



LEICESTER CITY COUNCIL

Scrutiny Annual Report

2014 - 2015

ADULT SOCIAL CARE • HOUSING • CHILDREN • YOUNG PEOPLE • SCHOOLS • ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT • CULTURE • TOURISM • HEALTH • COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT • HERITAGE • LEISURE • SPORTS • NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES • TRANSPORT

Message from the Chair of the Overview Select Committee, 2014-15

Throughout the year, the council has continued to deal with the need to make efficiency savings as a result of reduced government funding. The five year plan until 2015/16, to make funding cuts and find the necessary savings, has led to a drastic change in the way the city council delivers its services. With this ongoing review of all areas of the council's work, scrutiny has had an extremely important role to play in ensuring that services provide value and that the most vulnerable in our community are protected.

For the last two years as Chair my aim has been to ensure services that are most valued by the community are safeguarded by scrutinising proposals and changes to policies that have a potential negative impact. Scrutiny's consideration of the Ofsted inspection of the council's children's services (which were rated inadequate), where scrutiny were keen to explore what went wrong and seek assurances that services were improved with immediate effect to protect potentially vulnerable young people is an example of this. Also, scrutiny reviews with findings to improve policies on pavement parking and communal cleaning and recommendations for improved communication and services for lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities via a better understanding of Equality Impact Assessments are just some of the examples of scrutiny work done this year to improve services where there may currently be a negative impact.

I must convey my thanks to the chairs of the scrutiny commissions in leading the work of scrutiny through their commissions throughout the year. I'd also like to acknowledge all commission members for their input in ensuring the scrutiny process effectively examined decisions and processes, ensuring efficient and quality services are provided to residents of the city. Finally I'd like to thank the City Mayor and the Executive for providing information to scrutiny throughout the year and for taking on board suggestions and recommendations by scrutiny to improve services.

I hope to see effective scrutiny continue in the coming years as we face the challenge to make efficiency savings, whilst protecting services for those in most need.

Councillor Mohammed Dawood





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Introduction

Scrutiny is an essential part of local government to ensure that the council and its partners remain effective and accountable. The Centre for Public Scrutiny define scrutiny as “the activity by one elected or appointed organisation or office examining and monitoring all or part of the activity of a public sector body with the aim of improving the quality of public services. A public sector body is one that carries out public functions or spends public money. Scrutiny ensures that executives are held accountable for their decisions, that their decision-making process is clear and accessible to the public and that there are opportunities for the public and their representatives to influence and improve public policy.”

For the year 2014-15, the council had an Overview Select Committee and seven scrutiny commissions to cover all parts of the council business and that of its partners, such as local health providers, the police and voluntary and community sector organisations amongst others. Whilst there are specific committees, work is often cross-cutting and therefore this report of the Overview and Select Committee has opted to split the areas, for the purposes of this report, into the themes set out in the City Mayor’s Delivery Plan.

There has been a considerable amount of work done in scrutiny this year via reports to meetings, reviews, call-ins and task groups. Through information received and evidence gathered there are often recommendations made to the Council’s Executive and its partners for improvements to policies and services and/or to consider policy changes with them being considered and in some cases adopted.

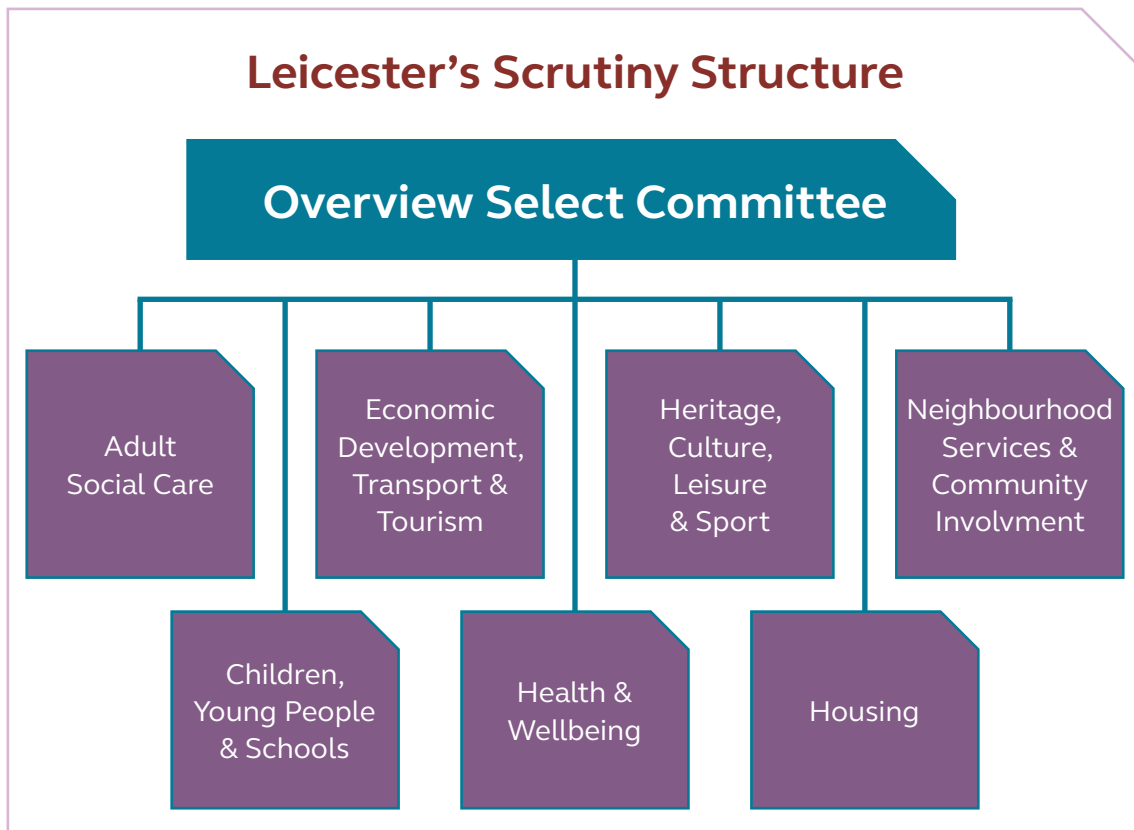
This report picks out some of the highlights for the key areas of work covered by scrutiny in 2014/15. There are a number of other items that aren’t mentioned but were considered by scrutiny and all pieces of work including detailed outcomes can be found on the Council’s website from the following link:

