



**Gloucestershire**  
COUNTY COUNCIL

**Gloucestershire County Council**  
**Scrutiny Annual Report**  
**2017-18**

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## Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Cllr Rob Bird  
Cllr Iain Dobie  
Cllr Andrew Gravells  
Cllr Kate Haigh  
Cllr Jeremy Hilton  
Cllr Paul Hodgkinson  
Cllr Carole Allaway Martin  
Cllr Patrick Molyneux  
Cllr Dave Norman  
Cllr Shaun Parsons  
Cllr Brian Robinson  
Cllr Rachel Smith

## Foreword

**Cllr Patrick Molyneux**  
**Chair of Overview and Scrutiny**  
**Management Committee**



I am proud to introduce to you the first Annual Scrutiny Report of the new Council following the 2017 elections.

Our Overview and Scrutiny structure has provided a strong platform in which to help induct our new members into the Council, and to provide the basis for support as well as a critical eye on the fresh challenges we as a Council face.

Through a combination of task group work, updates at committee and member seminars and workshops, scrutiny has managed to cover a breadth of topics and add real value to the decision making process. 2018 has started well for scrutiny with a number of reviews being concluded and more work scheduled in the coming months.

Gloucestershire has a good reputation for scrutiny, but it is important that we look to develop and evolve our ways of working and learn from others. I feel that there are many examples in this report of us doing just that, whether it be the involvement of the LGA to help support us in the challenging role of children's scrutiny in response to our recent Ofsted Inspection report, or through our own self evaluation of the way we scrutinise performance and subsequent steps to improve that.

I would like to thank all the 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 Carole Allaway Martin (Health and Care), Cllr Brian Robinson (Children and Families), Cllr Dave Norman (Gloucestershire Economic Growth), Cllr Brian Oosthuysen (Audit and Governance) and Cllr Will Windsor Clive (Police and Crime Panel).

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



Effective scrutiny is provides a strong voice and direct action for non-executive members to hold the Cabinet and senior officers to account. This report summarises the extensive range of scrutiny work that has been undertaken this year which reflects the things that really matter to local people.

Scrutiny in Gloucestershire has never been afraid to change its approach in order to produce the required outcomes. Budget Scrutiny this year is a good example: members have taken a fresh look at how best to understand the pressures and challenges of a £400m + budget.

Where the Council has faced major challenges in relation to Children Services, Scrutiny through the Children and Families Committee has been at the forefront of providing sharper challenge to ensure that the improvement plans are robust and working.

