



Gloucestershire
COUNTY COUNCIL

Gloucestershire County Council
Scrutiny Annual Report
2020-22

CONTENTS

Introduction: Cllr Phil Awford

Scrutiny Structure

Activity Overview

Summary: Stephen Bace

INTRODUCTION

This is my first annual scrutiny report as Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny, and I wanted to start by giving my thanks to all the scrutiny Chairs, Vice-Chairs and Committee members who have played a valuable part in this authority's scrutiny process over the past 12 – 18 months.

You will see from the report that there have been a number of excellent examples of scrutiny activities and outcomes, be that within Committee time or within our continuous task group activity.

In that vein, I wanted to pay particular thanks to the work of the Restoring our Rivers Task Group who have worked very hard to research and produce a commendable report, which has been praised throughout the Council. I look forward to revisiting this piece of work in the future and hopefully securing some positive outcomes and improvements for the county's rivers. This piece of work was a brilliant example of 'leaving politics at the door' and working productively towards a common goal.

Scrutiny success can flourish if it is seen in a positive light by the executive and officers, as a critical friend wanting to improve council performance and delivery for its residents. So, my final thank you is to the Cabinet Members and officers who tirelessly support our activities, providing information and support to assist effective scrutiny.

We will all appreciate what a challenging time this has been in terms of being able to move into a post-pandemic arena of hybrid working. The advances we have made as a Council towards providing hybrid council meetings has been impressive. Whilst I think we all welcome being able to return to in-person meetings, having the ability to join virtually and becoming more accessible for members of the public has been an invaluable improvement.

Looking forward, it is right that we as a Council continue to evaluate our scrutiny arrangements, reflecting on the success but also the challenges we have faced, and towards the next 18 months. It also provides the opportunity to 'health check' our scrutiny arrangements in light of the previous review.

I look forward to seeing what 2023 brings.

Cllr Phil Awford

Chair of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee



SCRUTINY STRUCTURE

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny
13 GCC members

Adult Social Care
and Communities
Scrutiny
9 GCC members

Children and
Families Scrutiny
9 GCC members + 3
added members

Economic Growth
Scrutiny
6 GCC members + 6
District members

Environment
Scrutiny
9 GCC members

Health Scrutiny
9 GCC members + 6
District members

Fire and Rescue
Scrutiny
7 GCC members

Police and Crime
Panel (PCP)
Joint Scrutiny
Committee
(4 GCC members, top ups,
2 independent members +
District representation)

Activity overview

- 1. Scrutiny Task Groups**
 - a) Restoring our Rivers**
 - b) Single Use Plastics**
 - c) Bus Improvement**
 - d) Rural Estates**
- 2. Budget Scrutiny**
- 3. Environment Scrutiny**
 - a) Climate Change**
 - b) Road Safety (Motion 876)**
- 4. Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel**
- 5. Children and Families Scrutiny**
- 6. Health Scrutiny**
 - a) Review of Urgent and Emergency Care in Gloucestershire**
 - b) Establishment of the NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care System**
 - c) Recruitment and retention of clinical and non-clinical roles within local GP Practices**
- 7. Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny**
 - a) Council Motion 890 – Domestic Abuse**
 - b) Council Motion 881 – Reducing Health Inequalities**
- 8. Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny**
 - d) Modern Methods of Construction**

e) Employment and Skills

9. Fire and Rescue Scrutiny

a) HMICFRS Inspection

b) Blue Light Collaboration

c) Community Risk Management Plan

10. Scrutiny on Cabinet Decisions

Scrutiny Task Groups

Restoring Our Rivers Task Group

Established: August 2021, Reported to Cabinet: September 2022

Background:

In September 2020, Motion 864 - Restoring our rivers was referred from County Council to Environment Scrutiny Committee (minutes of the full Council meeting can be found [here](#)). Members of the Committee, supported by the proposer and seconder of the motion, requested the formation of a task group to further explore this issue. This was also supported by the Cabinet Member responsible (minutes of the Environment Scrutiny Committee can be found [here](#)).

In March 2021, Environment Scrutiny Committee approved a one-page strategy request to establish a task group. The ambitions for the task group review were as follows:

- To work with partners, NGOs and water treatment operators to understand the extent and derivation of pollution present in the county's rivers.
- To understand the extent of the damage this pollution is having on the ecosystems within our rivers.
- To understand the legal context of permissible sewage dumps and whether this is being followed in the county.
- To invite water treatment operators and other polluters to meet with officers and councillors to scrutinise their performance.
- To explore the extent of wild swimming in Gloucestershire and the possibility of establishing a designated bathing area, as promoted by the Rivers Trust's "Together for Rivers" campaign.

Membership:

Councillors: Phil Awford (Chair), Cate Cody, Stephen Hirst, Paul Hodgkinson, Nicholas Housden, Graham Morgan, Dominic Morris, Susan Williams and David Willingham.

Meetings:

The group first met on 10 August 2021 where they discussed an outline of the areas they would like to address. It was noted that the issue of river pollution was not one within GCC's control or responsibility. The Group's research and resulting recommendations would therefore be focused on external organisations.

Throughout the next 6 months, members met with the following organisations:

- Environment Agency
- Ofwat
- Gloucestershire water companies (Severn Trent, Thames, Wessex Water)
- Windrush Against Sewage Pollution (WASP)
- Save the Wye and The Friends of the Lower Wye
- Surfers Against Sewage
- Rivers Trust
- District partners
- GCC flood/rural estate officers
- Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust
- City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
- NFU

Members agreed due to the subject of this task group, as much as possible should be held in public session but understood there may be a need for private session to allow organisations to speak more freely. This would be decided on a meeting-by-meeting basis.

Recommendations

Point to note: Throughout the Group's research, they noted that there was a fundamental issue of connectivity and information sharing between the different parties who had responsibilities for river pollution. The disconnect made it very difficult to understand who was accountable for what area. There was also a major issue of underfunding in this area, particularly for the Environment Agency.

After being considered by Environment Scrutiny on 14 July 2022, members were keen to stress that the below recommendations should be actioned as a matter of urgency.

1. GCC to encourage their rural estate farmers to engage with relevant expert organisations such as the Environment Agency, and to adopt agricultural practices that address river pollution and improve water quality. GCC to advise and signpost its tenants to appropriate training opportunities being provided by third parties to help further their understanding of water quality and biodiversity matters.

(Responsibility of Rural Estates at GCC)

2. To identify and write to local organisations and individuals in the county already undertaking Citizen Science Data Collection on river pollution levels, to link them up with the Environment Agency and local water companies who may be able to assist in providing data collection equipment.

(Responsibility of the Task Group/Democratic Services)

3. To share the final report with all six Gloucestershire MPs and request a meeting to discuss the recommendations, the current law on sewage spills into the rivers, funding for the Environment Agency and the idea of taxing water company profits per discharge event, which would then be used to fund environmental pollution clean ups, rather than going back directly to the Treasury.

(Responsibility of the Task Group/Democratic Services)

4. To identify 'hot spot' river areas (one in each district) to focus initial investigation, investments, and efforts and to then use these as a guide for future improvements in other river areas.

The Task Group envisage that the above investigation and investment would eventually lead to applications for bathing water status in some areas of the county (further detail on the process for designation can be found [here](#)).

(Responsibility of the Task Group/Democratic Services)

5. To reconvene after 6 months to check progress on the recommendations, with a view of considering regular 6-monthly monitoring meetings going forward. These meetings could also be used to stay in contact and up to date with local pressure groups who have helped inform this piece of work.

(Responsibility of Corporate Scrutiny to approve and then the Task Group/Democratic Services)

6. To respond to Ofwat's consultation on their draft methodology for the 2024 price review via the Environment Scrutiny with officer support.

(Responsibility of the Task Group/Democratic Services)

7. Communications and Sustainability teams at GCC to approach local water companies to offer support on environmental awareness campaigns and messaging to help amplify and share their content by linking up with the Greener Gloucestershire website, newsletter, and corporate social media account.

(Responsibility of Communications/Sustainability)

8. To share the Task Group's report with the six district council Planning Committee's and to request that more weight be given to mitigating river pollution incidents when considering planning applications.

(Responsibility of the Task Group/Democratic Services)

Response:

The report was presented to Environment Scrutiny Committee and approved in July 2022. The minutes of the meeting can be accessed [here](#).

It was then presented to Cabinet in September 2022. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning responded on behalf of Cabinet. He welcomed the report and commended group for the resulting report and recommendations. Although noted GCC's limited accountability to influence this topic, it was clear the Council had a clear reasonability to have a voice that works with others to address what was an issue that everybody recognised as unacceptable. It was highlighted as a worthy topic for Environment Scrutiny to do further work on as necessary.

The task group will in the future seek approval from Corporate Scrutiny to progress the recommendations outlined above. Environment Scrutiny have requested to keep a 12 monthly update report on their work plan.

Single-Use Plastics (SUP) Task Group

Established: March 2019, Reported to Cabinet: December 2020

Background:

In March 2018, a motion was unanimously carried at Gloucestershire County Council's (GCC) full Council as follows:

This Council therefore resolves to:

- Eliminate all SUP within County Council managed buildings and facilities by 2020, and seek to encourage the elimination of SUP within its supply chain by 2025.
- Asks the Gloucestershire Joint Waste Partnership to consider how they could promote the reduction of SUP across the county and to highlight areas of further lobbying to central government by both collection and waste disposal authorities.