<http://www.cabinet.leicester.gov.uk:8071/ieDocHome.aspx?Categories>.

Contact

For more information please contact the Scrutiny Team on **0116 4546340** or email scrutiny@leicester.gov.uk

Membership of Scrutiny Commissions in 2014-15



The following is a list of the commissions for 2014-15 and the members that sat on each committee:

Overview Select Committee

CHAIR: Councillor **Mohammed Dawood**

VICE CHAIR: Councillor **Lynn Senior**

MEMBERS

Councillors: **Lucy Chaplin, Adam Clarke, Michael Cooke, Ross Grant, Patrick Kitterick, Paul Newcombe, Abdul Osman, Nigel Porter, Baljit Singh, Sue Waddington, Paul Westley** and **Ross Willmott**

Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission

CHAIR: Councillor **Lucy Chaplin**
VICE CHAIR: Councillor **Vijay Singh Riyait**

MEMBERS

Councillors: **Dawn Alfonso, Elly Cutkelvin, Mohammed Dawood, Patrick Kitterick** and **Ross Willmott**

Standing Invitee: Healthwatch Leicester representative (**Philip Parkinson**)

Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission

CHAIR: Councillor **Ross Willmott**
VICE CHAIR: Councillor **Malcolm Unsworth**

MEMBERS

Councillors: **Culdipp Singh Bhatti, Adam Clarke, Virginia Cleaver, George Cole, Ross Grant** and **Dr Lynne Moore**

Co-opted Members: **Bernard Monaghan** (Roman Catholic Diocese), **Carolyn Lewis** (Church of England Diocese), **Mohammed Alauddin Al-Azad** Parent Governor (Primary / Special Needs)

Standing Invitees: **Arshad Daud, Brahmpreet Kaur Gulati, Yash Sharma, Ryanvir Singh** (Youth Reps), **Rabiha Hannan** (Muslim Faith Rep), **Anu Kapur** (Leicester Secular Society), **Peter Flack** (Teaching Unions), **Gary Garner** (Unison, Union Rep)

Economic Development, Transport and Tourism Scrutiny Commission

CHAIR: Councillor **Sue Waddington**
VICE CHAIR: Councillor **Rashmi Joshi**

MEMBERS

Councillors: **Harshad Bhavsar, Ted Cassidy, Luis Fonseca, Nigel Porter, Vijay Singh Riyait** and **Gurinder Sandhu**

Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission

CHAIR: Councillor **Michael Cooke**
VICE CHAIR: Councillor **Elly Cutkelvin**

MEMBERS

Councillors: **Deepak Bajaj, Lucy Chaplin, Anne Glover, Ross Grant, Deborah Sangster** and **Rob Wann**

Standing Invitee: Healthwatch Leicester representative (**Surinder Sharma**)

Heritage, Culture, Leisure and Sport Scrutiny Commission

CHAIR: Councillor **Abdul Osman**
VICE CHAIR: Councillor **Sundip Meghani**

MEMBERS

Councillors: **Deepak Bajaj, Dr Susan Barton, Wayne Naylor, Paul Newcombe** and **Bill Shelton**

Housing Scrutiny Commission

CHAIR: Councillor **Paul Newcombe**
VICE CHAIR: Councillor **Dawn Alfonso**

MEMBERS

Councillors: **Hanif Aqbany, Rashmi Joshi, Mian Mayat, Veejay Patel, Barbara Potter** and **Paul Westley**

Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission

CHAIR: Councillor **Baljit Singh**
VICE CHAIR: Councillor **Culdipp Singh Bhatti**

MEMBERS

Councillors: **Dr Shofiqul Chowdhury, Stephen Corral, Iqbal Desai, Inderjit Gugnani** and **Sue Waddington**

A place to do business

The first of nine priority areas in the City Mayor's delivery plan; this area is focused around how the council works with the business, public, voluntary and community sectors to respond to the economic challenges the city faces.

The focus here is to support start-up businesses to be sustainable, increase the skills base of people into training and employment and create new job opportunities.



Areas of work undertaken

Heritage, Culture, Leisure & Sport Scrutiny Commission looked at the development of the King Richard III Visitor Centre, receiving regular updates before and after it was opened. Having considered visitor numbers and charges, sustainability and local impacts, e.g. car parking, the main recommendations were to monitor progress and to encourage more schools / young people to visit the Centre.