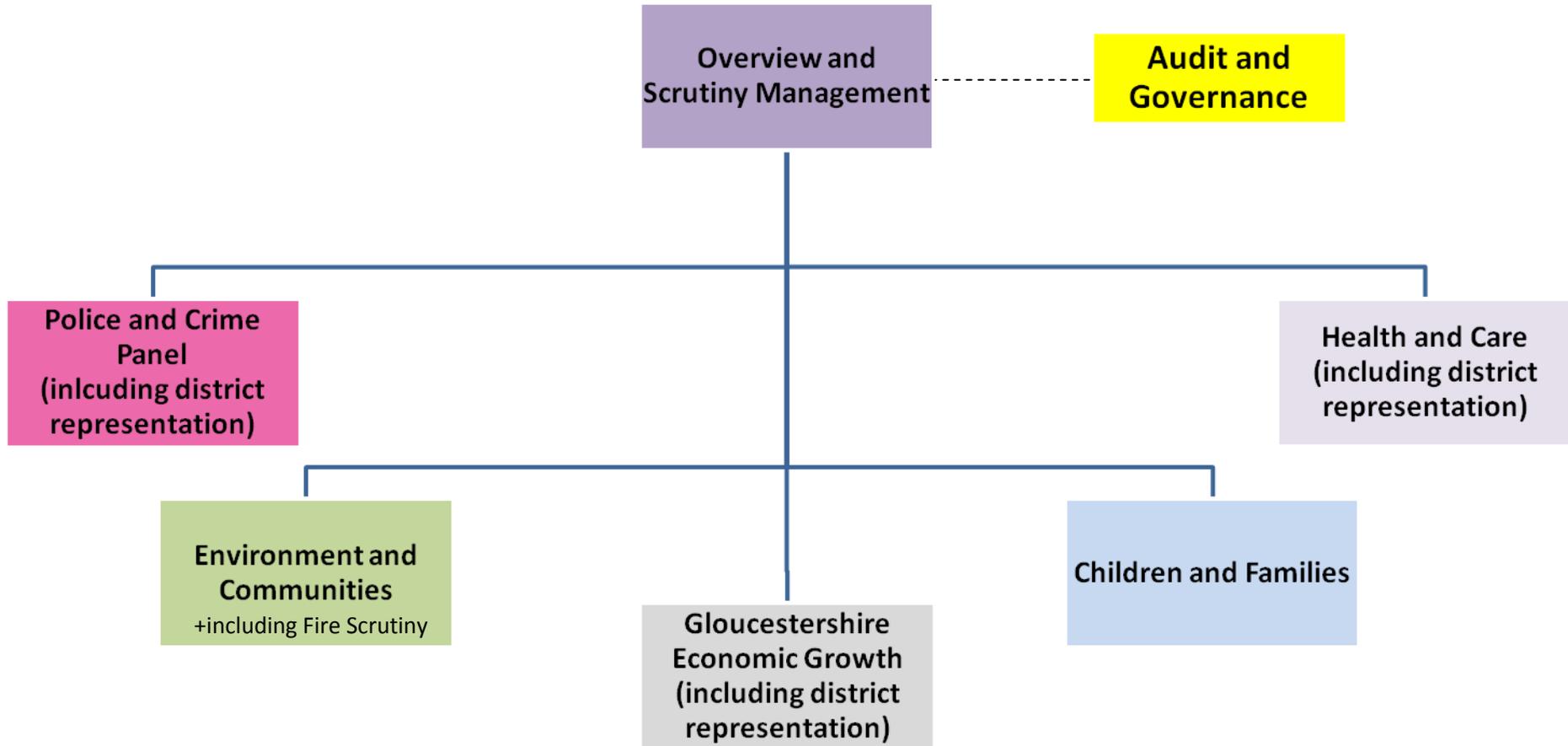
This has all been achieved in the first year of a new Council. Scrutiny has been effective in helping new members to better understand the Council and its services as well as to provide them with the opportunity to make a difference on behalf of their residents. This is supported by an evolving Member Development Programme that ensures that members

have the skills and knowledge to carry out their role.

As we move into the second year of the new Council, Scrutiny at the Council is maturing with further areas identified for reviews. Members show enthusiasm and dedication to their role.

On behalf of the officer team I would like to thank scrutiny members for their work over the past year.

# 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 Patrick Molyneux  
Vice-chair – Cllr Paul Hodgkinson  
Lead member – Cllr Kate Haigh

Jane Burns, Director: Strategy and Challenge

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

## 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 Brian Robinson  
Vice-chair – Cllr Lesley Williams

Chris Spencer, Commissioning Director: Children and Families

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

## 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 Dr John Cordwell and Cllr Rachel Smith

Nigel Riglar, Commissioning Director:  
Communities and Infrastructure

Stewart Edgar – Chief Fire Officer

Democratic Services Adviser – Laura Powick [laura.powick@gloucestershire.gov.uk](mailto:laura.powick@gloucestershire.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01452 324205

## 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 Carole Allaway Martin

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

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

### **Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel**

The Police and Crime Panel is a joint body of the local authorities served by Gloucestershire Constabulary. 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 Will Windsor Clive  
Vice-chair – Cllr Colin Hay

Stewart Edgar, Operations Director

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

### **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 Brian Oosthuysen

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

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

### **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 Dave Norman  
Vice-chair – Cllr Kevin Cromwell

Nigel Riglar, Commissioning Director:  
Communities and Infrastructure

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

## Scrutiny, making a difference

Over the course of 2017-18, 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.