In February 2019, following a member question at full Council from Cllr Eva Ward, the Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning expressed support for a task group to be establishment to examine all options to become a 'single-use plastic-free' Council and reduce SUP use in the County.

Following this, in July 2019, Environment Scrutiny Committee approved a one page strategy request from Cllrs Eva Ward and Andrew Miller to establish a task group.

Membership:

Councillors Eva Ward (Chair), Andrew Miller, Lesley Williams, Suzanne Williams, Loraine Patrick and Carole Allaway-Martin.

To note: Cllr Carole Allaway-Martin had to leave the task group membership in January due to her appointment to the Council's Cabinet. The Constitution for GCC states that executive members cannot be members of scrutiny task groups.

Aims and Objectives

- To understand the current progress towards the elimination of SUPs within County Council managed buildings and facilities, including any promotional campaigns.
- To understand the technical impact of different plastics on the environment.
- To explore SUP initiatives at other county councils.
- To work with and learn from local district councils on their SUP initiatives.
- To understand how to effectively engage and enable Council partners, schools and the public to reduce their use of SUPs, taking account of projects run by 'Surfers Against Sewage': <https://www.sas.org.uk/about-us/>

Meetings:

12 September 2019
10 October 2019
28 November 2019
16 January 2020
14 February 2020
10 September 2020
23 October 2020

To note: The group's work was suspended from March – September 2020 due to the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Recommendations:

1. To produce an accessible, but well informed 'in house' fact sheet on the impact of plastics on the environment, to be shared within the organisation, on all GCC's recycling media platforms, as well as with new staff induction information.

(Responsibility of Waste Management)

2. Write to all non-maintained schools in Gloucestershire highlighting the changes made to maintained schools use of SUP and highlight education materials available on Gloucestershire Recycles (<https://www.gloucestershirerecycles.com/>) and Surfers Against Sewage (<https://www.sas.org.uk/about-us/>).

(Responsibility of Education)

3. To provide regular updates to the Environment Scrutiny Committee (and other scrutiny committees where appropriate) on the progress of the Procurement Toolkit.

(Responsibility of Procurement)

4. Follow the example of another county council and add an information page on compostable packaging to the Gloucestershire Recycles website.

(Responsibility of Waste Management)

5. Produce a briefing to highlight all the good work already done towards reducing the Council's use of SUP and share within the organisation and externally, as well as within new staff induction information.

(Responsibility of Asset Management & Property Services)

6. Schedule media messaging around key holidays throughout the year about the importance of reducing the use of SUP, particularly the group noted Halloween, Guy Fawkes and Christmas.

(Responsibility of Waste Management and Communications)

7. To explore setting up a competition for the best SUP reducing initiatives in the county, which should include GCC giving a recognition award to the best submissions. The competition should be offered to, but limited to, businesses and schools

(Responsibility of Waste Management and Communications)

The report was presented to Cabinet on 16 December 2022. The Cabinet Member for Environment and Planning thanked the members for the task group. He provided an overview of communications activities and public campaigns aimed at raising awareness of single-use plastic waste prevention and recycling in Gloucestershire. Plastic waste was a considerable proportion of the household waste collected in Gloucestershire. Thin film plastic contributed 8% of residual waste by weight, with a further 14% comprising of mixed plastic materials and items such as disposable nappies.

Current and ongoing campaigns including helping local communities to set up and operate schemes for hard to recycle plastics and promoting the use of 'real nappies' amongst parents in order to drive down the use of disposables. He also referred to the current Christmas campaign highlighting the advice of waste avoidance.

Planning was underway for a Spring 2021 campaign title 'Clear on Plastics' which aimed to cut through the confusion on plastics and offer practical tips and advice on prevention and recycling.

The campaign plan for 2021/22 was currently being prepared, and a focus on both waste reduction and recycling would be maintained.

October 2022 – update on recommendations:

1. To produce an accessible, but well informed 'in house' fact sheet on the impact of plastics on the environment, to be shared within the organisation, on all GCC's recycling media platforms, as well as with new staff induction information – responsibility of Waste Management:

Please visit the Waste Partnership website for further information:

<https://www.gloucestershirerecycles.com/reduce/plastics/>

2. Write to all non-maintained schools in Gloucestershire highlighting the changes made to maintained schools use of SUP and highlight education materials available on Gloucestershire Recycles (<https://www.gloucestershirerecycles.com/>) and Surfers Against Sewage (<https://www.sas.org.uk/about-us/>) – responsibility of Education
3. To provide regular updates to the Environment Scrutiny Committee (and other scrutiny committees where appropriate) on the progress of the Procurement Toolkit – responsibility of Procurement
4. Follow the example of another county council and add an information page on compostable packaging to the Gloucestershire Recycles website – responsibility of Waste Management

Please visit the Waste Partnership website for further information:

<https://www.gloucestershirerecycles.com/reduce/plastics/>

5. Produce a briefing to highlight all the good work already done towards reducing the Council's use of SUP and share within the organisation and externally, as well as within new staff induction information – responsibility of Asset Management & Property Services
6. Schedule media messaging around key holidays throughout the year about the importance of reducing the use of SUP, particularly the group noted Halloween, Guy Fawkes and Christmas.

Please visit the Waste Partnership website for further information:

<https://www.gloucestershirerecycles.com/reduce/plastics/>

7. To explore setting up a competition for the best SUP reducing initiatives in the county, which should include GCC giving a recognition award to the best submissions. The competition should be offered to, but limited to, businesses and schools

Outstanding due to Covid-19

Bus Improvement Task Group

In the process of being established.

Background:

- Motion to Council (6 July 2022). Minutes of the full Council meeting can be found here: [LINK](#))
- Gloucestershire's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP): [LINK](#)

- The one-page strategy was considered at a Joint meeting of Environment and Economic Growth Scrutiny on 22 November and approved.

Aims and Objectives

- To understand the role and responsibilities of Gloucestershire County Council (as the Local Transport Authority) in the planning, commissioning and delivery of local public transport services, and the role of district and parish councils.
- To understand the long-term strategic aims objectives and targets for Gloucestershire's local bus services and relationship with the Council's other transport and corporate policy objectives, including decarbonisation and the Gloucestershire 2050 vision.
- To understand what can still be achieved over the 3-year period of the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) to improve Gloucestershire bus services without the additional funding allocation from the DfT and the basis on which a future BSIP bid or similar could be successful.
- To understand how customer experience and expectations and accessibility to essential services are taken into consideration in decision making processes.
- To understand how GCC's contracting processes can support transport decarbonisation and air quality targets.

Desired outcomes

- Recommendations on how public transport access to essential services can be sustained and improved, including ways that district and parish councils can support these objectives.
- Advice/recommendations to Cabinet on funding priorities as part of future network planning and the budget setting process.

Rural Estates Task Group

In the process of being established.

Background:

Aims and Objectives:

Desired outcomes:

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Budget Scrutiny

Meeting held: 6 January 2022

Reported to Cabinet: January 2022

Background:

Members met with Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Leader of the Council, and Pete Bungard, Chief Executive to discuss the Council Strategy and receive an introduction to the budget scrutiny day. Throughout the day the committee would meet with the Cabinet Members and Directors under the remit of each Scrutiny Committee and discuss their areas of the budget. Members on each of the Committees were welcome to attend for their relevant sessions or to stay for the whole day. The minutes of the meeting would then be provided to Cabinet to help inform their consideration of the budget.

Membership:

Councillors: Phil Awford (Chair), Matt Babbage, John Bloxsom, Ben Evans, Andrew Gravells MBE, Terry Hale, Colin Hay, Jeremy Hilton, Stephen Hirst, Dr Andrew Miller, Dominic Morris, Lisa Spivey and Chloe Turner

Aims and Objectives:

Members were advised to consider how effectively the proposed budget responded to:

- The changing needs of Gloucestershire residents and communities
- The priorities and ambitions set out within the Council Strategy – Looking to the Future
- Any legislative or other changes in national policy or guidance

Meeting:

In addition to scrutiny members, the following were in attendance:

Officers

- Pete Bungard, Chief Executive
- Steve Mawson, Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Corporate Resources

- Rob Ayliffe, Monitoring Officer and Director of Policy, Performance and Governance
- Colin Chick, Executive Director of Economy, Environment & Infrastructure
- Sarah Scott, Executive Director of Adult Social Care & Public Health
- Paul Blacker, Director of Finance
- Kaye Turner, Business Partner for Economy, Environment & Infrastructure
- Suzanne Hall, Finance Business Partner
- Siobhan Farmer, Deputy Director of Public Health
- Kirsten Harrison, Director of Education
- Mark Preece, Chief Fire Officer
- Chris Spencer, Executive Director of Children's Services
- Stephen Bace, Lead Democratic Services Adviser

Cabinet Members

- Cllr Mark Hawthorne, Leader of Council
- Cllr Stephen Davies, Cabinet Member for Children's Safeguarding and Early Years
- Cllr Vernon Smith, Highways and Flood
- Cllr Kathy Williams, Adult Social Care Delivery
- Cllr Carole Allaway Martin Adult Social Care Commissioning
- Cllr David Gray, Environment and Planning
- Cllr Lynden Stowe, Finance and Change
- Cllr Dave Norman, Public Protection, Parking and Libraries
- Cllr Philip Robinson, Economy, Education and Skills
- Cllr Tim Harman, Public Health and Communities

Recommendations/ summary

While the Committee did not make any formal recommendations, the significant comments raised by members were included in the minutes and received by Cabinet.

