

## **ANNUAL COUNCIL**

**DATE OF MEETING:** 21 MAY 2020

**TITLE OF REPORT:** REVIEW OF THE WORK OF OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE OVER THE PAST YEAR  
2019/20

**Report of:** Chairman of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee

### **I PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1** To report to Council on the work of Overview & Scrutiny Committee over the past year 2019/20.

### **2 OFFICER RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1** That the report and the subsequent actions taken be noted.

### **3 WHAT IS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY?**

- 3.1** Although not a decision-making body, effective Overview and Scrutiny has enormous potential to influence and inform decisions made by both the Council and partner bodies affecting the District.
- 3.2** The Committee can review and scrutinise any matters which affect the Council, its area or the residents of that area, in order to provide greater transparency and accountability in the delivery of local services.
- 3.3** The following key roles were identified as areas which Overview and Scrutiny should be concerned with in Hart:
- Holding the Cabinet to account (through acting as a “critical friend”), which may include reviewing decisions taken by Cabinet, but not yet implemented, via the ‘call-in’ procedure;
  - Monitoring Council performance;
  - Reviewing policy;
  - Developing policy; and
  - Scrutinising externally issues of public concern which may affect the Council and its delivery of services.
- 3.4** The Committee comprises 11 members. All Hart Councillors are eligible to sit on the Committee, except for members of the Cabinet. No Councillor can be involved in the scrutiny of a decision with which he/she has been directly involved. The Committee is chaired by a member of the main opposition party.
- 3.5** An important part of the role of the Committee is through the use of Service Boards. These comprise Lead Service Portfolio Holders and a small number of Overview & Scrutiny members who are appointed to look in depth at particular issues and their recommendations, which may suggest a change in policy or service

provision. These are submitted to Overview & Scrutiny Committee for consideration and onward recommendation is appropriate.

- 3.6** This year however, it must be acknowledged that the current Service Board arrangements were not working, with Boards being cancelled essentially due to lack of Member engagement and feedback. The recommendation to next year's Committee is that it should review Service Board arrangements to enable more effective arrangements to be put in place to monitor performance and scrutinise progress against Service Plans.

## **4 REVIEW OF 2019/20 AND THE ACTIONS TAKEN**

### **4.1 Regular reports -**

Quarterly performance/budget monitoring/Risk Management /RIPA/Flooding

### **4.2 Regular annual one off reports -**

Treasury Management/ 2017/18 Outturn Position/ MTFS/ Draft Budget / Service Plans/ Corporate Risk Register/Local Government Ombudsman Annual Review Letter, Update on use of Body Worn Video.

- 4.3 Service Boards –** It had been agreed that the current Service Board arrangements were not working, with Boards being cancelled essentially due to lack of Member engagement and feedback. In July 2019 it was agreed that Heads of Service would be invited to attend meetings to update the Committee on the progress of each service.

- 4.4 Service level Agreements (SLAs) –** It had been agreed that organisations with SLAs would attend for discussion on performance against SLA.

### **4.5 Individual Items of Note**

#### **4.5.1 June 2019**

HART VOLUNTARY ACTION - Caroline Winchurch, Chief Executive Officer, Hart Voluntary Action attended for discussion on performance against SLA.

CHANGES TO HART'S RECYCLING BRING SITES - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

FLEET PARKING SCHEME PROPOSAL - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

FLEET TOWN COUNCIL, GURKHA SQUARE MARKET - considered before Cabinet approval was sought. *This report was not for publication and the public were therefore excluded.*

SHARED LICENSING SERVICE 2019 TO 2024: PROPOSED VISION – Members considered the proposed Vision which was supported and recommended to the Licensing Committee for consideration.

COMMERCIALISATION STRATEGY: STRAND C (DIGITALISATION) DRAFT  
DIGITAL STRATEGY - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

#### **4.5.2 July 2019**

INCLUSION HAMPSHIRE - Cheryl Edwards, Inclusion Hampshire, attended for discussion on performance against SLA.

STATUTORY GUIDANCE ON OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IN LOCAL AND COMBINED AUTHORITIES - Committee members took the opportunity to clarify anything that was not clear to them from the new statutory guidance recently issued by the Government on Overview and Scrutiny in local authorities.

CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT UPDATE - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

#### **4.5.3 August 2019**

FLEET PHOENIX - Charlotte Tickner, Chief Executive Officer of Fleet Phoenix, attended for discussion on performance against SLA.

HART DISTRICT COUNCIL VISION 2040 - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

CLIMATE CHANGE RESPONSE - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

FIVE COUNCILS CORPORATE SERVICES CONTRACTS – Members considered the current position of the Council's contracts for corporate services. *Appendices 3 and 4 of this report were not for publication and the public were therefore excluded.*

#### **4.5.4 September 2019**

HART CITIZENS ADVICE - Sally Plank, Chief Executive Officer, Hart Citizens Advice, attended to present on performance against SLA for 2018-19.

SERVICE PERFORMANCE - John Elson, Head of Environment and Technical Services, attended to discuss service performance.

IMPROVING HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN HART: OUR PLAN 2019 – 2024 - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

HART STREET CARE SERVICES - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

REVIEW OF THE DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SERVICE - Overview and Scrutiny were asked to note the intention to undertake an independent, external review of the Development Management (DM) service and to consider any particular issues that the review should focus upon.

GARDEN COMMUNITY PROGRAMME - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

#### **4.5.5 October 2019**

SERVICE PERFORMANCE - The Head of Community Services, Kirsty Jenkins, attended to discuss service performance.

FLY TIPPING UPDATE - The Overview and Scrutiny Committee were provided with an update on the actual incidence of fly tipping in the District and the Council's arrangements for managing fly-tipping.

HOUSING STRATEGY - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

#### **4.5.6 November 2019**

SERVICE PERFORMANCE - The Head of Corporate Services, Andrew Vallance, attended to discuss service performance.

#### **4.5.7 December 2019**

SERVICE PERFORMANCE - The new Head of Place, Mark Jaggard introduced his broad vision for the service.

INSURANCE: OFFER FROM THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT MUTUAL - considered before Cabinet approval was sought. *Appendices of this report were not for publication and the public were therefore excluded.*

GARDEN COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

REVIEW OF HART PARKING CHARGES - The Committee's views were sought on proposed changes to Hart's car parking charges.

#### **4.5.8 January 2020**

DOG FOULING PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

DRAFT BUDGET 2020/21 - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

#### **4.5.9 February 2020**

SERVICE PERFORMANCE - The Head of Environment and Technical Services, John Elson, attended to discuss service performance.

LOCAL DISCRETIONARY BUSINESS RATE RELIEF SCHEME 2019/20 - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

COMMUNITY GARDEN AT EDENBROOK COUNTRY PARK - considered before Cabinet approval was sought.

RIPA POLICY AND PROCEDURES - Members considered the RIPA Policy and procedures for approval.

FIVE COUNCILS CORPORATE SERVICES CONTRACTS - Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the current position with regard to the contract for corporate services entered into with the Five Councils' Partnership. This report had been considered by Cabinet at its February meeting. *This report was not for publication and the public were therefore excluded.*

#### **4.5.10 March and April 2019**

Unfortunately the Coronavirus emergency meant that these two meetings had to be cancelled.

**Contact Details** - Ken Crookes, Chairman, Overview & Scrutiny Committee