Economic Development, Transport and Tourism (EDTT) Scrutiny Commission reviewed progress of the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) since its establishment in 2010. The Commission noted the view that the City Deal element of the LLEP programme was not as flexible as first indicated by the Government, however the overall view was that the LLEP had started to work effectively across the communities it was set up to serve, and is delivering significant capital and social programmes, the latter based on European funding schemes.

EDTT Scrutiny Commission also reviewed the Tourism Action Plan following earlier scrutiny work (reporting in December 2013), which made a series of recommendations about the tourism strategy for Leicester. The City Centre Director reported to the Commission that all the recommendation from the Commission's previous report into tourism in the city had been incorporated into the final Tourism Action Plan which was welcomed and it was agreed to review the plan in 12 months.

In-depth review

A review into employment, skills and training was carried out by EDTT Scrutiny Commission. The review considered the transition from education to employment, provision and value of training and apprenticeships; the role of European Social Funds in supporting social inclusion and employment support programmes and a range of work opportunities for young people, women, who continue to be under-represented in the workforce and the value and impact of adult education.

The Task group found there was concern about the employment rates of women within the Leicester economy and that wage rates and career progression opportunities for many young people in their first decade in the work market are too poor to allow for economic progression and this is a significant problem within the local and national economy. Other recommendations can be found on the website. The Commission has asked for a response to the recommendations which will come back to a future meeting.

Getting about in Leicester

With a growing population in the city this area prioritises the need to have an effective traffic management network. This includes having effective road maintenance and an efficient public transport network which is technologically advanced and up to date. Provision for cyclists and pedestrians is also important ensuring that they can get around the city safely.

Areas of work undertaken

The ten year Cycle Action Plan (2014-2024) was brought to the EDTT Scrutiny Commission. The primary target in the action plan is to double the number of every day cyclists by 2018 and again by 2023, with a cycling modal share of 10% city centre traffic by 2024. It also incorporates wider aims such as delivering an infrastructure network of high capacity, quality cycle tracks along main road corridors.

The Commission supported the Action Plan but asked that greater clarity be given on the enforcement of unlawful pavement cycling and for enhanced engagement with business communities and schools and colleges in promoting cycling.

In-depth review

EDTT Scrutiny Commission also continued their review to look at the impact of pavement parking on vulnerable pedestrians, and resolutions to improve the issue. Via a task group the commission took evidence from departmental officers, interest groups including VISTA and the private sector and also held an online consultation and invited pictures to illustrate problems. Information was requested from and shared with other authorities and included a site visit to Slough where

large-scale parking enforcement has come into force.

The review found that this is a real social problem, but no single solution is possible due to the street configurations (many are too narrow to allow for pavement parking, for example). Stronger enforcement by police (in relation to enforcement) and TRO regulations by the council would help and changes to national regulatory framework are required.

After a series of recommendations were made by the commission the department and task group continued to work in partnership by working with ward councillors to identify pilot areas for the introduction of pavement parking regulatory schemes. Currently two areas have been identified and scrutiny will continue working with the department, members and local communities to identify further areas for the introduction of a pavement parking ban, where appropriate.



A low carbon city

Reducing the city's carbon footprint is another key priority and the aim is to reduce to reduce greenhouse emissions from the council's own operations, from transport in Leicester by promoting sustainable methods of travel, and to reduce the emissions from homes and businesses.

Areas of work undertaken

A draft of the Air Quality action plan was considered by members of the Economic Development, Transport and Tourism and Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commissions at a briefing by the Deputy Mayor. Following the briefing the plan went out to public consultation.

A further examination of the plan, along with a summary of comments received during the course of the consultation will come back to scrutiny. There will also be consideration of the way in which health and transport objectives are aligned and how objectives and targets within the action plan can be set and programmed.

A petition was submitted to Overview Select Committee asking the Council to review and resolve the traffic chaos / congestion caused by the various improvements made to the city centre and surrounding roads. The petitioners argued that if people did not take up alternative methods of travel, such as cycling, walking or using buses, congestion remained which resulted in pollution that in turn impacts on public health.

The Executive disagreed that congestion had increased, stating instead that it was unchanged. However, it was acknowledged that a balance had to be maintained between the needs of motorists, cyclists, pedestrians, traders and the wider city, which it was recognised was not easy to achieve.

The Committee suggested that it would be helpful if the City Mayor could set out all of the plans for change over the next three to four years. This would enable people to see how they worked together and they could then comment in the full knowledge of what was trying to be achieved. It also could mean that situations were avoided where plans had to be changed as people were not aware of the context of individual proposals.



The built and natural environment

With the discovery of Richard III in the city there has been a real focus on the city and its heritage, particularly in the last year. Initiatives such as Connecting Leicester have made a real effort to promote the heritage and connect shopping, leisure, heritage, housing and transport facilities in the city.

Preservation of historic buildings, investment into parks and open spaces and new regeneration programmes such as Jubilee Square, Cathedral Gardens, Richard III visitor centre and the market redevelopment are all included in this section.

Areas of work undertaken

The Bereavement Services and Burial Space Strategy were considered by members of the Heritage, Culture, Leisure & Sport Scrutiny Commission. The focus for members was the Leicester Water-Based Site for Scattering of Ashes and the Burial Space Strategy. The commission recommendations included improvements to Saffron Hill Cemetery and to the signage at the Leicester Water-Based Site for Scattering Ashes. An improved service was felt to have been established through the process and was reported in local media.