These included comments relating to Highways Local, the important of partnership working, as well as a need to review the Road Safety Partnership and providing examples within the strategy of securing in investment such as Cyber.

The Committee outlined the importance of seeing risks reflected in the Council Strategy and how resources had been allocated to mitigate those risks.

Response:

The budget was agreed at the meeting of full Council on 16 February 2022.

Environment Scrutiny

Committee members: Cllrs Roger Whyborn, Susan Williams, Chris McFarling (Vice-Chair), Gill Moseley, Alan Preest, Phil Awford, Sajid Patel, Dr David Willingham and Vernon Smith (Chair)

Climate Change

The impact of climate change and the Council's progress in meeting its reduction targets has remained a key issue for Environment Scrutiny.

Motion 861

At full Council on 24 June 2020, members unanimously passed Motion 861 which resolved:

[...] This Council asks the Cabinet member for Environment and Planning who is responsible for climate change strategy to produce a report to Environment Scrutiny Committee on what lessons the Council has learnt during Covid-19 that the County Council can apply to its policies and practices to meet our climate change targets and produce a cleaner, greener post-Covid County. Referring to key strategies including Vision 2050, Industrial Strategy, Strategic Transport Plan and Council Plan.

On 24 November 2020 Environment Scrutiny considered this report. It explored the impacts of Covid-19 on the Environment within transport, food and farming, health and wellbeing, access to nature, biodiversity, and natural capital. As well as innovative environmental solutions that could contribute to the country's response and recovery as a result of the pandemic, and how then how all the above could provide opportunities, but also challenges, for the council's strategies. The full report can be found [here](#). This report would also form part of Cabinet's consideration of the first Gloucestershire Climate Change Strategy Annual Report and Action Plan 2021/22-2026/27 in December, since the Strategy was approved in December 2019.

Recommendations:

After a lengthy discussion and consideration of the report by members, the Chair summarised the following. The full minutes can be accessed [here](#).

[...] The Committee appreciated a lot of this work was very much ongoing but as far as the motion as concerned, it was proposed that the report be recommended to the Cabinet Member to successfully carrying on with this agenda and developing the good and important work.

Gloucestershire Climate Change Strategy Progress Report

On 29 November 2021, the Environment Committee considered a progress report on whether Gloucestershire was on track to meet the commitments outlined in the Gloucestershire Climate Change Strategy, and whether the plan is ambitious enough to address the crisis at hand.

The report concluded what had been achieved since the Strategy was approved in 2019, Gloucestershire's emissions performance and the Action Plan progress. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

Recommendations:

Following a lengthy and in-depth discussion, members of the Committee requested the Cabinet Member to feedback the following comments at the next Cabinet meeting in December:

- *To commend GCC on the substantial reduction in its own emissions, with the added action of proving clarification around the baseline and methodology used to measure this reduction.*
- *To provide a briefing paper on the pros and cons of adopting the PAS 2060 standard and whether the team had sufficient resources to deliver this, if appropriate.*
- *To understand whether there were any additional actions that could be taken to help reach the targets committed to for the Gloucestershire wide reduction, noting specifically whether GCC had the resource, powers or structures in place to deliver this.*
- *The need for integration as well as coordination in order to effectively deliver against these shared targets.*

The full minutes for this meeting can be accessed [here](#). It was also agreed going forward that the Gloucestershire Climate Change Strategy Progress Report would be brought to each November Scrutiny Committee prior to being considered by Cabinet in December each year. The next review is scheduled for 22 November 2022.

Climate Leadership Gloucestershire

In light of the climate emergency declarations which all Councils in Gloucestershire made between 2018 and 2019, Leadership Gloucestershire agreed to establish the Countywide Climate Change Coordinator role to facilitate and coordinate strategic climate action across Gloucestershire's public sector bodies, and in September 2021 the creation of Climate Leadership Gloucestershire – to raise the profile and level of coordinated action on climate change within the County.

The purpose of Climate Leadership Gloucestershire (CLG) is to bring Gloucestershire's councils and other strategic partners together to collaborate in

developing strategic solutions and maximizing the benefits of strategic working to tackle the climate emergency.

Environment Scrutiny requested a report on the workings of the Partnership and its progress to date at their meeting on 9 March 2022. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

Following consideration of the report it was agreed that going forward, the Committee would receive a regular progress update report at each meeting as an information item. If there were then any areas they wanted a more in-depth understanding of, this would be scheduled on their workplan. The Committee welcomed the positive start to the CLGG work. The full minutes can be accessed [here](#).

The committee now receive a Thematic Update Report at each meeting. An example of this can be seen [here](#) at item 9.

Road Safety

Motion 876

In June 2021, full Council resolved to refer Motion 876 to Environment Scrutiny for their exploration and consideration:

This Council believes that 20 is plenty where people are.

This Council agrees with and supports the UK Government's recent endorsement of The Stockholm Declaration, which stipulates in Resolution 11 that a council should "mandate a maximum road travel speed of [20mph] in areas where vulnerable road users and vehicles mix...except where strong evidence exists that higher speeds are safe."

Council resolves to formally adopt Resolution 11. In practice this means that the default speed limit on Gloucestershire's urban and rural residential streets will be 20mph, except on main roads where speed limits, if higher, must be both safe and appropriate.

As the Local Highways Authority, this Council calls on Cabinet to consult the county's District Councils, Parish Councils and communities to identify all the roads which should adopt a 20mph speed limit no later than 30 April 2025 and to make significant progress towards realising these changes in tandem - establishing 20mph limits in identified places quickly if communities agree.

Council commits to providing the necessary funding, to achieve the goal of making our residents safe across Gloucestershire.

At their meeting in September 2021, Environment Scrutiny considered an initial report responding to the motion. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

Recommendations:

The Committee concluded to produce a summary document to be shared with the Lead Cabinet Member. The full minutes can be accessed [here](#).

Following consideration of the attached report on 9 September 2021 Environment Committee, the following proposals have been made:

1) *The Committee endorse the recommendations originally proposed in the report to be actioned by the Lead Cabinet Member and relevant officers:*

- *Officers to continue to deliver existing schemes as above*
- *Officers to develop a methodology for the prioritising of requests for 20mph zones and limits*
- *Officers to work with in Partnership with Gloucestershire Police to review the Community Approaches to Road Safety document and develop a 20mph policy supported by internal guidance.*
- *Officers to collect data to confirm the effectiveness of recently introduced 20mph schemes.*

2) *The Committee propose the additional recommendations to be added and explored by the Lead Cabinet Member and relevant officers:*

- *Consultation with District Councils, Parish Councils to understand local thoughts/views/ considerations on adopting a 20mph speed limit.*
- *Any possible funding within GCC to support future action*
- *Examples of changes made within other local authority areas – to include the adoption of 20mph zones/limits and any other speed reducing initiatives, and to include other LAs' approach, such as Oxford CC and others, to the way the 2013 DfT circular is interpreted.*
- *To consider the provision of a wider GCC & Glos Police 'offer' to communities on alternative and broader options (other than 20mph zones/limits) that result in the same outcome, improving road safety and reducing speed.*

NB: Whilst the majority of members support the inclusion of this proposal, three members did not, not because they disagree with it but that they feel it important to focus on the 20-mph issue rather than dilute the report with other issues.

- *Broader engagement (and/or partnership working) with the police around enforcement of speed limits/zones. To include discussions on community-led technology enforcement options.*
- *Consideration of batching to improve efficiencies*

The Committee request that an update on the exploration of the above recommendations/proposals be brought as an interim report to the 23 November 2021 meeting and a full report to the 12 January 2022 meeting.

Progress updates

The Committee received a progress report at their next meeting in November. The table in the report was a summary of the agreed actions, the progress against the actions, and expected final delivery dates. Members were also informed that officers in parallel to the work on the 20-mph policy, they were also developing a new overarching Road Safety Policy, which will encompass various different activities and would be launched at a Road Safety Workshop in December. The full report can be accessed [here](#) and the minutes of the meeting [here](#).

A more in-depth update report was considered at the next meeting in January. Members were able to give full feedback on the progress of actions identified during their initial discussion in September. The full report can be accessed [here](#) and the minutes of the meeting [here](#).

GCC Road Safety Policy

The draft Road Safety Policy went out to public consultation in June 2022. At their meeting in September 2022, members of scrutiny considered and commented on the draft document prior to the next stage of Cabinet approval. The full report can be accessed [here](#).

