

Agenda item:

Title and Date of Meeting Scrutiny Management Panel – 4 July 2014
Council Meeting -15 July 2014

Subject: Report on Scrutiny

Report by: Head of Customer, Community and Democratic Services

Key decision (over £250k): **No**

Full Council: **Yes**

1. Purpose of report

The City Council’s Constitution requires information reports to be provided to the Scrutiny Management Panel and subsequently full Council on the work undertaken by the scrutiny panels.

2. Recommendations

It is recommended that the report be noted and the work done by the panels be acknowledged.

3. Work Undertaken by each Panel

Scrutiny Management Panel

The Scrutiny Management Panel has a wide remit that includes

- overall responsibility for overseeing the themed scrutiny panels (including agreeing their work programmes)
- scrutinising the budget (which includes receiving presentations from the Head of Finance and S151 officer at relevant times during the municipal year)
- receiving topics for review as a result of Notice of Motion referrals and reporting back to Council,
- receiving updates where requested on progress made with the implementation of recommendations from reviews already carried out and
- considering decisions that have been “called in”.

Agreeing work programmes

At its meeting on 5 July 2013, the Scrutiny Management Panel considered all the topics that had been put forward by the themed panels and prioritised and allocated them to the relevant themed scrutiny panels for review.

Scrutinising the Budget

Scrutiny of the budget was undertaken by the panel at its meetings on 7 November 2013 and 7 February 2014 when it received presentations from Chris Ward, Head of Finance and S151 Officer on the Budget 2014/15. Members were given the opportunity to discuss the contents of the presentations and ask questions.

Notice of Motion Referral

Scrutiny Management Panel received one Notice of Motion referral from Full Council concerning Transparency and Openness (Filming of meetings). This was considered at its meeting on 7 February 2014 in light of additional information being provided that the Local Audit and Accountability Bill had received royal assent on 30 January 2014. Members were advised that secondary legislation was necessary to decide exactly how to bring in and regulate the provisions. The panel made recommendations to the Council meeting held on 18 March 2014 which were accepted.

Updates Received

The Panel received updates at its meetings on the following matters:-

- Corporate Performance in the Transforming Organisation - the Panel was advised that the approach towards measuring performance had changed significantly over the last few years. Previously the system of regulation was based on numerous national indicators and the performance management framework was based around reporting how well PCC was doing against the national indicators. Following various changes as set out in the report, it was agreed that in developing business plans, more focus needed to be on the key performance indicators that services would use to measure their efficiency and effectiveness. The Strategic Directors Board are now using the business plans produced by services to provide a focus on performance. Services are being asked to identify blocks or barriers affecting performance. (5 Nov 2013)
- Welfare Reform Update - the original scrutiny panel review into this had been completed in May 2012. The information contained in the report had quickly become out of date as many changes had been made and the panel received a detailed update. (5 Nov 2013).
- Winter Maintenance Operations Plan 2013 - 2014 - the panel received an update explaining the lessons learned following snow events and that the overall aim is to ensure so far as is reasonably practicable that safe passage along the highway is not endangered by snow or ice. In particular co-ordination needed to be much more joined up and as a result of this the snow desk had been set up. (7 February 2014).

- Corporate Peer Challenge - the panel received information about the review team, information that had been sent to them about the authority, their general programme and to whom they spoke. The full report was provided to the panel as appendix 1 of the report and appendix 2 provided a summary of actions in response to the recommendations. Many of the issues have been reflected in the annual governance statement for the authority and as such are being tracked through the Governance & Audit & Standards Committee. The panel noted the report and wanted two matters particularly to be highlighted: comments about PCC's relationship with the voluntary and community sector and the suggestion that there should be more systematic and tailored political development and training for councillors. (7 February 2014)

Decisions Called-in.

As part of its remit, the Scrutiny Management Panel is responsible for dealing with any decisions subject to the Call-in procedures. The panel met on one occasion during the last Municipal Year to consider a call-in of decisions relating to the Pyramids, taken by Cabinet on 10 June 2013. The panel decided that it was satisfied that adequate information had been supplied to enable the Cabinet to reach its decision and did not refer the matter back to Cabinet for reconsideration.

Economic Development, Culture & Leisure Scrutiny Panel (EDCL Panel)

Following its review into "Making Community Ownership work for Portsmouth", the EDCL panel now receives regular updates on the work of the Community Ownership Unit Portsmouth (the cross departmental, virtual team "COUP"). Members of the panel have been invited to attend some of the COUP networking events (including a talk 'Can community ownership revolutionise your neighbourhood?' given by social entrepreneur Phil Tulba on the experience of award winning social enterprise Adrenaline Alley a BMX and skate park in Corby).

During the 2013/14 municipal year the panel completed its review 'Pathways into Work for Young People' which is expected to go to Cabinet in July 2014. The report's recommendations focus on the importance of promoting employment and training opportunities such as apprenticeships, the need to make clear links between schools and local businesses, and the Council's own use of contractual arrangements to incorporate social inclusion clauses. The work with more vulnerable groups was recognised and encouraged, such as the Troubled Families Unit/Positive Family Steps giving targeted support to families and the New Belongings Project assisting care leavers with their education and employment choices. The panel was very interested in the Post 16 curriculum in the city and the variations between retake opportunities afforded by the local colleges which can impact upon employment opportunities for their students. The panel also heard from schools on their careers advice provision, the government agencies, local authority and voluntary bodies assisting young adults to prepare for work and ensuring they have the necessary skills, as well as from local employers who are seeking candidates with the relevant qualifications and attitude to ensure sustainable employment for young people in the city.

