collaboration**

Police and Crime Panel Members received a presentation on developments regarding

Gloucestershire Constabulary collaboration for the delivery of armed, dogs, and roads policing services with Avon and Somerset and Wiltshire Forces. Members were informed of the challenges and the plans for the future. The benefit of this collaboration was to ensure that specialist niche capability which was expensive could be spread across forces.

The Chairs of the Police and Crime Panels from the three areas have set up a group in which to discuss common themes for questioning and to explore opportunities for joint scrutiny of collaboration arrangements.

## **Waste Update**

The Joint Waste Team provided the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee with a short update on current issues and performance with regards to waste. Members were informed that, whilst performance had been successful in some areas, overall performance had been static, with the results of residual waste collections, slightly lower than the previous year.

Several members expressed concern about the effectiveness of the joint working arrangement of the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Committee, and questioned whether the committee could function effectively without a unified scheme, involving participation from all districts. Noting member's frustrations, it was generally agreed that certain obstacles had prevented the joint committee from operating in a fully coordinated working arrangement since the committee had first established in 2013. In spite of this, it was felt some progress had been made in recent years. The unrelenting challenge, however, was to meet the demands of an ever-increasing population, which continued to impact on performance.

Following a full and in-depth discussion on the role of the Joint Waste Committee, it was suggested that the committee communicate its concerns to the Joint Waste Committee, and invite the Chairman of the Committee to respond to member questions on the views, ambitions and long term objectives of the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Committee.

The Head of Service and the Chairman of the Joint Waste Committee have confirmed their attendance at the committee meeting in January

2017. The item is to take into account the 'waste' motion considered at the full council meeting on 14 September 2016.

### **What do we do to help young people into employment, particularly the most vulnerable**

A key priority for the council is to help all young people, particularly those who are more vulnerable, to make a successful transition to adult life including gaining employment. The council does perform well against targets relating to young people not in education, employment, or training (NEET) but the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee wanted to get a clear understanding of what initiatives are in place to support our vulnerable young people.

The committee met with the Employment Commissioner, the Head of Extended Learning, the Youth Support Team (Prospects) lead for the Work it Out Project, and the Apprentice based in the Participation Team. It was invaluable to hear first-hand the experiences of the Apprentice, in particular the manner in which she was supported by officers and foster carers.

It was good to see that many employers now recognise that people with a learning disability can be a valuable addition to their workforce; and that these young people's aspirations are being encouraged and supported.

Members were impressed with the commitment and dedication of the officers supporting these young people who recognising that all young people were individuals with individual responses to their care situation or learning disability.

The committee will review this matter in the new council.

## Looking ahead: What's next for Scrutiny in Gloucestershire?

*Simon Harper*

*Head of Democratic Services*

Looking forward, there are a number of scrutiny reviews that have been established or are being scoped for 2017. Scrutiny looks well prepared for the challenges beyond the County Election in May 2017.

### Blue light Collaboration

The Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel have agreed to set up a task group looking to understand the implications of potential legislative changes regarding the role of the Police and Crime Commissioner, in particular around blue light services collaboration from the Police and Crime Bill.

The review will outline the potential implications on Gloucestershire, understand what collaboration is already underway and identify opportunities for greater collaboration between blue light services.

### Council Motion 780 Accident & Emergency Waiting Times

In response to this motion the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee is holding an extraordinary meeting on 15 December 2016.

This debate will include information on the national picture relating to urgent and emergency services models of care, and what this means for Gloucestershire.

The committee will submit a report to council in the New Year.

### Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust Financial Position

On 20 September 2016 the Trust announced a material change to its financial position. This followed a high level independent review of its financial position and financial reporting

arrangements which was commissioned by the Trust's Board following concerns raised at a number of levels within the Trust about its financial position and the deterioration of its cash reserves (the money it has available to spend). The review concluded that the Trust's financial position isn't as strong as previously understood and is significantly worse than the balanced position previously reported.

The Trust has subsequently been placed in financial special measures by NHS Improvement (NHSI). The Board has also commissioned an independent Financial Governance Review.

The Health and Care Scrutiny Committee is holding an extraordinary meeting on 20 January 2017 to receive the outcomes of the current investigation; and how the Trust Board intends to respond to the findings.

### Promotion of Gloucestershire

Over the course of the past two years, the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee has focussed attention on the need to elevate the profile of Gloucestershire as a desirable county to work and live.

To enable the committee to broaden its understanding of the impact tourism has on promoting Gloucestershire as a reputable residential and business location, the committee received presentations from Maureen McAllister, (Executive Director of Wye Valley and Forest of Dean Destination Management Organisation), and Robin Tjolle, (Chief Executive of Cotswold Tourism Partnership Destination Management Organisation), outlining the activities of the two organisations.

At the ensuing committee meeting on 7 September 2016, a member requested a scrutiny task group be established to consider the impact of tourism in terms of creating opportunities for residents and new and existing businesses across the county, and to investigate how tourism might benefit from a co-ordinated Gloucestershire approach.

The majority of members supported the proposal, and proposed that the review encompass a wide range of factors, (including tourism), which might

attract people and businesses to live and work in Gloucestershire.

The task group will submit its report to Council in early 2017.

Following discussion at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 30 September 2016, it was requested that a meeting be held with David Owen, Chief Executive of the Gloucestershire LEP, to consider whether the proposal for a review would duplicate or add value to the economic development of Gloucestershire. The suggestion was that, should the review be seen as viable, then it would commence in the next council. (Post May 2017).

### **School performance in the Forest of Dean**

A task group has been set up to scrutinise the educational attainment in Secondary Schools located in the Forest of Dean. The group aims to understand the make up of the schools in the area and understand the factors that influence educational performance in the Forest of Dean. In particular the group will be looking to identify what activity had enabled other schools in the area to make progress.

A briefing will be produced outlining the initial findings and to identify key lines of enquiry for a select committee style meeting of the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee and stakeholders in the new council.

### **Student Mental Health Review**

The ambitions for the review include gaining an understanding of the mental health issues experienced by students (aged 16-19) and identify the statutory duties placed on schools, the council and other partners.

Early findings are that the Future in Mind Transformation Plan, with its vision that the children and young people of Gloucestershire thrive and grow up to be confident and resilient, reflects the importance of early support and intervention, to support development of emotional resilience early in the life span. For example, a Mental Health pilot programme with Stroud Schools (primary and secondary) is in place and will be evaluated at the end of December 2016 to ascertain whether it has delivered on outcomes, and is making a positive difference to young people's health and wellbeing.