Following a length discussion, members summarised the following areas that they felt needed further consideration in the Policy:

- *Review of speed limits on higher speed roads – acknowledging the majority of KSIs occur on A roads. This should not be limited to urban areas.*
- *Include reference to improving safety for horse riders on the highway, as well as improving the access and upkeep of bridal ways.*
- *More detail on use of personal electric vehicles, particularly e-scooters.*
- *There was a noticeable issue of the current legislation and technology not being at the same level.*
- *Better use of social media to prompt campaigns. It was highlighted that the DfT campaign, for example, on recent changes to the Highway Code to allow more right of way for pedestrians had not run long enough to reach everyone in society.*
- *More emphasis on the importance of monitoring before and after implementation of measures to ensure they are working effectively.*
- *Listening to community voices and not just following the data. If a community are particularly worried about a road safety issue but the data does not indicate a problem, precautionary or prevention measures may be needed.*

- *Ensuring new development did not compromise road safety and making sure developers are paying for the most appropriate safety measures.*
- *Residents and drivers being able to feedback/report on near miss collisions to help better identify safety issues before an accident occurred.*
- *Ensure that variations in the weather are considered, for example, something that is safe on a dry summer day may be dangerous on a foggy winter night.*
- *Consideration of low-cost solutions such as anamorphic road paint (optical illusions) to slow down traffic and preventing vehicle access to pedestrian areas.*

The full minutes of discussion can be accessed [here](#).

Joint Scrutiny of Transport Decarbonisation

Background: Noting comments made in the scrutiny review of the close working nature of Environment and Economic Growth Scrutiny Committees, it had been agreed that where there were topics of interest to both Committees, joint meetings would be arranged where possible. A Joint Committee was therefore arranged on 24 May 2022 to consider a presentation on the Transport Decarbonisation agenda.

Aims and Objectives

To brief this Joint Committee on the challenge for decarbonising transport for the county and GCC's proposed steps to reach net zero transport emissions by 2045 in line with our target.

That Scrutiny notes the findings of the Gloucestershire Transport Carbon Reduction Pathway data analysis outlined in this report and approve the next steps proposed to deliver on the adopted Gloucestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP) commitment to reduce per capita transport carbon emissions to zero by 2045, GCC's Climate Change Strategy carbon reduction targets.

Scrutiny is also asked to note that all Gloucestershire Districts declared a climate change emergency and that there is a need for every stakeholder and citizen in Gloucestershire to be involved in delivering the changes as it cannot be left to one single authority to deliver.

The comments and questions from members were minuted and can be viewed [here](#).

Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel

Membership: Cllrs Joe Harris, Sajid Patel (Vice-Chair), Steve Robinson (Chair), Brian Tipper Ray Brassington (Cotswold District Council), Cllr Philip Burford (Forest of Dean District Council), Flo Clucas (Cheltenham Borough Council), David Gray (Tewkesbury Borough Council), Dawn Melvin (Gloucester City Council) and Martin Pearcy (Stroud District Council)
Independent Members - Martin Smith

The Gloucestershire Police and Crime Panel receives a range of reports and updates to enable it to scrutinise the work of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Gloucestershire. They receive a verbal update at every meeting from the PCC on current activity, a report from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC) Chief Executive, and ad hoc item reports which will relate to the workings of the OPCC or particular areas of concern. The Panel's 'live' work plan be accessed [here](#).

Members continue to receive regular and in-depth update reports on the Constabulary's improvement progress, following its inadequate rating during the HMICFRS Crime Data Inspection in 2019. The reports and minutes for the two reviews this year can be accessed here: [March 2022](#) and [September 2022](#). The Panel had become increasingly concerned about the level of pressure on police officers and staff in terms of mental health and social care challenges, as well as the level of evidence required to successfully charge. Officers that the constabularies best opportunity to try and come out of special measures was through the repeated PEEL inspection process, which would likely be after next April but there was no firm clarity on timeframes at the moment.

The Panel is required to comment on the appointment of the Chief Executive of the OPCC. During this year the Panel were pleased to agree the appointment of the Deputy Chief Executive to the Chief Executive position. The Panel had worked with the Deputy for some time and were very impressed with the answers provided to their questions, particularly in the area of partnership working, management style, acknowledging the importance of the wider team and the past experience examples. The Panel also noted that, although it was clear there was good working relationship with the PCC, the new Chief Executive still maintained their personal independence and would not be afraid to pose challenge where appropriate. The minutes of the hearing can be accessed [here](#).

It is also required to comment on the Police and Crime Plan prior to its publication. at their meeting September 2021, the Panel commented on the Commissioner's draft 2021 – 2025 Plan. Members welcomed the focus on performance frameworks and targets for each priority, balanced with views and comments from the general public via a survey to gain a better understand of their views on police and crime matters. The Panel welcomed the inclusion of a public approach to policing but agreed that this needed involvement from all partners to avoid unmanageable pressure on the force. In summary, the Panel agreed that it could support the draft plan; it was clear

and comprehensive, and it was good to note that there was an emphasis on victims. The report and minutes can be accessed [here](#).

In addition to the regular items and reports it considers, the Panel has begun considering items that give them a better understand of the OPCC as a whole. In their meeting in November 2022, members received a presentation on Contact, Complaints and Reviews which gave an in depth understanding of the level of contact the OPCC has with the public, the sort of complaints they deal with and the processes they have in place. The Panel were really grateful for to the two presenting officers for their incredible hard work in a very busy area for the office.

In September 2022, lead members of the Panel undertook interviews to recruit to the independent member positions. The Panel is required to have at least two independent members and they were delighted to welcome two new members in Stella Tams and Kingston Myles.

Children and Families Scrutiny

Membership: Cllrs Linda Cohen, David Drew, Ben Evans (Vice-Chair), Tim Harman, Stephen Hirst, Beki Hoyland, Mark Mackenzie-Charrington, Dr Andrew Miller (Chair) and Emma Nelson

Added Members - Charlotte Blanch (Clifton Diocese)

Co-Opted Member - Ambassador for Vulnerable Children and Young People

Children's Services Improvement Journey: Ofsted Outcome Report

Following the council's rating of Inadequate from the Ofsted Inspection of services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers in February 2017 much of the committee's focus has been on the council's Improvement journey. The Committee received the long-awaited Ofsted Outcome Report and scrutinised its findings. It was noted the Authority had moved from inadequate to requires improvement, members felt this was a fantastic position for the service to be in and thanked officers for all their efforts. The Committee recognised the Authority still had work to do to achieve a good rating, as the service was a whisker away from achieving good for leadership and management of its social work practice.

Members recognised the Authority had come a considerable way since the initial report in 2017, and the situation was direr than initially reported as the service had been allowed to drift for some time following the last inspection. A strong leadership team who had a collective approach to improve children services had been appointed in 2018 and had embarked on a long and difficult journey, which had been further compounded by the pandemic.

It was noted the Ofsted Inspection Team felt significant progress had been made and this was acknowledged within their report, most importantly they recognised that children in Gloucestershire were no longer at risk of harm.

Ofsted believed the Authority knew its strengths and weaknesses and recognised plans were in place to overcome the weaknesses. In an effort to overcome the challenges a clear model of practice was evolving.

In terms of what areas needed further improvement, members noted that the quality of accommodation for young people was an area of concern and there were some improvements required to the Care Leavers Service. The main issues faced by frontline staff was the aged IT infrastructure and this continues to be a constant source of frustration as work was often lost due to system issues.

Ofsted complimented the Social Workers and the practices used were regarded as a positive trajectory. As such, staff now felt more positive to work for Gloucestershire County Council as there were opportunities for career progression. Social services staff had continued to work in a face-to-face environment throughout the lockdown period and this had been recognised and commended by the Ofsted Team.

The Ofsted reporting framework had changed since 2017 and it was now more rigorous. It was recognised the Inspectors were very skilled and practiced at homing in on the service issues and they undertook considerable research before the visit and were reassured by the forensic process that had been undertaken.

The Committee wished to convey its congratulations and thanks to all staff involved in the service area, they hoped officer's felt empowered to continue to deliver the service, as their efforts had not gone unrecognised. The strong leadership and determination of the Senior Leadership Team in Children's Services continue to maintain the pace of change and deliver robust services for children and families in Gloucestershire.

Gloucestershire Early Help

The Committee recognised that the outcome of the Ofsted Inspection would inform the provision of early help, as it would help to prevent escalation into the system later on and would help give a clear steer on in terms of commissioning services. The number of children going into care had not decreased, as children were not leaving the care system as they had in previous years. It was recognised this was a national trend and there was a more complex picture rather than a straightforward correlation.

The Committee appreciated that felt family centres did a considerable amount of good work in the local community and offered critical triage in terms of early help and support. Members were urged to look at their own local communities in an effort to develop their own understanding on what services were available in terms of early help.

Domestic Abuse

The Committee received an update on activities carried out as a response to the findings and highlighted wider practice development as informed by the learning of recent Domestic Homicide Reviews, which involved a considerable amount of partnership working between the Police, Health and Adult Services. Members felt the Domestic Abuse Strategy should be reviewed more regularly, as there had been an increase in domestic violence during the pandemic.

Youth Offending Service

Members were advised that there was a duty placed upon the Authority as the accountable body, to bring forward an annual youth justice plan. There had been a significant upshift in youth service funding nationally, and the focus was now on early intervention. The Youth Service Team were working closely with the supporting families programme, and this was proving to be a successful alliance.