The Housing Scrutiny Commission scrutinised proposals to changes in the Responsive Housing Repairs service, including a new requirement on tenants to take more responsibility for repairs. Evidence was provided by officers and tenant representatives (and praise) about improvements to the service. Members endorsed the improvements to the service, and the use of benchmarking with other authorities to help improve the service, but expressed concern about potential craft job losses.

Housing Scrutiny Commission also reviewed proposed rent and other charge changes and the associated capital and revenue programmes. Evidence was gathered from tenants representatives and from reports. Members and tenants supported the proposals for a 2.2% increase as providing a fair balance between cost increases and investment in the community; however one proposed charge increase – for communal cleaning – was suspended to await the outcome of the communal cleaning scrutiny task group review. The impact of increased charges will need to be assessed in the light of benefit ceilings and other pressure on tenants.



Affordable new housing is high on the list of commitments for this council. The Housing Scrutiny Commission looked at the supply of new affordable homes as contrasted with the pressure on social housing to provide accommodation in the city. The commission heard that 750 new homes a year were required and around 11,000 people were on the housing register. Loss of units through Right to Buy was reported at 148 for 2012/13 and 173 for 2013/14. Members were pleased with the commitment to new-build, but were concerned about the impact of new developments on local facilities and on school places.

The details of the Waterside Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) came to the Economic Development, Transport and Tourism Commission as part of the wider community and city consultation. The information received identified a strategy for the redevelopment, through land assembly, partnership working and outside investment, of the area near Frog Island which has experienced severe decline, mainly through decades of de-industrialisation.

The Commission supported the strategy underlying the SPD and much of the detail.

There was concern about how the development would impact on local facilities, and particularly the provision of primary school places.

Members were also very conscious that the development will have an impact outside the proposed SPD area as well as within it, and therefore recommended the fullest possible consultation with local communities, residents and businesses as well as local ward councillors, about both the planning proposal and the delivery plan for the project. The commission also felt that Repton Street (and the bottom

of Bonchurch Street) and the area around Rally Park should be included within the zone of change as the area requires improvement, investment and redevelopment.

In-depth review

The Pitch Allocations Policy for Traveller Sites was looked into jointly by the Economic Development, Transport and Tourism and Housing scrutiny commissions. The report on allocations was in response to the original joint task group report.

The task group review involved visits to sites within Leicester and further afield. The reports arose over concerns by members about the site conditions at Meynell's Gorse and the poor relationships between tenants and site staff, including Multi Agency Travellers Unit (MATU) staff. Two new sites are being opened in the city in 2015. Additionally the government has provided £1.4m to redevelop and modernise the existing Meynell's Gorse site. Looking forward a key issue is to establish and maintain good relations on traveller sites. A range of recommendations, including education support for children and families on the sites, and the setting up of site-based liaison committees should be considered.



A healthy and active city

With Leicester having poor health on average in comparison to the rest of the country it is important to provide excellent healthcare and promote healthier lifestyles to close the gap on the rest of the country.

Scrutiny focusses on specific areas of health and healthcare in the city determining how well the city's strategies and facilities cater for the health needs of people in Leicester. This involves calling to account all health partners in the city.

Areas of work undertaken

The Health and Wellbeing (HWB) scrutiny commission has special powers built into statute that allows them to call health service providers to account and to scrutinise their performance. This was activated recently to investigate the Highfield's Medical Centre relocation. Members heard evidence from NHS England, Healthwatch Leicester, GP Practices and the Patient Participation Group on behalf of affected patients. This topic also attracted local media interest.

The commission concluded that the relocation of the Highfields Medical Centre did have a negative impact on the patients due to lack of consultation and the short timescales involved meant patients had little time to arrange an alternative surgery. The commission recommended for health partners to consider developing a workable protocol to prevent a recurrence of similar situations.

The commission previously used its powers to make a referral to the Secretary of State for Health on the issue of Congenital Heart Disease (CHD) Review. Following this, in 2015 the Commission responded jointly with the Council's Executive Lead, to the NHS England new consultation on Congenital Heart Disease Review. These comments



were sent directly to the NHS England Review team. The NHS England Review Programme lead officers attended a commission meeting on 25th March 2015 to outline the results of the consultation.

A priority for the council is to promote healthy and active lifestyles. One topic that attracted local media attention was the Golf Courses Consultation which was scrutinised by the Heritage, Culture, Leisure & Sport Scrutiny Commission.



Site visits were conducted by members to the two council golf courses under review, Humberstone Heights and Western Park, and the members heard evidence from golf club representatives. The commission concluded that the decision to close Western Park will provide savings, but a further outcome should be to improve resources at Humberstone Heights Golf Course which has a higher usage.

The Heritage, Culture, Leisure & Sport Scrutiny Commission also scrutinised Leisure Centre Gym facilities. The aim of the Commission was to compare local authority and private sector gyms market provision. Members conducted site visits to Aylestone, Evington and Spence Street Leisure Centres, following this they concluded that there was a high usage for local authority run gyms, but there was a need for improvements and investment in order to compete with private sector providers. The Executive will reflect on the findings as part of the council's Leisure facilities review.

The Housing Scrutiny Commission looked at a health related pilot scheme in the context of it providing help and support to private rented sector tenants. A briefing to members of

the commission demonstrated how interventions in the physical fabric of a home could have positive health benefits which had a big overall financial benefit in terms of improved health and reduced healthcare costs. The Commission agreed that the scheme should be supported in principle.