### A417 'Missing Link' Consultation

In March, Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee received a presentation on the A417 'Missing Link' consultation, which was being undertaken by Highways England between 15 February and 29 March 2018.

The Committee considered the options proposed by Highways England in detail. In particular, the Committee discussed how to raise the issue of noise pollution along the A417 and A419 with Highways England.

The Committee agreed to present its view in a statement to the Cabinet Member for Economy, Skills and Growth, for him to consider as part of his decision on the Council's response to the consultation. The Committee agreed to support the recommendation by Highways England that Option 30 was the preferred route for the A417 'Missing Link' and asked that he request that noise attenuation along the A417/A419 be addressed as part of the A417 'Missing Link' scheme. Full council debated and supported the scheme.

### Air pollution and its impact on public health

On 12 July 2017, the Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee received a report on the Air Quality Schools Pilot Project. Following a discussion, the Committee agreed

that a task group should be established to consider further issues relating to air pollution.

The ambition of the task group was to understand the effects of air pollution on public health and which communities were particularly affected. The group considered the actions of the County Council and partners, taking into account national legislation. Members considered how to improve collaboration, understand how to engage and enable the public to reduce air pollution and identify Council policy areas which could contribute to air quality improvements.

The task group hosted a health and systems impact assessment stakeholder workshop on air quality and health in Gloucestershire. The workshop took place on 16 January 2018 and was attended by 55 delegates representing a wide range of organisations, including Gloucestershire County Council, the district councils, GFirst LEP, NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group, South West Highways England, Public Health England, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, Stagecoach, and the University of Gloucestershire.

The task group made recommendations around the establishment of a Gloucestershire Air Quality Monitoring Group, comprising of relevant officers from district and county councils. In addition they recommended that a Gloucestershire Air Quality and Health Partnership be set up comprising of representatives from both public and private sector organisations to drive the development and delivery of the agenda for air quality and health in Gloucestershire.

The task group also looked to make recommendations to support interventions to tackle congestion on roads to improve air pollution levels. They recommended that consideration is given in the development of planning and transport policies impacting on air quality and that it is included in the review of the Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan.

## **Audit and Governance Committee**

Members have carried out work across a wide remit, including approval of the Annual Statement of Accounts for 2017/18 and the Annual Governance report from Grant Thornton, the council's external auditors. In addition the Committee have received the report from the Member Code of Conduct Review and Risk Management Statement.

## **Budget Scrutiny**

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has the lead role in terms of budget scrutiny. It produces a response to the Cabinet's draft budget on behalf of the scrutiny function as a whole. A 'Budget Scrutiny' day was held on 10 January 2018, where sessions were held with Cabinet Members and Directors for each scrutiny committee to discuss the budget. OSMC members were in attendance throughout the day in order to identify any recurring themes and trends.

Over the course of the day members identified a number of key themes and suggested areas for Cabinet to consider further as they formulated the budget for full Council. These were included in a report received by Cabinet on 31 January 2018.

The Children and Families budget stood out as an area of high risk. While welcoming the investment in this area, Members asked that the Cabinet further consider whether the budget was sufficient to meet the additional demand and to ensure the continuation of the Improvement Plan.

Feedback from the budget scrutiny process has been positive and Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee members feel that this 'one day' approach allows for themes to be more easily identified.

## **Care Staff and the National Minimum Wage**

In November 2017, Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee received a report detailing the review of 'employment practices of all those care providers being used by the council to ensure that all care staff are paid at or above hourly National Minimum wage rates'. This had been referred to the Committee following a motion at full Council. The Committee was to decide whether there was a need to progress the matter.

The Committee welcomed the report and having considered the information, members were satisfied with the summary provided. They noted questions raised by members on other aspects of Domiciliary Care and that these questions could be raised through Health and Care Scrutiny Committee.

## **Chief Constable Confirmatory Hearing**

The Police and Crime Panel was required by the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 to hold a confirmatory hearing for the appointment of the Chief Constable. The Police and Crime Commissioner was invited to speak to the Panel to outline the selection process and to introduce the candidate. The candidate then had the opportunity to address the Panel, and members asked questions relating to professional competence and personal independence. The Panel then made its decision on whether to recommend the appointment, recommend against the appointment or to use its power of veto. The preferred candidate was the current Temporary Chief Constable who spoke to the Panel on his vision for the Police and his understanding of the role. The Panel unanimously recommended the appointment of Rod Hansen as Chief Constable and congratulated him on his presentation.