The Committee noted that Gloucestershire was deemed to be a relatively safe county, but there had been a spike in youth violence recently and it was necessary to understand what the primary cause was, in order to intervene more effectively. It was recognised that children outside of school were at greater risk of offending, the aim was to provide a wrap-around service to address those various factors, while protecting the community from harm

It was necessary to engage with schools to prevent them from excluding young people and to offer support to schools to help them manage those young people rather than exclude pupils, which left them vulnerable to other influences.

Restorative Practice in Education

The Committee received a presentation on restorative practice and were informed of it was used throughout schools and the Authority in terms of the family hubs, restorative justice, etc. The restorative practice model had been promoted nationally and continued to share good practice methods.

It was important for the Authority to engage with schools as a whole in order to bring about a positive change and this would be a challenge given there were 106 academies. In addition, the new Schools Bill which would impose a new set of academy trust standards and there would be a statutory duty to cooperate with the local authority.

There were strong parallels between restorative practice and the youth justice system, the committee hoped by persevering with restorative practice in schools there would be fewer clients for the youth offending team in future.

Alternative Provision

The Committee were advised of the progress of Alternate Provision (AP) and the continued activity to support the improvement across the county. Members recognised there was often a misinterpretation of AP, as the aim was to provide support to children who were unable to access mainstream education, with a view of returning to mainstream education. As AP involved meeting a complex range of needs and it wasn't necessarily just children with challenging behaviour, high anxiety, etc.

The Committee were advised that a significant amount work had been undertaken to address the issues and as a result, the quality of LA provision had improved and was now rated good in all areas by Ofsted, which was a big step forward in terms of quality of provision.

There was a consultation exercise being undertaken to discuss the possibility of bringing the two AP schools into one consolidated school that would deliver county wide LA maintained provision. The new model would need to reflect the different types of need across the county, as there was a need for high quality provision in Gloucester especially for secondary aged pupils.

There were approximately 100 children accessing the Gloucestershire Hospital Education AP service, 220 children in LA maintained commissioned service and 35 were in primary provision, of which 8 of those primary children were permanent exclusions. It was hoped by early intervention, exclusions could be avoided as it was often proved detrimental to the child. The Committee have requested that a guidance leaflet be made available for parents.

Family Hubs

The Family Hub model had emerged nationally as an effective integrated model which was being encouraged by various policy initiatives. The service had explored the future of Children and Family Centre's as part of a potential key ingredient to support the creation of Family Hubs, whereby they were reimagined as community bases for families with children aged 0-19 and up to the age 25 with SEND. There had been a reduction in services nationally and this was now a wide scoping offer that meant services needed to be reconfigured.

The Committee welcomed the report and thought the concept of a one stop shop for 0–25-year-olds and families was an enormous remit. It was noted there was a three-year incremental programme to deliver the whole Gloucestershire offer. When the Family Hubs were established, a visit would be arranged to view the centres in operation during 2023.

Fostering Update

The Committee received the Fostering Service Annual Report 2021/22; and agreed to receive periodic updates on progress with Fostering Service improvement as part of the regular reporting by the Director of Children's Safeguarding and Care on progress with the Continuous Improvement Plan.

The service had responded proactively and effectively to those challenges, with a sustained focus on ensuring that foster carers were supported and enabled to

provide good quality care for children and young people in the county. The Committee recognised and wished to thank all foster carers for their continued support and for providing home education especially during challenging times.

The Committee noted engagement with foster carers and children had been sustained and gradually evolved from on-line to face to face, as the impact and restrictions of Covid had been relaxed.

Members were urged to share and promote GCC Fostering through their social media outlets. It was recognised by using social media effectively, all members could work together to achieve a common goal and educate more people through the various media platforms available.

Widening Participation in Gloucestershire's Grammar Schools

The Committee considered what options were available to engage high ability disadvantaged students and their parents in applying to the county's grammar schools as part of the Year 6 to Year 7 secondary transition arrangements. A collective group of Grammar Schools Head teachers, known as the G7 Group, were taking on the challenge of recruiting disadvantaged children to the grammar schools.

Safeguarding Children in Gloucestershire

The committee receives the Annual Safeguarding Children Report each year.

Revenue Budget Monitoring

The committee is concerned about the significant overspend in the budget and receive regular monitoring reports.

Health Scrutiny

Committee members: – Cllrs Andrew Gravells MBE (Chair), David Brown, Linda Cohen, David Drew (Vice-Chair), Stephan Fifield, Tim Harman, Stephen Hirst, Paul Hodgkinson and Alan Preest

Co-opted Members – Cllrs Stephen Andrew, Adrian Bamford, Helen Molyneux, Collette Finnegan, Helen Fenton and Jill Smith

Review of Urgent and Emergency Care

Joint meeting with Adult Social Care and Communities

Background:

In response to the Covid-19 Coronavirus Pandemic, the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee received regular updates on the delivery and performance of health and care services across the county. This included detailed presentations and extracurricular discussions with NHS Gloucestershire representatives and the Southwest Ambulance Service Foundation Trust (SWASFT).

Performance across the urgent and emergency care system in Gloucestershire was significantly challenged during the winter of 2021/22. In response, health and social care organisations committed to working together to review the challenges to the system and to consider activities to effect a radical transformation of NHS services across urgent and emergency care.

At the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 12 July 2022, members supported a proposal from the Chair of the Committee, Cllr Andrew Gravells, to undertake a review of issues impacting on urgent and emergency care services in Gloucestershire. At that meeting, it was agreed to arrange a joint workshop event in September 2022, for the members of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee to consider concerns raised at the meeting and the outcomes of a Local Government Association (LGA) and NHS England Peer Review plus proposals relating to a recently commissioned piece of work undertaken in partnership with consultants, Newton Europe, to improve the experiences and care outcomes of the people of Gloucestershire.

Newton Europe commenced its work in July 2022, with the aim of developing an integrated approach to the delivery of urgent and emergency care services and improving system flow based on the needs of the person and carer. The work encompassed the physical health, mental health and social care needs of patients experiencing or having experienced urgent or emergency care treatment.

Aims and Objectives

The aim of the review is to consider issues impacting on health and care partners across the integrated care system in their ongoing work to reform urgent and emergency care, improve system flow and ultimately improve care outcomes and experiences for the people of Gloucestershire.

Meetings

12 July 2022

12 September 2022

08 November 2022

15 November 2022

Recommendations

At the workshop event in September 2022, members agreed to consider a single item agenda on the delivery of urgent and emergency care in Gloucestershire at a joint scrutiny committee meeting on 15 November 2022. Representatives from Gloucestershire County Council, NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board, NHS Gloucestershire Hospitals Foundation Trust, NHS Gloucestershire Health and Care Foundation Trust, NHS Gloucestershire Primary Care, NHS 111 Service, South-West Ambulance Service Foundation Trust, Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Gloucestershire Police and Newton Europe to contribute to the discussion and respond to questions.

At the meeting, members of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee will receive an update on the conclusions and findings of the diagnostic work undertaken by consultants, Newton Europe, in partnership with Gloucestershire County Council and NHS Gloucestershire.

In addition, members supported the suggestion to arrange a visit to SWASFT and the NHS 111 Control Offices at Bristol on Tuesday 8 November 2022. The purpose of the visit will be to observe the working environment at each location and to speak to key workers. The observations of the visit to feed into the scrutiny review of urgent and emergency care services.

Outcomes

Given the significance of the challenges to the urgent and emergency care system in Gloucestershire and following on from the outcomes identified by Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection reports in 2021/22, this extensive piece of work is likely to form an on-going piece of work for the members of both the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee throughout 2023/24.

Establishment of the NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care System

Background:

Following the passing of the Health and Care Act 2022, significant changes to the structure and governance of local NHS bodies, including changes to the way local health bodies work with Local Government, were introduced. In adherence to the

changes, the Gloucestershire Integrated Care System received statutory status on 1 July 2022.

Prior to this, a significant amount of work was involved in the development of the NHS Gloucestershire Integrated Care Board, (known as NHS Gloucestershire). The Integrated Care Board, (ICB), also received formal status on 1 July 2022, replacing the NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group.

NHS Gloucestershire (ICB) is responsible for overseeing the day-to-day running of local NHS health and care services, including the commissioning of services. Represented by Executive and Non-Executive Directors, as well as partner members from local NHS organisations, (NHS Trusts and Primary Care), local authorities and Gloucestershire County Council, the ICB, (NHS Gloucestershire), is responsible for organisational and operational decisions relating to NHS funding and investment.

The NHS Integrated Care Board will work closely with the Gloucestershire Integrated Care Partnership, (known as the One Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Partnership), bringing together health, social care, public health and other voluntary and community sector partners. The ICP will be aligned with Gloucestershire's existing Health and Wellbeing Board, with a shared chair and members in common. The appointment of the membership to the Partnership and work on producing an Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Strategy commenced in August 2022.

Statutory guidance issued by the Department of Health and Social Care in July 2022 on the scrutiny arrangements for the Integrated Care Partnership can be found at the link below:

[Health overview and scrutiny committee principles - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/guidance/health-overview-and-scrutiny-committee-principles).

Scrutiny of Integrated Care Partnerships falls under the Health Scrutiny agenda and is therefore within the remit of the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Guidance states: "It is important to note ICPs, as a joint committee between the ICB and partner local authorities, as well as other members agreed by the ICP locally, will be within the scope of HOSCs".