Joint scrutiny work by the Health & Wellbeing and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commissions played an important role this year in carrying out some effective reviews, such as holding a special inquiry into the Future of Healthwatch Leicester. The aim was to determine why the Healthwatch Leicester board and Voluntary Action Leicestershire (VAL) had failed to novate a contract. The commission found that there had been a breakdown of communications across all parties, but in particular the shortcomings by VAL in blocking Healthwatch Leicester board in moving forward. The review recommended that VAL must novate the contract as soon as possible in order to move forward. The novation took place at the beginning of May 2015.

Developing Joint working protocols is seen as good practice and a way to improve partnership working and this has been a positive achievement

for scrutiny this year. In 2014 Leicester Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission signed a Joint working protocol with Healthwatch Leicester to improve partnership working on health scrutiny issues. The Health and Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commissions invited the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to a meeting to discuss sharing intelligence and improvements for future working. The recommendation called for a protocol agreement as the way forward.

Members of both commissions also undertook to hold a special inquiry into delays that patients in Leicester were experiencing when travelling to and from hospital via hospital transport. Evidence was gathered from Arriva Transport Solutions and Leicester City Clinical Commissioning Group. Members found that there were serious failures in relation to targets with patients often left stranded for hours. The main recommendation was that if improvements were not made, the contract should be terminated. The commission referred this to the Health and Wellbeing Board to monitor progress.

In-depth review

In light of the recent national Francis Inquiry into the failings at Staffordshire Hospital, the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission undertook a review of its own health scrutiny arrangements. This 'fit for purpose' review was led by the Centre for Public Scrutiny.

The main recommendations related to:

- Improved public and community involvement
- Clarification of relationships
- Effective prioritisation of issues to scrutinise and member skills development.

Following this an implementation Plan has been agreed to take forward the improvements to future health scrutiny work. This has been fully supported by the Executive lead.

Another detailed review by the Health & Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission looked at Mental Health Services for Black British Young Men in Leicester. The objective was to determine the effectiveness of the service provision in Leicester.

Evidence was gathered from Voluntary Community Sector, Police Service, Health Sector Organisations, Justice System, Leicester City Council Commissioning and Public Health.

The Commission found that this service had not improved over the last 10 years and there was a still a lack of targeted services, and poor data collection processes for Black British Young Men in Leicester.

The recommendations called upon service providers and commissioners to improve services to Black British Young Men in Leicester.

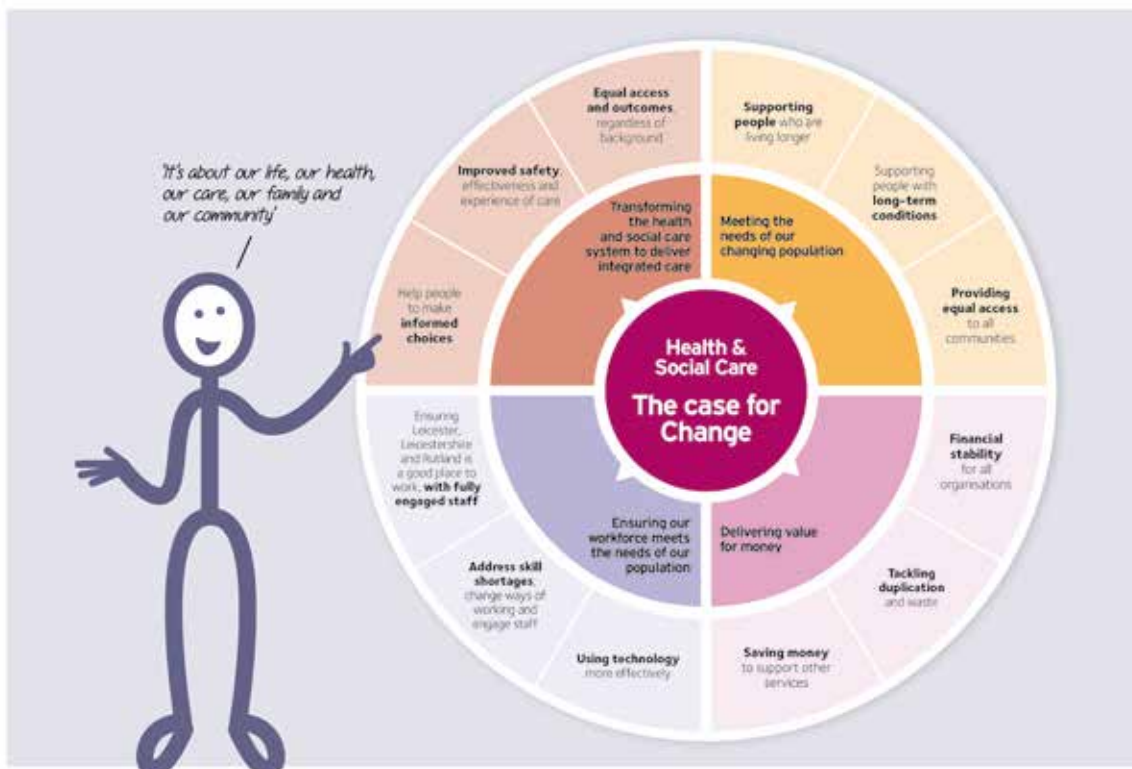
Providing care and support

With an ageing population the care provided for older people needs to be adequate for the needs of people and this is moving away from the traditional social support services and towards promoting independence to allow people to live in their own home for longer. These services are also being increasingly aligned to healthcare to ensure a greater transition for older people between the two when they require health and/or social care. As well as users of services there is also a need to ensure that carers are well supported.