## Children's Services Improvement Journey

Between 27 February and 24 March 2017 the council was inspected by Ofsted with regard to services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers. The report was published on 13 June 2017 with the council being judged to be inadequate.

The Children and Families Scrutiny Committee has a significant role in the council's improvement journey, holding to account the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People and the Children's Services Leadership team. Committee members agreed that the improvement journey must be the priority for the committee's workplan.

To support this work the committee took up the offer of support from the LGA and undertook a series of training workshops including questioning skills and scrutinising safeguarding. The committee also received advice from an LGA Children's Improvement Advisor to help shape its approach to scrutinising the improvement journey.

Early in this process the committee held an extraordinary meeting to meet with the Chair of the Children's Services Improvement Board, and two Ofsted Inspectors to gain a detailed understanding of the inspection process and the role of the Improvement Board in the recovery process.

At each committee meeting members receive update reports from the Children's Services Improvement Board, the Quality Assurance Framework and revenue monitoring reports; performance reports are received quarterly. The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People attends every meeting to inform and answer questions. The committee also receives the agenda and reports of all Improvement Board meetings.

Ofsted undertakes monitoring visits to the council on a quarterly basis and the committee debates the monitoring letters with the Cabinet Member Children and Young People and the Director of Children's Services.

### Other Scrutiny Work

The majority of the committee's work is focused on the Children's Services Improvement. Alongside this the committee has also discussed:

Care Leavers, in particular to understand the implications for the local offer from the Children and Social Work Act (2017) which include extending support from a personal advisor up to the age of 25 for all care leavers, and the new corporate parenting duties.

Early Help in Gloucestershire (Families First Plus) – Ofsted had commented positively on the early help offer, and that social workers now report that they have a clearer understanding of the services for children and families. Committee members met with front line officers to gain a detailed understanding of the council's early help offer.

Annual Report of the Gloucestershire Children's Safeguarding Board (GSCB) – the Independent Chair attended the committee and discussed not only the report, but also responded to questions relating to the council's Ofsted Inspection.

### Cleeve Link – The Lessons Learnt

Cleeve Link was one of the largest non-national/locally owned providers of adult social care provision within Gloucestershire, operating a number of care homes and delivering the largest percentage of home care in the county. The company went into liquidation in early March 2017, and it was therefore important for the committee to understand how this had happened and that the lessons learned from this situation were acted on, and informed future practice.

The Committee debated this matter with the Director of Adult Social Services. The bottom line was that there was nothing that the council could have done to stop this from happening.

It was thanks to the goodwill, and commitment, of the Cleeve Link staff, that there was a continuation of care to customers following the closure. This was particularly impressive given that many of these staff members had not received payment for some weeks. Over the initial weekend the council had supported these staff by providing free petrol/diesel (via the Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service) and food; and had subsequently arranged for advances to those people who had not been paid.

The committee was concerned that signs had been missed but was assured that the council had both commercial and financial expertise in house, and that all procedures had been followed. Members were assured that all learning points from this situation would be taken forward to inform the commercial processes.

## **Draft Integrated Risk Management Plan 2018-21**

Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee considered the development and progression of the next Integrated Risk Management Plan for Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service. The Committee was informed by the Chief Fire Officer that GFRS, on behalf of Gloucestershire County Council in its capacity as the Fire Authority, was required to produce a plan on a periodic basis, which was every three years for GFRS, outlining how GFRS intended to address existing and emerging risks to Gloucestershire.

The Committee noted that following completion of the public consultation, a review of the representations would be carried out to allow for any revisions to the draft IRMP (2018-21).

Members were asked to comment on the plan and consider a submission by the Committee to the public consultation. The Committee agreed to

endorse the draft IRMP (2018-21), in addition to individual Committee members submitting representations to the consultation.