As a major transformation in healthcare, both locally and nationally, the Gloucestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee received regular briefings on the formation of the Integrated Care System throughout the development phase for the new arrangement. To adapt to its new scrutiny role, the committee will receive regular reports from the NHS Gloucestershire ICB in the form of a One Gloucestershire NHS Integrated Care System (ICS) Performance Report and a One Gloucestershire NHS Integrated Care Board (ICB) Update Report at each meeting.

Draft Terms of Reference, setting out the membership, remit, responsibilities, and reporting arrangements for the ICP were presented to the County Councils' Constitution Group on 10 October 2022. The recommendations agreed at this meeting were presented to Full Council at its meeting on 9 November 2022.

The Terms of Reference for the ICP are subject to annual review by the Partnership. Any recommendations from the review will be brought to the Constitution Committee

and to County Council for consideration and approval. Any changes to the Terms of Reference of the ICP will require the joint approval of the ICB and the County Council. The Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be advised of any changes and responsible for the review and scrutiny of matters relating to the planning, provision and delivery of health services in Gloucestershire.

Aims and Objectives

To agree and to respond to the scrutiny requirements of the Gloucestershire Integrated Partnership.

Recruitment and retention of clinical and non-clinical roles within local GP Practices

Background:

Prior to and increasingly since the COVID-19 Pandemic, GP numbers have been challenged nationally. At the Gloucestershire Health, Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 17 May 2022, members requested an update on the local position and were advised that a range of factors had contributed to this position, including significant increases in workload, changing patient demographics, negative (national) media portrayal of General Practice, increased complaints, the desire for a more balanced home/work life and an increasing administrative burden. It was reported that such factors had significantly impacted on increased levels of fatigue, stress and sickness and a subsequent reduction in GP sessions/hours. It was also reported that some GPs were changing their roles from partner GPs to salaried or locum GPs or had made the decision to develop a portfolio career, (performing other roles in addition to that of their clinical GP role), subsequently affecting GP Practice performance and delivery of clinical hours.

In response, considerable support was being provided to Gloucestershire practices and primary care networks, (PCNs), in terms of recruitment, retention and offering education to staff working in Primary Care. Whilst Gloucestershire's GP workforce was slightly above the national average, (May 2022), there was increased focus on the consequences of GPs choosing to leave, move or change roles in response to national trends and influences. In addition to ongoing engagement with GP Practices and Primary Care Networks, NHS Gloucestershire's Primary Care Workforce team was consistently reviewing GP workforce numbers, using both nationally available data and the Primary Care Training Hub's annual Workforce Survey.

Noting the latest GP Workforce position for each of the six localities within Gloucestershire, it was reported that Gloucester Inner City practices had been particularly affected by significant challenges in both numbers of GPs and vacant GP sessions, for which a number of initiatives had been introduced by the then Clinical Commissioning Group's Primary Care Workforce and Training Hub Team. In addition, Gloucestershire CCG was at the forefront of offering successful and wide-ranging GP fellowships and providing GPs with opportunities to develop personal skills and to respond to 'forward thinking' training practices.

Recognising the benefits and skills International Medical Graduates (IMG's) were able to bring to Primary Care, the Gloucestershire Primary Care Training Hub was

working with a number of practices to provide guidance and support on the national Tier 2 Visa application process, including providing funding for visa costs. Tier 2 visas last for a period of 4 years, after which the sponsoring organisation, (the practice), would need to apply for a visa renewal. It was noted that visa applications can take up to 10 weeks to process and that the training hub was working with Gloucester Inner City practices to support and speed up this process. The training hub was also planning to create a summary document of support that could offer support covering all stages of the GP career.

In the past year, the CCG had successfully bid for monies from NHS England and Improvement (NHSE&I) to invest in recruitment and retention initiatives for all 71 Gloucestershire practices. Having discussed what support would be beneficial to GPs, the Primary Care Workforce team had also successfully bid for funding to establish a facilitated peer support group to support GPs when trying to return to general practice or considering working within Gloucestershire's Practices.

It was reported that there was an increasing number of GPs who, having been on maternity/paternity/parental leave had either, not returned to practice or had returned for a short period and had then chosen to leave the profession. Several reasons contributing to this, including increased workloads and the desire for a better work-life balance having had children. To support GPs, the CCG was in the process of establishing and facilitating parental workshops and peer groups for those GPs returning from maternity/paternity/parental leave. The Gloucestershire's Primary Care Workforce team would also be shortly relaunching its Catalyst Scheme in order to provide support to mid-career GPs. In doing so, Gloucestershire would be providing programs of support for early, mid and late career GPs.

Using ring-fenced funding from NHS England and Improvement (NHSE&I), the Gloucestershire CCG had procured a Primary Care Flexible Staff Pool to enable the posting and booking of vacant sessions by practices and locums plus the establishment of a local GP Chambers to provide support to GP Locums.

Outcomes

Members thanked the presenting officers for the detailed update and commended the level of work being invested in the recruitment of staff in Gloucestershire.

Responding to questions on the use and flexibility of locums, it was confirmed that recruitment and retention initiatives did not extend to locums. In response to member concerns about the shortage of GPs in Gloucester City and the number of sessions being provided at that time, CCG officers reassured the committee that every effort was being taken to overcome the issue. Encouraging patients to use GP services in a practical, innovative and more logical way, and assisting in developing relationships between GPs and their patients, was at the forefront of this work.

Referencing the work of PPGs, (Patient Participation Groups), and the requirement by NHS England to establish groups of patients to assist in maintaining performance at local surgeries, it was agreed that, now more than ever, was an opportune time for PPGs to become more proactive. The work of community nurses at GP surgeries and the invaluable support they and the members of the reception team, (care navigators), might offer in reducing pressures on GPs was also highlighted.

Members recognised that, since the pandemic, there had undoubtedly been a change in the culture of GP Practice arrangements. Noting resistance to the new arrangements within some cohorts, it was agreed that more education and enlightenment on the benefits of triage arrangements, (including reduced waiting times for treatment), needed to be further explored and developed.

One member enquired about the impact international and national emergency situations, including the impact of the recent pandemic might be having on local NHS recruitment and retention arrangements. Responding to international situations in general and specifically to the current crisis in Ukraine, officers were asked what measures were being considered to address potential gaps in key positions within the Gloucestershire Integrated Care System. After the meeting, it was reported that 'there had not yet been any direct impact on NHS recruitment and retention as a result of the crisis in Ukraine'. Reflecting on the 10-week waiting period from which to process Tier 2 Visa applications, it was agreed that the committee write to the MP for Gloucester and seek his support in reducing any administrative bottlenecks.

It was confirmed that the recent pandemic had significantly impacted on NHS staff morale and engagement scores, with a notable decline in staff well-being and satisfaction at work experienced since the start of the pandemic. In response, NHS Gloucestershire confirmed that it was investing in a range of measures, including targeted recruitment campaigns, developing apprenticeship roles, enhancing opportunities for staff to further develop their professional skills and education, in addition to international recruitment. It was requested that further updates on this particular issue to be explored.

Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny

Committee members: Cllrs Stephan Fifield (Chair), Cate Cody, Terry Hale, Stephen Hirst, Steve Robinson, Lisa Spivey (Vice-Chair), Pam Tracey MBE, Susan Williams and Suzanne Williams

Response to Council Motion 890 – Domestic Abuse

Joint meeting with Health Scrutiny

Background: At the Gloucestershire County Council meeting on 8 September 2021, members considered Motion 881, (Tackling poverty and deprivation in Gloucestershire), with a request to 'bring regular progress reports on the progress of the Health and Wellbeing Board's seven strategic priorities to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee'. To view the discussion at the council meeting on 8 September 2021, please visit the Council website at the link here

Acknowledging common interests and linked agenda items with the Adult Social Care and Communities Scrutiny Committee, a report was presented at a joint committee meeting of the two committees on 18 October 2022. The report included an update on the outcomes of the Gloucestershire Levelling Up Our Communities Conference held on 19 May 2022.

A key part of the presentation was an overview of the work on the seven strategic priorities identified by the Gloucestershire Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB). These included: Physical Activity, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), Mental Wellbeing, Loneliness and Social Isolation, Healthy Weight, Best Start in Life and Housing. It was explained that the priorities have been considered as HWBB priorities since 2019, with regular updates and reports at HWBB meetings. Each priority received dedicated agenda time to 'spotlight' the area in terms of progress, opportunities, and challenges.

Highlight reports for each of the seven priorities were considered at the HWBB meeting held in September, alongside a performance update report, comprising indicators for each priority area. Key highlights identified by the presentation included: -

1. Physical activity - distribution of over £250,000 grant funding; a pilot approach used to social prescribing for young people; delivery of on-line workshops for communities, clubs and organisations; strength and asset-based delivery in geographical areas of inequality;
2. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) - evidence of good professional knowledge of ACEs; 138 ACE Ambassadors forming a network of people to champion ACEs awareness across Gloucestershire; Action on ACEs' partnered with

the Nelson Trust to roll out training to 160 people from VCS organisations and ACEs Ambassadors

3. Mental wellbeing –roll out of a £200k community grants scheme for community led and based projects aimed at addressing the wider determinants of mental health and Five Ways to Wellbeing initiative, focusing on groups at highest risk of poor mental health and social isolation; provision of new early intervention mental health services throughout the pandemic to improve access to support for children and adults experiencing mild-moderate mental health issues working alongside existing commissioned services; completion of a suicide audit to inform a refresh of the countywide suicide prevention strategy and action plan; ongoing delivery of training in suicide prevention, mental health and crisis care awareness for VCS and public sector organisations.