Recent cases of abuse against children and young people across the country also highlight the importance of adequate protection of vulnerable young people and ensuring that they have improved outcomes dependant on their individual needs.

There is also a need to support people who are at risk of harm and abuse to stay safe and to prevent

homelessness and provide appropriate support to people who become homeless. These are some of the most vulnerable people in society and it is important that policies and services are fit for purpose and any changes made deliver quality services to meet the needs of people, whilst balancing against tight resource availability.



Areas of work under taken

Members of the Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission reviewed the status of residents during their move from the council's Elderly Person's Homes that closed into new accommodation and how they felt after moving. This involved continued monitoring of the individual impact on residents and there was also monitoring of the sale of the homes and the commissioning process.

The Commission found that most residents had been happy with their move with only a select few reportedly not settled but this will continue to be monitored.

The sale of the first two homes has gone through with payments received in full ahead of the agreed date.

The commission also explored the costs of adult social care (ASC) staff in services external to the council being paid the national living wage (NLW) and therefore fully adopting Unison's Ethical

Care Charter. Costings were drawn up and presented to the commission and representation was heard from a provider of residential care.

It was found that the total additional cost would be £10m to have all staff receive the NLW and the implication for the council, would mean changing how funds are allocated across ASC if adopted. The commission recommended that an action plan be devised to consider paying ASC staff the living wage with the action plan indicating progress towards being a NLW city for all ASC staff. There should also be consideration of how other authorities had implemented the NLW.

Progress of the Better Care Fund has also been monitored through reports to the Adult Social Care scrutiny commission, which considered progress against indicators used to measure outcomes. It was found that current progress was good and that the city council was thought to be leading the



way as an example of best practice. The commission did request that the equality impact is monitored throughout the process and that looking forward, the public needs have to be considered and effectiveness of progress needs to be assured and this will be monitored by scrutiny.

The Jay and Casey reports highlighted a number of issues with regards to the poor safeguarding of children in Rotherham and Rochdale and highlighted a national issue. Children, Young People and Schools scrutiny commission considered the current status in the city and were given an update on the council's procedures to safeguarding of children in the city and how we are equipped to deal with the problems in Rotherham. It was agreed then that findings would be considered at a future hearing as members felt there was a need to know what action was being taken in the city and how the council was performing.

A video presentation was received from Dear Albert Social Enterprise Project to the ASC scrutiny commission, highlighting the support they give to substance misuse users.

Members concluded that this was a successful project that had been well received and was growing and, recommended that it is used as a blueprint for future projects and highlighted as good practice. The Chair nominated the project to receive an Honoured Citizen Award which was presented to them by the Lord Mayor.

The Housing scrutiny commission received a report which looked at temporary provision for teenage parents as part of the homelessness policy. The current arrangements for leasing support accommodation ends in July 2015 and future support will be provided at Border House. Whilst the report was accepted, members signalled

that they wished for a further report on the new arrangements, and a possible site visit, in future.

In-depth review

ASC Scrutiny members have considered preliminary designs and concepts for the new intermediate care facility building and made suggestions to ensure it is a sustainable building that meets the needs of users. Members also suggested that it should be a one storey building instead of two and to avoid having a café as it is often found they don't work. The proposed café has since been removed from the designs following consultations with scrutiny members and others, but the building will remain as two storeys as it is considered financially and logistically more viable. The commission will continue to monitor progress.

Our children and young people

The aims of this priority are for every child to be safe, loved and live a happy and healthy childhood, free from harm and given every chance to pursue their aspirations and fulfil their potential. The aim is to do this by:

- Improving children's health and reducing the gap between the most and least deprived.
- Raise achievement in Leicester to national averages and higher, and narrow the gap between the lowest achievers and other children and young people.
- Develop an integrated children's workforce that is confident and capable of intervening early – thinking flexibly across job roles, functioning across organisational boundaries, supporting children in the whole family context.
- Reduce and mitigate the effects of family poverty on children's life chances in Leicester.