The final version of the draft IRMP (2018-21) was then resubmitted to Cabinet in February 2018 for formal approval.

## **Early Help in Gloucestershire – Families First Plus**

Children and Families Scrutiny Committee met with the Head of Families, Communities and Partnerships, the Service Lead for Family Support and an Employment Advisor, a Family Support Worker and a Family Group Conference Coordinator to discuss Early Help.

The committee was informed that Working Together to Safeguard Children guidance (2015) stated that ‘providing early help is more effective in promoting the welfare of children than reacting later. Early help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges, at any point in a child’s life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years’.

The Ofsted inspection (2017) findings on early help were positive and reported that ‘the restructuring of services on a locality basis means that early help is becoming more responsive to local need; increasing numbers of children have an early help plan; and, social workers report that they have a clearer understanding of the services available for children and young families’.

The Committee had a detailed discussion around young people getting back into employment, the universal credit system, and careers advice in schools.

It was questioned how success was measured. It was acknowledged that measuring the success of prevention was a complex area with a focus on building longer term support around the family. However, factors such as reducing demand,

fewer re-referrals into social care and obtaining feedback from families were important.

There remained concern that there could be families in the county that needed help that were not known to services. The committee was informed that it would be unlikely that these families were not engaging with services even if they had not come through the early help 'front door'. The committee was also informed that officers worked very closely with a range of partners including schools and health services as well as the community connectors employed by District Councils.

### **Economic Growth Local Meetings**

At the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee meeting in June 2017, it was agreed two 'stand alone committee meetings' would be held at each of the 6 district council offices during the 4 year term of the committee, (arranged on a rotational basis), with an invitation to the councillors from each respective authority to attend meetings and submit questions on 'localised' issues. In addition, lead officers from each local authority to be invited to the meeting to consider issues and priorities relevant to the economic agenda for the district/borough where the meeting is held.

Two successful meetings were held at Tewkesbury Borough Council (October 2017) and Cotswold District Council (February 2018), with useful input from the respective councillors and officers of each authority. Arrangements are now in place for Cheltenham Borough Council to host a meeting in October 2018. A review of the outcomes of the three meetings held to date and actions arising to be considered in 2019.

### **Education, Employment and Skills**

Economic Growth Scrutiny received a report in November updating members on several aspects of employment and skills in Gloucestershire, including an overview of the five skills projects in

Gloucestershire receiving funding from the European Social Fund and contracted through the Education Skills Funding Agency. The report also provided an update on the Gloucestershire Employment and Skills Board (GESB), which had met for the first time in October 2017.

The Committee also received detailed presentations on Learn Direct 'Work Start Gloucestershire' Project and the South Gloucestershire and Stroud College EDGE (work experience) and (apprenticeship support) Projects.

### **Gloucestershire Connects Study**

The Project Director for Gloucestershire Connects Study attended the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee in November 2017 having given a presentation at the Joint Committee earlier that day advising members of the commissioned study of transport connections for the future.

The purpose of the study was to consider the 'future role of road and rail in supporting strategic connectivity in Gloucestershire by 2050'. The initial phase of the study had involved SYSTRA consulting with a wide range of stakeholder in Gloucestershire as well as being supplemented by a review of important policy and planning documents.

The outcome of the discussion at committee was aimed at shaping the later stages of the study. Scrutiny members welcomed the opportunity, asking questions around access to and from the Forest of Dean, improvement works on the A417 Missing Link, rail links, and junctions on the M5 motorway at Stroud and Tewkesbury.

## **Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation trust – Independent Review of Financial Governance**

In September 2016 the Gloucestershire Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust (GHNHSFT) announced an unexpected and significant deterioration in its financial position. As a consequence of this, the GHNHSFT Board (in partnership with its regulator NHS Improvement), commissioned an independent review into the circumstances that contributed both to the financial decline and the fact that it had gone unreported for such a significant period of time. The report by Deloitte was published on 7 July 2017.

