

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

HIGHLIGHTS

Topics identified for inclusion in the 2018/19 work programme:

EMPLOYEE WELLBEING – Employee Wellbeing and Sickness Absence Management has a high profile within the Council. The aim is to provide employee wellbeing initiatives to improve the health of the workforce; manage absence in line with best practice; and monitor and report on absence levels. The mechanisms in place were reviewed by scrutiny in February 2019. Initially, a light-touch review, scrutiny felt that a more detailed breakdown of the council's sickness absence management was needed, and a further report is scheduled for autumn 2019.

WASTE AND RECYCLING EDUCATION – the light-touch review focused on recycling and contamination rates, collection levels and waste disposal, behavioural change and education, and national and local education campaigns. The Education Plan for Rugby included targeted enforcement and educational activity around known problems/issues, borough-wide educational activity to promote increased recycling, reduced contamination and organic waste options.

TREES AND HEDGES – trees on public and private land are a considerable cultural and biological asset across the borough with innumerable public benefits in relation to visual amenity, biodiversity, health and historical associations. Rugby is fortunate to have a diverse arboricultural resource, both urban and rural, for the enjoyment of all. Scrutiny reviewed the processes in place with regard to trees and hedges in the Borough of Rugby and recommended that development of a Tree Policy was essential to protect Rugby's trees and green infrastructure for future generations.

PARKING AT THE QUEEN'S DIAMOND JUBILEE LEISURE CENTRE – to gather evidence for the review scrutiny carried out a site visit at the car park of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre. Meetings were attended by external representatives from the leisure centre, clubs and organisations based on the site and other interested groups and agencies prior to short-term recommendations being approved by Cabinet in April 2019. Scrutiny was considering further information and evidence relating to parking enforcement and any medium or longer-term recommendations prior to submitting the draft review report to Cabinet.

ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY – a task group was established to carry out an in-depth review of facilities for disabled people and access for people with disabilities to council owned or run buildings, open spaces or parks. During the public consultation, the task group sought the views of a range of individuals and groups. The highlight of the review was the successful public engagement. The review was completed in March 2019. A review report was considered by Cabinet in June 2019.

INFORMING AND ENGAGING OUR COMMUNITIES – communication, engagement and public consultation were raised as separate suggestions for scrutiny topics. A task group was established to carry out the review focusing on the following questions: ‘How can we involve communities in decisions that affect them, in ways that suit them? Can we provide information and tools to council teams and to Members, so that they can inform and engage communities where relevant?’ The review was completed in March 2019. A review report was considered by Cabinet in June 2019.

MOTION FROM COUNCIL – 28 FEBRUARY 2019

REDUCE PLASTIC WASTE AT THE COUNCIL – an audit of single use plastics used by individual service areas was undertaken and the findings were reported to scrutiny in February 2019. A council-wide Plastics Policy was adopted by Council in April 2019.

In the former Leader’s Budget Speech 2019, a commitment was made to eliminate single use plastics at Rugby Borough Council from 1 April 2019.

Work is ongoing to identify suitable alternatives to replace single use plastics. A progress report is scheduled to be presented to scrutiny in autumn 2019.

STANDING ITEMS

There are a number of standing items that return to scrutiny every year. They include AIR QUALITY MONITORING to examine progress of the of the Council’s Air Quality Annual Status Report, progress on the Local Air Quality Management Action Plan Annual Status Report and implications of new residential and infrastructure developments planned in the borough.

In accordance with Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006, scrutiny has responsibility to carry out an overview of CRIME AND DISORDER at no less than one meeting each municipal year to scrutinise decisions made and actions taken by the responsible authorities that make up the Rugby Community Safety Partnership in connection with the discharge of their crime and disorder functions. In April 2019, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Warwickshire attended a scrutiny meeting to provide an appreciation of his priorities and key activities. Rugby Borough Neighbourhood Watch provided an update on the work of the organisation.

Finance and Performance reports are reviewed by scrutiny on a quarterly basis.

Holding the Executive to account is one of the primary responsibilities of scrutiny to ensure that Cabinet is making decisions effectively and acting in the best interests of the local community. Two joint meetings of both overview and scrutiny committees were held based on question and answer style sessions with the Leader and Executive Director and the four Portfolio Holder.

BROOKE OSC WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

Meeting Date	Scrutiny Items
28 June 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance and Performance Monitoring 2017/18 Year-End Notice of Motion – Reduce Plastic Waste at the Council
13 September 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance and Performance Monitoring 2018/19 Quarter 1 Review of Waste and Recycling Education (light touch)
7 February 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance and Performance Monitoring 2018/19 Quarter 3 Review of Employee Wellbeing (light touch) Review of Trees and Hedges (light touch) Notice of Motion – Reduce Plastic Waste at the Council (progress update)
11 April 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Special Expenses Scheme (one-page strategy) Crime and Disorder (annual review) Notice of Motion – Reduce Plastic Waste at the Council (draft policy) Review of Informing and Engaging Our Communities (review report) Review of Access for People with a Disability (review report)

WHITTLE OSC WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

Meeting Date	Scrutiny Items
16 July 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presentation on the business case for a Council led lottery Review of Public Space Protection Orders (review report) Air Quality Monitoring (update)
15 October 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access for People with a Disability (one-page strategy) Air Quality Monitoring (annual review)
10 December 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finance and Performance Monitoring 2018/19 Quarter 2 World Rugby Hall of Fame (progress report) Town Centre Heritage (progress report) Review of Parking at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre (one-page strategy)
13 February 2019 SPECIAL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Parking at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre (consideration of feedback and evidence)
11 March 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth and Investment (focus on town centre economy, inward investment and affordable housing) World Rugby Hall of Fame (progress report) Town Centre Heritage (progress report) Review of Parking at the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Leisure Centre (review report) Bridges – Great Central Way

JOINT OSC WORK PROGRAMME 2018/19

Meeting Date	Scrutiny Items
8 November 2018	Portfolio Holders
28 January 2019	Leader of the Council and Executive Director
5 March 2019	Review of Overview and Scrutiny

LOOKING AHEAD

To explore ways that scrutiny could be improved, a review of the overview and scrutiny arrangements was carried out and suggested outcomes were approved by Council. The key changes for 2019/20 include:

The two new scrutiny committees – Communities and Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Environment and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Committee – will have clear remits aligned to their portfolio areas.

Each Portfolio Holder will be invited to attend at least one scrutiny committee meeting during the year to discuss performance and future strategy, or any specific topics.

Topics listed in the Forward Plan will be included in committee agendas.

The former committee chairs reviewed the process for setting the forward overview and scrutiny work programme and the annual workshop was replaced with a fresh approach to engaging with the public and external partners via platforms such as the Council website, Facebook and councillor listening posts. This will enable scrutiny to be more reactive by addressing issues as they come to light. The scrutiny area of the website will be improved to encourage greater communication.

Review topics will be narrowed down using a review checker and the final shortlist will be agreed with Heads of Service and committee Chairs and Vice-Chairs prior to being incorporated into the work programme for 2019/20.

A programme of training will be carried out for overview and scrutiny committee chairs, committee members and key officers.