Housing & Social Care Scrutiny Panel (HSC Scrutiny Panel)

'Advancing the use of Technology in Adult Social Care (Telecare and Telehealth)

The HSC Scrutiny Panel signed off its report in September 2013, following 9 evidence gathering meetings hearing from service providers at the City Council, sheltered housing providers, health practitioners and the voluntary sector representatives. The Cabinet on 7 October 2013 supported the recommendations to recognise and promote the importance of Telecare and Healthcare in assisting Adult Social Care clients and Sheltered Housing residents and the preventative benefits to the healthcare system.

Hospital Discharge Arrangements in Portsmouth.

The panel commenced this review in October 2013. The panel heard from the council officers involved in these arrangements from a variety of departments: Adult Social Care (including occupational therapists), the Integrated Commissioning Unit, Sheltered Housing and Community Housing (with links to Telecare and external housing providers) and Housing Options. External witnesses included representatives from Age UK Portsmouth, and Hampshire Domiciliary Care Association.

The panel has also visited Queen Alexandra Hospital to meet with the Managing Director of Medicine for the Clinical Services Centre who explained the issues surrounding discharge of patients from QA.

The review is continuing and the intention is to gather evidence from those with direct experience of discharge arrangements.

Education, Children & Young People Scrutiny Panel

School Governance Arrangements

The panel conducted a review into school governance arrangements which has recently been completed. During the course of the review the panel learned that the city has a large number of governor vacancies, particularly in the parent governor category. The panel was pleased to note that the council's school governance strategy action plan, that was approved by Cabinet earlier this year, contained a number of initiatives to improve governance in the city, including working with the Shaping Portsmouth group to promote the role to the business community.

The panel received evidence from a number of head teachers, chairs of governors and a parent governor through their attendance at panel meetings and through responses to the panel's questionnaire. This enabled the panel to obtain evidence on why governors are not staying in post, the take up of training of governors and their ability to understand school data, which was used to form their recommendations. The panel also considered the current arrangements for governing body self-review in the city.

The work of the governor services team was reviewed by the panel who concluded that they provide excellent support to governing bodies. The panel considered how

effective clerking is in the city and sent a questionnaire out to clerks and received evidence on the Hampshire CC clerking service.

A number of recommendations were made by the panel to improve governance in the city. The panel's report and recommendations will be considered by Cabinet early in the new municipal year. If approved these will feed into the school governance strategy.

Traffic, Environment & Community Safety Scrutiny Panel

Review of air quality in Portsmouth.

The review assessed the progress on the 29 measures set out in the Air Quality Action Plan.

The panel recognised the significant detrimental impact of air pollution on health and the economic costs of failing to deliver the council's responsibilities. It was pleased that air quality had improved sufficiently since 2009 for 8 of the 13 Air Quality Management Areas (where levels of nitrogen dioxide were above the National Air Quality Objectives set to protect health) to be revoked; however members recognised the need for further development of the council's strategies to improve air quality and to achieve the objectives and recommended that this be done by producing a new local Air Quality Strategy.

The panel's report went to Cabinet on 1 July 2013 where all its recommendations were supported.

Assessment of the progress made following Portsmouth's review of domestic abuse.

In July 2013 the panel started a review to assess the progress made following the 2012 domestic abuse commissioning strategy which was published by the Safer Portsmouth Partnership, the Children's Trust Board and the Portsmouth Children's Safeguarding Board.

It noted that Portsmouth reports high levels of domestic abuse but this may reflect good access to and confidence in support services.

Although good progress has been made to support victims of domestic abuse, Members recommended that more work is required to fully embed a co-ordinated community response across the city and this must remain a priority for the council and its partners.

The report was signed off on 29 April 2014 and is expected to be considered by the Cabinet in July.

Health, Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Over the last 12 months, the panel scrutinised regular updates from local NHS organisations and Portsmouth City Council and looked at:

- Maternity Services.
- Re-provision of Exbury Ward, St James Hospital

- Possible Repatriation of Plastics from St Richard's Hospital, Chichester.
- New Ways of Working
- Framework for Assessing Change.
- Update on Public Health Progress Following the Transfer of Responsibility and Health Information.
- The Right Place, Right Time Community Lounge
- Guildhall Walk Health care Centre
- Continuing Healthcare - Section 75 Agreements
- Report on 2011-12 Five-Year Olds Dental Epidemiology Survey in Portsmouth.
- Hampshire & Isle of Wight Local Dentists Committee
- Amputation rate for diabetics
- Hampshire & Isle of Wight Pharmaceutical Committee
- St Mary's and St James Hospital Service Review
- Dementia Action Group
- Proposal to Close the Lowry Unit
- Options for the provision of Vascular Surgery for Southern Hampshire

.....
Signed by:
Head of Customer, Community and Democratic Services

Appendices:
None

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Minutes of Scrutiny Meetings	City Council's website www.portsmouth.gov.uk