The Chair of GHNHSFT gave a detailed presentation to the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee on progress against the Deloitte report's recommendations, in particular the work to strengthen governance and finance reporting. There was in effect a new leadership team with the challenge of delivering rapid change. Both the Chief Executive and Chair felt that there was now more challenge at Board level. The speed with which the Chief Executive had addressed the situation was welcomed, as was the work to improve transparency across the governance process. The Committee was pleased to note that the learning opportunities from the review had been shared with STP partners.

The committee was concerned with regard to the potential impact on services. However as GHNSFT was commissioned by the Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group (GCCG) to provide specific services it must deliver them.

The Committee continues to monitor the situation.

## **Health and Wellbeing for the future: Community Hospital Services in the Forest of Dean**

In September 2017, the Health and Care Scrutiny Committee received a detailed presentation from the Chief Executive of Gloucestershire Care Services NHS trust on proposals for community hospital services in the Forest of Dean. The committee was aware that the work to identify health needs in the Forest of Dean area and develop proposals had started two years ago, and was therefore pleased that consultation on the way forward was now beginning. Having looked at the consultation proposals relating to the delivery of new models of care, improving local access to services, ensuring service capacity and providing a high quality physical environment, in detail the Committee agreed that it could support the consultation process. The committee was aware that Gloucestershire Care Services NHS Trust's preferred option was option 3: Investing in a single, new community hospital in the Forest of Dean.

In January 2018, the Committee received the outcome report of the consultation. The Committee's role in this process was to confirm whether or not it was satisfied that the consultation process was appropriate, and gave sufficient engagement opportunities for local communities. The committee did agree that the consultation process was appropriate. However, members were clear that whilst supporting the consultation process they did have concerns including transport issues, the number of beds and the impact of housing developments. The committee wrote formally to the GCS and GCCG Boards to inform their decision making. The committee will continue to be informed as this matter develops.

## Highway Customer Service Satisfaction Survey

The Lead Commissioner for Highway Authority, provided the Environment and Communities Committee with an update on the findings of the Highway Customer Service Satisfaction Survey.

Members were informed that the number of responses received from parish councils, town councils and elected members had dropped compared to previous years. Members were also informed that the results indicated a significant improvement in customer satisfaction levels compared to the 2015 results, particularly in relation to the service provided by Amey and the professionalism of staff.

The Committee discussed the results in detail, and recognised that whilst satisfaction levels had improved, further work to raise satisfaction levels needed to be done. Members also considered whether the low response rate could have been due to an increase in satisfaction levels.

The Committee was asked to consider whether the survey should be issued again in autumn 2017. Members compared the benefits of sending the survey out in either autumn 2017 or summer 2018. It was agreed that officers and the Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood would discuss the options, with reference to the thoughts of the Committee, and would provide the Committee with an update on their decision at a future meeting.

## Local Flood Risk Management Strategy – Annual Progress and Implementation Plan 2017/18

In November 2017, Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee was informed that Gloucestershire County Council, as the Lead Local Flood Authority for Gloucestershire, adopted its Local Flood Risk Management Strategy in 2014, which set out the Council's

proposals to fulfil its role over the subsequent 10 years. The Council also produced an Annual Progress and Implementation Plan every autumn.

The Committee recognised the significant number of flood alleviation schemes which the Flood Alleviation Team had and continued to deliver for the County. In particular, it was recognised that since 2007, £48million had been spent on flood alleviation schemes, and over 2000 properties had been protected from flooding within the County. However, it was also acknowledged that there were still schemes that needed delivering to protect further homes and communities within the County.

There was a discussion around soft upper catchment flood alleviation schemes. It was suggested that the Committee may wish to consider soft flood alleviation schemes as an item for scrutiny at a future meeting.

The Committee noted that a final version of the Plan, which would take into account the Committee's comments, would be added to the Flood Risk related pages on the Council's website.

## Minerals Local Plan

Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee received a report on the emerging Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire (2018-2032) in November 2017. This report detailed the analysis of representations received to the draft plan consultation and the proposed significant changes to be considered for incorporation into the Publication version of the plan.