4. Loneliness and social isolation – it was reported that, since the pandemic there had been significant changes to peoples' social connectedness. To address such changes, new and diversified community-based activities had been introduced to bring people together and to consider the differences and need for change since 2019.

5. Healthy weight - Feeding Gloucestershire (FG) was established to coordinate and enable local efforts to help coordinate and support efforts to improve access to affordable healthy food for those affected by food insecurity, working with food aid providers and charities and develop a sustainable programme to eradicate food poverty; a successful bid had been made to participate in the Soil Association's Sustainable Food Places (SFP) programme and become one of the country's first Sustainable Food Counties; pilot delivery of community-based weight management support to continue in Gloucester City and the Forest of Dean until March 2023, to be followed with a countywide children and young people's community weight management service.

6. Best Start in Life – highlights from the nine focus areas introduced to help support families seek the best start in life included: The Steps Ahead Programme, funded through the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) Grant, (providing tailored packages of care to support families impacted by the pandemic in all areas of child development); equity audit of Gloucestershire's maternity services, (introduced to make improvements to services for women from areas of deprivation and some ethnic minority groups); help provided to young children who had missed out on support provided during the pandemic;

7. Housing and Health – this priority had shifted significantly during the past year due to the Ukraine situation and the use of contingency hotels for asylum seekers. At the time of the meeting, Gloucestershire was hosting refugees through a variety of schemes, including the Gloucestershire Refugee Resettlement Programme (GRRP)

for Syrian refugees, the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy, the Homes for Ukraine (HFU) scheme and the Ukraine Family Scheme

It was noted that significant changes had impacted on the county since the priorities had been identified in 2019, notwithstanding the COVID pandemic which had created specific challenges in progressing each of the priorities. It was agreed the current cost-of-living rise would undoubtedly affect the outcomes of the priority areas and present new challenges.

The HWBB priorities will now form part of the developing Integrated Care Partnership Strategy, with a focus on long-term change from tackling the wider determinants of health and primary prevention. It was requested that the members of both committees should continue to receive periodical updates on each of the priorities.

A detailed update on the 'Levelling Up Our Communities Conference' held on Thursday 19 May 2022 was also provided. The conference was attended by over 131 people from a broad range of voluntary sector and community groups and public sector leaders. To view the conference report and summary of the discussions, including next steps, please refer to the link here. It was agreed the conference had highlighted how important it would be to work together to reinforce the links between communities, voluntary and community sector partners, public sector organisations and businesses.

Response to Council Motion 881 – Reducing Health Inequalities

Joint meeting with Health Scrutiny

Background: At the Gloucestershire County Council meeting on 8 September 2021, members considered Motion 881, (Tackling poverty and deprivation in Gloucestershire), with a request to 'bring regular progress reports on the progress of the Health and Wellbeing Board's seven strategic priorities to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee'. To view the discussion at the council meeting on 8 September 2021, please visit the Council website at the link [here](#)

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priorities since 2019, with regular updates and reports at HWBB meetings. Each priority received dedicated agenda time to 'spotlight' the area in terms of progress, opportunities and challenges.

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2. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) - evidence of good professional knowledge of ACEs; 138 ACE Ambassadors forming a network of people to champion ACEs awareness across Gloucestershire; Action on ACEs' partnered with the Nelson Trust to roll out training to 160 people from VCS organisations and ACEs Ambassadors

3. Mental wellbeing –roll out of a £200k community grants scheme for community led and based projects aimed at addressing the wider determinants of mental health and Five Ways to Wellbeing initiative, focusing on groups at highest risk of poor mental health and social isolation; provision of new early intervention mental health services throughout the pandemic to improve access to support for children and adults experiencing mild-moderate mental health issues working alongside existing commissioned services; completion of a suicide audit to inform a refresh of the countywide suicide prevention strategy and action plan; ongoing delivery of training in suicide prevention, mental health and crisis care awareness for VCS and public sector organisations.

4. Loneliness and social isolation – it was reported that, since the pandemic there had been significant changes to peoples' social connectedness. To address such changes, new and diversified community-based activities had been introduced to bring people together and to consider the differences and need for change since 2019.

5. Healthy weight - Feeding Gloucestershire (FG) was established to coordinate and enable local efforts to help coordinate and support efforts to improve access to affordable healthy food for those affected by food insecurity, working with food aid providers and charities and develop a sustainable programme to eradicate food poverty; a successful bid had been made to participate in the Soil Association's Sustainable Food Places (SFP) programme and become one of the country's first Sustainable Food Counties; pilot delivery of community-based weight management support to continue in Gloucester City and the Forest of Dean until March 2023, to be followed with a countywide children and young people's community weight management service.

6. Best Start in Life – highlights from the nine focus areas introduced to help support families seek the best start in life included: The Steps Ahead Programme, funded

through the Contain Outbreak Management Fund (COMF) Grant, (providing tailored packages of care to support families impacted by the pandemic in all areas of child development); equity audit of Gloucestershire's maternity services, (introduced to make improvements to services for women from areas of deprivation and some ethnic minority groups); help provided to young children who had missed out on support provided during the pandemic;

7. Housing and Health – this priority had shifted significantly during the past year due to the Ukraine situation and the use of contingency hotels for asylum seekers. At the time of the meeting, Gloucestershire was hosting refugees through a variety of schemes, including the Gloucestershire Refugee Resettlement Programme (GRRP) for Syrian refugees, the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy, the Homes for Ukraine (HFU) scheme and the Ukraine Family Scheme

It was noted that significant changes had impacted on the county since the priorities had been identified in 2019, notwithstanding the COVID pandemic which had created specific challenges in progressing each of the priorities. It was agreed the current cost-of-living rise would undoubtedly affect the outcomes of the priority areas and present new challenges.

The HWBB priorities will now form part of the developing Integrated Care Partnership Strategy, with a focus on long-term change from tackling the wider determinants of health and primary prevention. It was requested that the members of both committees should continue to receive periodical updates on each of the priorities.

A detailed update on the 'Levelling Up Our Communities Conference' held on Thursday 19 May 2022 was also provided. The conference was attended by over 131 people from a broad range of voluntary sector and community groups and public sector leaders. To view the conference report and summary of the discussions, including next steps, please refer to the link [here](#). It was agreed the conference had highlighted how important it would be to work together to reinforce the links between communities, voluntary and community sector partners, public sector organisations and businesses.

Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny

Committee members: Cllrs Matt Babbage (Chair), Paul Baker (Vice-Chair), Gina Blomefield (Cotswold District Council), Alastair Chambers, Stephen Hirst, Paul McCloskey (Cheltenham Borough Council), John Murphy (Tewkesbury Borough Council), Nicky Packer (Forest of Dean District Council), Sajid Patel (Gloucester City Council), Chloe Turner (Stroud District Council) Vernon Smith, Robert Vines, and Roger Whyborn.

Modern Methods of Construction

Subject Overview:

The Gloucestershire Economic Growth Scrutiny Committee (GEGSC) was presented with a series of three presentations on Modern Methods of Construction (MMC) at its meetings in November 2020, November 2021, and May 2022. Each of the presentations had a different focus: the first presentation looked at the benefits of MMC for social housing; the second covered the benefits of MMC from the viewpoint of manufacturers involved in the industry; and the third looked at the benefits and limitations of MMC from the perspective of developers.

Key Findings:

Several benefits of using MMC were identified, including a reduction in wastage; reduced delivery times; less reliance on skilled labour; improved health and safety considerations, and consistency across builds.

The Committee heard from MMC housing manufacturers, notably Ilke Homes, Beattie Passive and Forest Homes Collaborative, who spoke of the carbon reduction benefits of using MMC and of how the use of these methods could support a sustainable future within the housing industry.

Additionally, several housing developers have begun to incorporate aspects of MMC in their builds, such as Vistry Homes which has embraced the use of the Smart Roof. A Smart Roof can be fitted within a day or two, having been made in a factory before being transported to the building site, and is safe, clean, water-tight and efficient.

However, several challenges and limitations are currently affecting the MMC industry, particularly a lack of confidence in alternatives to traditional builds from warranty providers, home buyers, mortgage providers and large-scale housing developers. Further limitations include a lack of flexibility and upfront costs.

Outcomes:

A report summarising the findings of the GEGSC was presented to the Gloucestershire Economic Growth Joint Committee (GEGJC) for its consideration in September 2022.

Employment and Skills Agenda

Subject Overview:

During 2020 and 2021, the Committee considered several items relating to the employment and skills agenda, including a general update at their meeting in March 2021; an overview of the skills landscape in June 2021; an overview of emerging policy changes in November 2021; and a presentation on youth unemployment in March 2022.