Areas of work undertaken

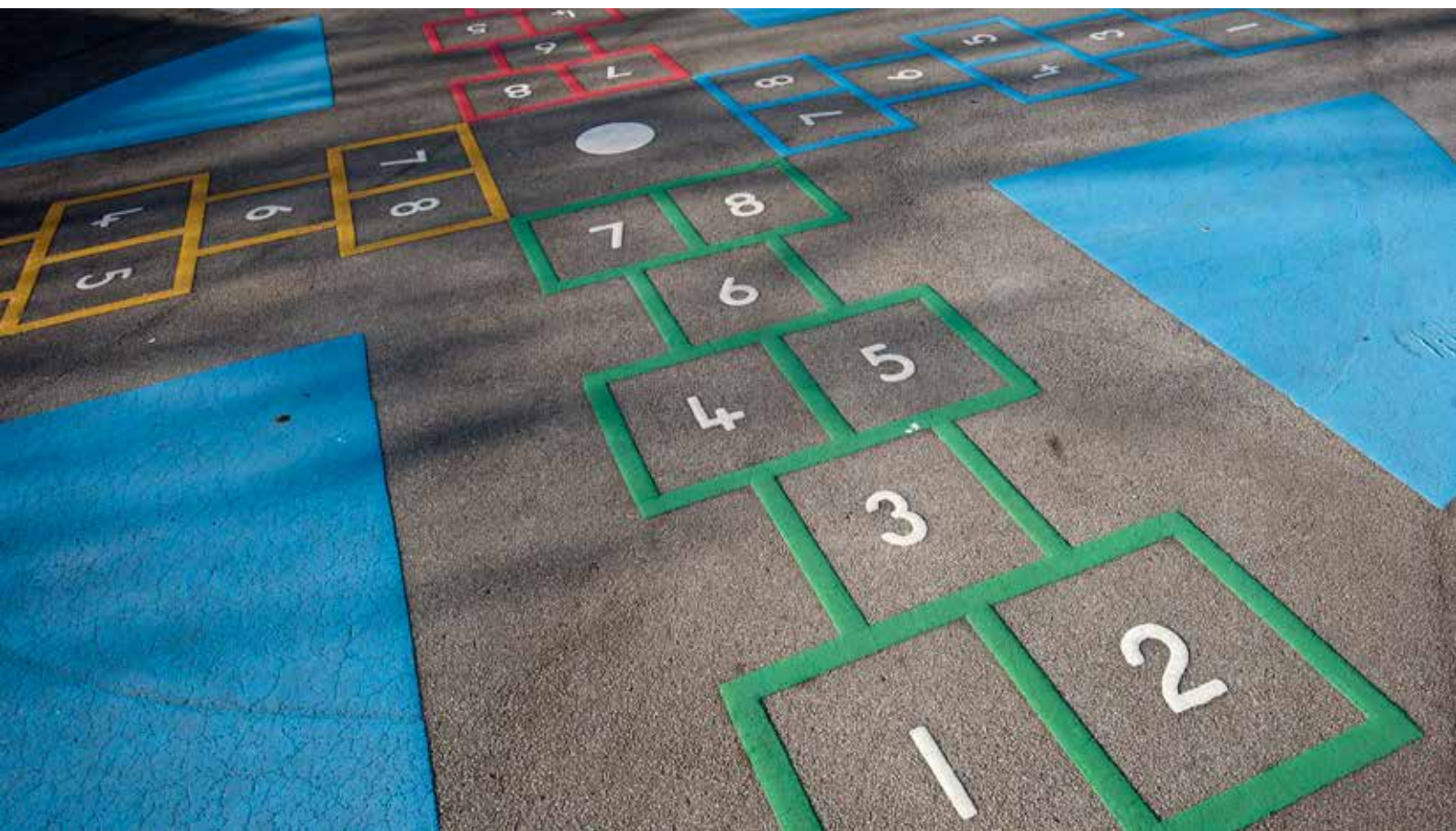
The Children, Young People and Schools (CYPS) and Health and Wellbeing scrutiny commissions considered the proposed temporary relocation of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to Coalville. The Chairs of the commissions sent letters to the Chief Executive and Chair of the Leicester Partnership NHS Trust to highlight the concerns about spending large sums of money on a temporary unit which is located away from the city (where most of the users were from).

The unit's move to Coalville was only temporarily. Members recommended that a permanent base should be in the city as most of the users are from there. It was agreed to revisit this issue in a year and that there was a need for improvement in engagement with the

Council when considering a permanent base in the city.

CYPS scrutiny also received information on education attainment results in key stages 2 and 4. It was noted that the results in some schools were better than others but the good progress being made was commended. The commission endorsed the aspirational targets and asked that the effectiveness of the improvement action plan be brought back to scrutiny in the future.

The Chair of CYPS scrutiny highlighted the need for a joined up reporting mechanism on outcomes and performance across the service and the commission recommended that it received regular quarterly performance reports. This would allow for better scrutiny of the service and a better



understanding of issues facing it. This was agreed to come to scrutiny in the coming year.

The commission also heard that a number of pupils had been allocated to schools above the statutory walking distance as part of Primary Place Planning. The situation had arisen partly because of late applications for school admissions and partly due to parental choice. Where this had been the case it was confirmed that support was being offered to those pupils and their parents and this was supported by the commission.

In-depth review

Members of CYPS scrutiny were invited to join members of Overview Select committee to consider the OFSTED report into the inspection of children's services which rated the service as inadequate. Following in-depth evidence gathering from all parties, the scrutiny commission made a number of recommendations for improvement, which echoed those in the OFSTED report. It was agreed that the action plan for improvement and an update on progress would continue to come to scrutiny in the coming year and beyond.

Our neighbourhoods and communities

Neighbourhood facilities are extremely important in allowing people to access services and facilities locally. The council has considered ways of making services in the community more effective and efficient by reducing costs and improving services through the better use of buildings, joining up services locally and by helping local neighbourhoods to run facilities from some of these buildings themselves.

It is also important to communicate effectively the range of welfare reforms that are taking place and reduce any impact and this is also a priority in this area. There is also an aim to ensure council housing is of good quality and energy efficient.

Environmental and enforcement services to help keep people safe, tackle anti-social behaviour, domestic violence and substance misuse, and keep the city clean and green through waste collection and recycling, and tackling fly tipping are also a priority in this section.

The Housing Scrutiny Commission regularly scrutinised particular issues relating to welfare reforms. For example the proposed national Universal Credit System and the bedroom tax was considered in relation to negative impacts such as rent arrears and evictions from council homes.