Members noted that Gloucestershire County Council was the local Minerals Planning Authority for the County, and that the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required planning authorities to produce local plans. Gloucestershire County Council was currently seeking to replace the existing Gloucestershire Minerals Local Plan, which was adopted in 2003.

Members were informed that the public consultation received over 2,500 individual representations, and over 25 percent of representations were concerned with the acceptability or otherwise of the proposed local policy for assessing any future oil and gas developments. Regarding the candidate allocations, the Redpool's Farm allocation and the Stowe Hill/ Clearwell quarry complex allocation received the most interest.

In response to concerns raised by some Committee members that the emerging Minerals Local Plan for Gloucestershire (2018-2032) would not include an oil and gas policy, it was explained that officers were confident that the proposed approach would be acceptable to the planning inspectorate. It was also suggested that, in light of the significant public interest of the issue, the proposed approach was the most pragmatic way forward, and that should there be a renewed interest in oil and gas extraction in the future, the policy could be reviewed separately to the rest of the plan. It was added that the plan included thematic policies to cover related issues such as water quality and flood risk. Additionally, it was noted that any policy not in line with the Government's current permissive approach, may not be considered favourably by the inspectorate.

### **Motion 787: Pavements**

The Cabinet Member for Highways and Flood presented a report to Environment and Communities Scrutiny members on measures to improve the inspection and fixing of pavements to the Committee.

The Committee noted that, on 7 December 2016, full Council considered Motion 787: Pavements, and resolved that the Cabinet Member report back to the Highways Advisory Group on measures to improve the inspection and fixing of pavements, before reporting back to Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee with a positive action plan. However, as the Highways

Advisory Group was disbanded, the report was being received directly by the Committee.

Some members highlighted the poor state of footways in their divisions, and the need for better measures to improve the inspection of footways. There were queries from members regarding the assessment of town centres by walked inspections, and regarding the liability and cost of footways claims.

Several members expressed their satisfaction at working with their Local Highways Manager to identify and resolve problems with footways in their divisions.

Following a detailed discussion, it was agreed that the issue of footways would be added to the work plan for the Committee to reconsider in a year's time. It was also suggested that the local highways satisfaction survey include a specific section for the consideration of footways and cycle ways in the future.

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

In September 2017 a motion was put to full Council asking for a review of all outstanding flood resilience procedures to determine the capacity of our communities in the face of future crises. The motion was referred to Environment and Communities Scrutiny Committee who requested a report to be considered at the January 2018 meeting on Gloucestershire's flood and community resilience.

Although significant progress had been made to improve the County's resilience to flooding, the Committee recognised that further measures were required to protect homes that were still at risk from flooding. They noted that further flood alleviation schemes were being investigated to protect those properties still considered at high risk.

## **One Gloucestershire: transforming care, transforming communities (STP)**

The Sustainability and Transformation Partnership is a key driver for health and social care in Gloucestershire. The Health and Care Scrutiny Committee receives a progress report on the STP at every meeting, and will have a formal role to play in the consultation on any significant service change proposals identified through this process.

### **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 5.6% in the police related Band D Council Tax or £12 for the year. The Panel supported the precept.

### **Road Safety Review**

The Environment and Communities Committee received an update from the Assistant Chief Fire Officer, 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 Committee was also informed that the review was an opportunity to consider the challenges facing Gloucestershire over the next five to ten years, and to ensure that road safety functions were integrated effectively to address these challenges.

## **School Exclusions**

The Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been concerned at the level of permanent exclusions in Gloucestershire for some time. In January 2017, the committee received an item on this matter to enable members to gain a broader understanding of the issues. The Committee agreed that this matter required in-depth consideration and that there should be a task group into this matter in the new council.

Task group members considered the available data, discussed approaches to addressing this issue with schools and met mainstream primary and secondary head teachers and governors, alternative provision schools and students who have been permanently excluded.

The task group did not find a definitive answer to the question of why there were a high number of permanent exclusions in Gloucestershire schools. Factors that were identified included the cost to schools of being inclusive, lack of curriculum choice, DfE and OFSTED accountability measures, competition between schools, lack of disincentives to exclusion, at risk children not attending early year's settings and transition from primary to secondary school.