Key Findings:

In March 2021, members were introduced to the Gloucestershire Skills Advisory Panel action plan, which focussed on apprenticeships, unemployment, and redundancy post-Covid, as well as on developing Gloucestershire's digital and cyber skills. It was noted that the Career's Hub had been launched, which was helping young people make connections with local employers. A skills portal had also been established, which brought together in one place information on local and national support available on skills and employment.

At its meeting in November 2021, the Committee considered the skills landscape and emerging policy changes. Members requested information relating to the careers performance of schools that had engaged with the Careers Hub.

In March 2022, the Committee received a presentation on youth unemployment. Members understood that unemployed young people faced the challenges of anxiety, lack of confidence, social isolation, and financial pressures. They were made aware of the various programmes and support available for young people in the County. However, members also understood that projects in this area needed to be prioritised due to funding gaps.

Members queried how Gloucestershire County Council was engaging with employers to ensure they were supporting young people not in education, employment, or training. They were advised that engagement with schools and employers was fundamental, and that this would be taken forward by the Employment and Skills Hub.

Outcomes:

The Committee continues to regularly scrutinise progress with the employment and skills agenda.

Fire and Rescue Scrutiny

Committee members: Cllrs Jeremy Hilton (Chair), Bernie Fisher, Mark Mackenzie-Charrington (Vice-Chair), Vernon Smith, Wendy Thomas, Brian Tipper and Pam Tracey.

HMISFRS Inspection

Subject Overview:

In September and October 2021, Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services (HMICFRS) carried out its inspection of Gloucestershire Fire and Rescue Service (GFRS).

In January 2022, GFRS was notified of two Causes of Concern identified during the inspection. These related to GFRS having not done enough since its previous inspection to embed its values and associated behaviours and promote a positive workplace culture; and GFRS having not done enough since the last inspection to improve understanding of the importance of equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) and to remove barriers to establishing EDI in the service.

In July 2022, HMICFRS published its final report on GFRS. The report assessed GFRS in three areas: effectiveness, efficiency, and people. In terms of effectiveness, GFRS was graded requires improvement. In terms of efficiency, GFRS was graded requires improvement. In terms of people, GFRS was graded inadequate.

Key Findings:

The Fire and Rescue Scrutiny Committee scrutinised the results of the HMICFRS inspection at its meeting on 2 September 2022.

Members sought clarification as to how GFRS was addressing the issues raised in the report; whether staff had been engaged with regarding the culture at GFRS; whether the report fairly reflected the inspection; whether GFRS's service budget and staffing plans were aligned to its policies and priorities; and on diversity within the Service.

Members were advised that in response to the report, GFRS had produced a detailed improvement plan to address the issues raised. The plan was approved by Cabinet at its meeting in September 2022.

Members were also informed that the Community Safety Improvement Board had been re-established, chaired by Steve Mawson, Deputy Chief Executive, to monitor progress against the improvement plan. Additionally, GFRS had engaged with an external provider which specialised in public sector cultural intelligence and change,

as well as with the Principal Officer Team at West Sussex Fire and Rescue Service, which had been through a similar improvement journey.

Members noted that HMICFRS would be revisiting GFRS in Autumn 2022 to review progress against the improvement plan for the two Causes of Concern.

Outcomes:

The Committee will continue to monitor GFRS's progress against its improvement plan by receiving regular briefings on Improvement Board meetings. Steve Mawson, Chair of the Improvement Board, will also be attending the Committee meeting in January 2023 to discuss progress made. Additionally, an item to scrutinise the results of the HMICFRS inspection re-visit has been included in the work plan for the Committee.

Blue Light Collaboration

Subject Overview:

The Police and Crime Act 2017 determines that emergency services have a duty to collaborate in England. The Committee was keen to understand and scrutinise the areas where collaboration between GFRS and the Police and Ambulance Service already existed and identify where further collaboration could be of benefit to all partners.

At its meeting on 14 January 2022, the Committee received a presentation on collaboration between GFRS and Gloucestershire Constabulary, attended by Nick Evans, Deputy Police and Crime Commissioner, and at its meeting on 4 March 2022, members received a presentation from Derek McCullough, South Western Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (SWAST) on GFRS and SWAST collaboration.

Key Findings:

At their meeting in January 2022, members understood that since the election of the new Gloucestershire Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in May 2021, opportunities for greater collaboration between GFRS and Gloucestershire Constabulary had been explored. An action plan had been developed which had identified five key areas for collaborative work, including leadership arrangements, the shared estate, and operational opportunities.

Reassurance was provided by officers that each service had its own clear duties and maintained their independence, however it was in the public interest for them to work together in key areas to maximise effectiveness. GFRS was benefitting from collaboration with the Constabulary by being able to access their leadership and management training facilities in Berkeley. It was also noted that collaboration was

necessary between the two services to reduce road deaths in the County, as well as to identify and help the most vulnerable in the community.

At the meeting on 4 March 2022, the Committee was advised that GFRS had first started collaborating with the ambulance service in the form of co-responding in 2006, which had since been followed by cardiac response, Concern for Safety, use of GFRS station facilities and Operation Braidwood in 2020. GFRS co-responders were used when they were the closest medical asset to an incident, with protocols mobilising an ambulance in tandem.

In 2021, GFRS attended 732 co-responding incidents on behalf of SWAST, and 51 cardiac care incidents. However, the statutory responsibilities of GFRS always came first and therefore a co-responder would not be mobilised if it would have a detrimental effect on these responsibilities.

The benefits of collaborative working for individual firefighters included that they felt they were contributing to the community and were able to develop transferable skills, whilst ambulance staff welcomed working alongside the expertise of firefighters, which led to better outcomes for patients.

Outcomes:

A progress report on GFRS and Gloucestershire Constabulary collaboration activities, focusing on the shared estate, road safety and community safety, will be brought back to the Committee to scrutinise in November 2023.

Community Risk Management Plan

Subject Overview:

The Fire and Rescue National Framework determines that a key priority for fire and rescue authorities in England is to develop a Community Risk Management Plan (CRMP). The Committee received an introduction to the development of GFRS's CRMP in September 2021 and an update on progress with the CRMP at their meeting on 4 March 2022, ahead of the document being approved by Cabinet later that month.

Key Findings:

Work to develop the draft CRMP 2022-25 began in June 2020, which included carrying out an evidence-based risk profile methodology for Prevention, Protection and Response activities; workshops with the Senior Leadership Team and Senior Managers to inform different elements of the CRMP; a pre-engagement consultation with the public, staff, and businesses before the first draft; and the production of an Equality Impact Assessment.

The draft CRMP outlined 8 objectives, which had been agreed by the GFRS Senior Leadership Team, and which would be delivered by GFRS across the three-year life of the plan.

Members advised that the formatting and presentation of the draft CRMP could be improved to make it more reader friendly. It was also suggested that potential GFRS recruits should be signposted to the CRMP, given the depth of information it contained, as part of the recruitment process.

Outcomes:

The Committee supported the draft CRMP 2022-25 and recommended that Cabinet approve the document. Progress against the CRMP objectives will be scrutinised by the Committee, with an update due to be considered in Spring 2023.

Pre-Scrutiny of Cabinet Decisions

Following a discussion at the September 2020 Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee, members requested a list of any examples of pre-decision scrutiny carried out within the scrutiny committees.

Committee	Item	Scrutiny consideration	Cabinet
Environment & Economic Growth Scrutiny	Local Transport Plan Review	September 2020	January 2021
Environment Scrutiny	Gloucestershire Ultra Low Emission Vehicle (ULEV) Strategy	March 2020 (Update January 2021)	June 2021
Environment Scrutiny	Climate Change Strategy annual report and action plan, 2022 – 2027/28	November 2021	December 2021
Environment Scrutiny	Road Safety Policy	September 2022	November 2022
Fire & Rescue Scrutiny	Community Risk Management Plan	September 2021 (Update received March 2022)	March 2022

SUMMARY

This report demonstrates the breadth and quality of the scrutiny work being undertaken by non-executive members of the County Council. It documents the work carried out by committees and by task groups all looking to add value to the decision-making process at the Council. It includes good examples of collaborative work with partners to make recommendations that can make a real difference to the people of Gloucestershire.

We do not have a 'one size fits all' approach and that is one of the strengths of Scrutiny here, it is about being clear about the intended outcomes and finding the right approach to deliver. Contained within the report, are examples of scrutiny members considering issues and feeding into processes prior to Cabinet decisions, becoming a strong and influential voice and helping to contribute to good governance.

This report also offers an opportunity to reflect on the successes and challenges over the past 12-18 months. This is still a relatively new Council, with some experienced scrutiny members and chairs, as well as some members involved in the scrutiny process for the first time. I think members and officers can reflect on how well scrutiny members have been able to work cross-party, 'leaving politics at the door' and have taken real ownership of their work plans.

We are fortunate that many of our Cabinet Members are former scrutiny chairs and their understanding and enthusiasm for working with scrutiny committees has ensured a healthy dialogue has been maintained throughout. We have good working relationships between members and officers that put Scrutiny in a good place moving forward.

The challenge now for scrutiny members is to balance work plans in order to ensure that priority areas receive the attention required and that the scrutiny process can be there to provide support and appropriate challenge on the delivery of the Strategic Plan. I am confident that the foundations are there for strong scrutiny going forward.

Stephen Bace

Statutory Scrutiny Officer