The roll-out of the council's transforming neighbourhood services programme was considered by the Neighbourhoods Services & Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission. Main findings were that the review in





the south of the city was completed successfully, and that clear community consultations were taking place as the review for the West of the city was undertaken. The recommendations included a request to the Assistant Mayor (Neighbourhood Services) to consider whether facilities other than the two rooms currently identified at Fosse Library could be used to house the music library.

In relation to substance misuse in the city, members of the Neighbourhood Services & Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission looked at the issue of a City-wide drinking ban order. Evidence to the Commission included representations from the local community and ward members voicing particular concerns about the problems being addressed.

Members were concerned that street drinkers should have access to appropriate support measures. It was noted that the police were not obliged to enforce a city-wide drinking ban. But the measure would stop displacement of street drinking from one zone to an area where no street drinking ban was in place.

Main commission recommendations were:

- To support the implementation of a city-wide street drinking order, provided such an order is balanced with the needs of habitual drinkers;
- That the Assistant Mayor (Neighbourhood Services) be asked to advise the Parks service of the concerns raised above about the maintenance of Onslow Park and Cedar Park;
- That the Head of Community Safety be asked to provide regular monitoring reports on the implementation of the city-wide street drinking order; and
- That the Assistant Mayor (Neighbourhood Services) be asked to advise the Commission of any response from the Executive to the implementation of a city-wide street drinking order.

In-depth review

In relation to good quality housing and a clean city, the Housing Scrutiny Commission carried out a detailed review of the Communal Cleaning Service in tenant and leaseholders' blocks of flats. The commission examined tenant satisfaction; value for money and effectiveness of the service and the relationship between the service provider (City Cleaning Services), Housing and tenants.

A task group was set up to work with the housing department; leaseholders; cleansing services; members and tenant representatives. Tenant representatives were an integral part of the task group. Tenant surveys and site inspections were undertaken. Evidence was taken from a co-operative to advise on different ways of working and organising the workforce, perhaps based on community enterprises.

The Task Group found that the service needed a radical overhaul. The service experienced difficulties by being required to take back the work when a private company walked away from the

contract. Tenants were largely happy with the service and value for money. The final report, with recommendations, was approved by OSC in March 2015. Members considered that a complete renegotiation of the communal cleaning contract arrangements was required.

A working group should:

- (i) define what areas should be covered by a communal cleaning service
- (ii) re-calibrate work patterns to ensure enough time to do the required work. This should include further investigation into alternative frequency of cleaning associated with more times being allowed to do the work
- (iii) establish new cleaning standards reflecting current conditions. This should include investigating the cost and value of re-introducing annual and other period deep-cleans.

The tenants and leaseholders forum could be a suitable vehicle for developing these issues, with the cleaning team joining it for the specific programme of developing new contract structures.

A strong and democratic council

It is important for the public to have confidence and value the work of the council and also for them to be able to participate in decisions affecting them. As such ensuring the way the council's work supports openness and accountability, communicating effectively, and encouraging the people of Leicester to participate in the democratic process and in the shaping of services is an important priority.

Also working in partnership with business, the voluntary and community sector, community organisations, the education sector, faith groups and unions to maximise the benefits this can deliver, and a commitment to fair practices and to tackling inequality of outcomes and discrimination are important factors in this area of work.

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Area of work undertaken

Overview Select Committee (OSC) called-in a decision on the Voluntary and Community Sector Review. They heard evidence from a number of organisations currently funded. Members raised concerns about the impact of undertaking a competitive tendering exercise for such work and the potential impacts of the review in terms of community cohesion. OSC concluded by asking the City Mayor to re-consider the decision.

The Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission received an update on the status of ward community meetings. It heard that officers will continue to identify methods of positive engagement with local residents such as via social media and that the impact of changes to the ward boundaries will be monitored. Commission members recommended for community meetings to contribute £500 towards additional publicity for meetings and to continue finding ways of improving the administration of grants and supporting the meetings.

In-depth review

OSC set up a task group to review Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), particularly those relating to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) communities, looking to see if improvements could be made to ensure greater consideration of LGBT issues in future. After a series of meetings with officers and members of the LGBT Centre the Task Group found that a methodology should be developed for capturing demographics of the LGBT population in Leicester and that EIAs were improving but required better monitoring and that there was a disjointed training plan and a that a mandatory e-learning programme should be developed.

OSC endorsed a range of actions for scrutiny to look at issues further in particular departments and called for a robust training plan to provide a more joined up approach in educating employees of LGBT issues. The outcome of this should be a better service delivery and support to LGBT communities.



SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS 2015-2016

Overview Select Committee

Chair: **Cllr Singh**

Vice Chair: **Cllr Dempster**

Scrutiny Commissions

Adult Social Care Scrutiny Commission

Chair: **Cllr Cleaver**

Vice Chair: **Cllr Bajaj**

Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission

Chair: **Cllr Dr Moore**

Vice Chair: **Cllr Cole**

Economic Development, Transport and Tourism Scrutiny Commission

Chair: **Cllr Willmott**

Vice Chair: **Cllr Joshi**

Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Commission

Chair: **Cllr Chaplin**

Vice Chair: **Cllr Fonseca**

Heritage, Culture, Leisure and Sport Scrutiny Commission

Chair: **Cllr Dr Barton**

Vice Chair: **Cllr Unsworth**

Housing Scrutiny Commission

Chair: **Cllr Newcombe**

Vice Chair: **Cllr Alfonso**

Neighbourhood Services and Community Involvement Scrutiny Commission

Chair: **Cllr Dawood**

Vice Chair: **Cllr Gugnani**

CONTACT

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