The task group was pleased to see that there were approaches in place to try and reduce the number of permanent (and fixed term) exclusions; not just from the education perspective but also youth justice. These approaches are Restorative Gloucestershire; Restorative Practice in Schools; the Children First initiative (embedded within Restorative Justice Gloucestershire); and the establishment of the Education Inclusion Team in the county council.

In March 2018 the government commissioned an externally led review of school exclusions. The task group agreed that given this national work it was a good time to pause their work and the recommendations include the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee following up on this

work once the national inquiry has published its report.

The task group report identifies 18 recommendations; these are, in the main, made to the Cabinet and the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board. The task group's report was also submitted to the national inquiry as part of its call for evidence.

## Strategic Performance Reporting

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has responsibility for monitoring strategic performance. The Committee has developed its approach by introducing an item to allow service specific committees to feed back their performance concerns ahead of the consideration of the strategic performance report.

## Winter Planning – did it achieve its objectives?

At the November 2017 Health and Care Scrutiny Committee meeting the Gloucestershire Winter Resilience Plan was received and discussed. It was therefore important to understand whether the objectives identified in the plan had been achieved. The committee was pleased to welcome representatives from across all partners (NHS, Public Health and Social Care) to the meeting to discuss this matter with committee members.

It was clear that despite the challenges a lot had been achieved; attributed to significantly closer partnership working, and to every member of staff working together to achieve the best for patients. Headlines from this period include: -

- Significantly improved winter ED (Emergency Department) performance – the national 4 hour standard was met in November 2017 (the first time in 4.5 years);

December 2017 saw an increase in performance of 16.84%, and January 2018 a 15.01% improvement in comparison with the same time period in the previous year;

- A 78% reduction in ambulance handover delays, with zero over one hour;
- 59% increase in weekend discharges;
- Reduced delayed transfers of care (DTC) with Gloucestershire being the third best in the country for January 2018;
- The (Gloucestershire Care Services NHS Trust) rapid response service supported 80% (1295) more patients to remain in their own home this winter compared to last year; and,
- GP Support in the EDs had been outstanding.

The system had been running 'very hot' all the time and staff had been concerned that they were not able to deliver the level of care that they would wish to for patients waiting on trolleys in corridors. Committee members were assured that these patients were tracked, and that the number had reduced. It was acknowledged, by partner organisations, that the system was not yet where it needed to be, but that there was evidence of good progress and the system had performed better than the previous year despite additional challenges such as a severe and protracted flu season. The committee was particularly pleased to note the significant improvement in delayed transfers of care (DTC).

The committee was thankful for the care, compassion and dedication of NHS and social care staff.

## Summary

**Simon Harper**

### **Statutory Scrutiny Officer**

We are fortunate to have a group of non-executive councillors that are enthusiastic about Scrutiny and are keen to engage with officers in undertaking reviews. This enthusiasm, together with Cabinet Members who recognise the value of Scrutiny, puts us in a good place moving forward.

One of our great strengths is that we do not have a 'one size fits all' approach but tailor Scrutiny to meet the needs of the topic under consideration. For some issues a task group review works best whereas for others a session at a committee meeting is more appropriate.

Budget scrutiny was probably the most outstanding success this year. It is an area that most councils struggle with and for the new Council we changed our approach. Members from across the Council commended the process as it allowed them to gain a better understanding of how the Budget had been developed and provide constructive challenge.

Scrutiny though is more than about meetings at Shire Hall and we encourage our members to go out and see how services operate on the ground. This allows them to understand the challenges facing particular services and provides a more rounded approach. This has been particularly effective for Health Scrutiny with members having the opportunity to visit local hospitals and the ambulance control centre at Almondsbury.

I am confident that we have strong foundations for Scrutiny moving forward. Topics are already coming forward for the coming year. These include Vision 2050. Scrutiny can have an important role in helping shape the approach to the work and members are well placed to put forward ideas and suggestions on what the county should look like in future.



### Democratic Services Team

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