



Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010/11

Introduction by Cllr Chris Saint, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board



This report outlines the work undertaken by the Council's Overview and Scrutiny function during the 2010/11 municipal year.

The Council agreed new arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny at its meeting in June 2010, consisting of four Committees:

- Overview and Scrutiny Board
- Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Board is responsible for commissioning Task and Finish Groups, with the three other Committees suggesting topics to the Board. Any non-cabinet member is able to put their name forward to participate in a Task and Finish Group.

A number of Task and Finish Groups have been commissioned during 2010/11, with the majority of recommendations proposed being accepted by Cabinet and relevant partners, illustrating that Overview and Scrutiny is having a positive impact on public services across the County.

Committees

Each Committee established its own work programme focussing on a number of high priority issues.

Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

During 2010/11 the Adult Social Care and Health OSC (formerly the Health OSC and the Adult and Community Services OSC) has considered a number of important issues, including

Care and Choice Accommodation Programme

In January, the Committee considered proposals to modernise residential social care for older people under the Care and Choice Programme prior to the proposals being considered by Cabinet on the 27th January. The proposals related to the 10 County Council care homes, which currently provide 350 beds out of a total of 2,229 beds available in Warwickshire. The proposals included the proposed closure of two homes, Mayfield and Abbotsbury, which had been calculated to be surplus to requirements and to invite expressions of interest from the market in relation to the remaining 8 care homes.

The meeting attracted a large number of members of the public, who used the opportunity to ask public questions about the proposals. Whilst the Committee supported the direction of travel outlined in the proposals, enabling people to retain their independence, concerns were raised about managing the transition, the impact on residents and the need to ensure high quality of care within the independent sector. The Committee made a number of recommendations to Cabinet, including putting the two care homes proposed for closure out to the open market prior to any decision being made on closure. However the Cabinet did not accept this recommendation. The Committee also asked Cabinet to explore the legal position in relation to the transfer of the care home buildings to other providers to ascertain whether a covenant can be embedded within any agreement to ensure that the assets are retained for the use of community care. The Cabinet agreed to investigate this.



The Committee will be monitoring the transitional arrangements and quality and standards of care for transferred residents at 6 monthly intervals. Councillor Les Caborn, Chair of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, commented that *“the Committee will play a pivotal role in ensuring that high standards and quality of care are maintained across the sector.”*

Fairer Charging and Contributions



At its meeting in October, the Committee considered the outcomes from the Fairer Charging and Contributions consultation. The Committee scrutinised the robustness of the consultation process and the how the outcomes of the consultation informed the proposed changes to charges and contributions for adult social care. The Committee supported the proposed changes and will consider the impact of the changes during 2011/12.

NHS Transformation

The Committee held a seminar on 21st April about the changes to the NHS, Public Health and Adult Social Care and how this will affect the work of the County Council and the role of Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The seminar focussed on key aspects of the NHS Transformation agenda including, GP consortia, Healthwatch, Health and Well-Being Board, Public Health and implications for Adult Social Care



An expert advisor from the Centre of Public Scrutiny, Rachel Harris facilitated workshops at the end of the seminar focusing on the role of Adult Social Care and Health OSC in relation to the transformation process and the new health system. Rachel Harris's wide ranging experience includes chair of Dudley Beacon Primary Care Trust, chair of the Joint Health and Wellbeing Partnership on the Dudley Local Strategic Partnership and a local authority councillor.

Councillor Les Caborn (Chair) said, *"The seminar provided a vital opportunity for Members including our Borough and District colleagues to consider the NHS Transformation agenda, and the Committee's role moving forward"*.

Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

During 2010/11 the Children and Young People OSC (formerly the Children, Young People and Families OSC) has considered a number of important issues, including the following:

Educational attainment of Warwickshire pupils

The Committee reviewed the educational attainment of pupils at its meeting in February 2011. Whilst the overall educational attainment of children in Warwickshire is good and better than the national average there are some key issues which still need to be addressed, about which the committee has made recommendations to Cabinet.



An already significant gap (23%) in attainment is now widening at Key Stage 2 between children and young people who are in receipt of Free School Meals (FSM) or with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and other pupils. This has obvious implications for performance at Key Stage 4. There is already a significant gap at Key Stage 4 in pupils achieving five or more grades A to C with non FSM pupils at 60% and FSM pupils at 27%. This is a low rate of achievement and significant gap of 33%.

Although the progress of FSM pupils has improved the gap has not been narrowed.

The Committee was also concerned that the choices of subject which counted for the purposes of the English Baccalaureate were too narrow.

Councillor June Tandy, Chair of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee commented *"The committee has looked very carefully at educational attainment and has concerns about the levels of attainment in certain parts of the county especially in areas of deprivation. For this reason we have asked for further reports to come back to the committee so we can monitor the situation very carefully"*.

Warwickshire Pupil Re-Integration Service

In response to the poor outcome of the Ofsted Inspection of Warwickshire's Teaching and Learning Centres, the Committee undertook a scrutiny exercise in relation to the PRU in November 2010. Members received accompanied tours of Warwickshire's Teaching and Learning Centres at Keresley and Pound Lane, and were able to meet with staff and a focus group of pupils at Pound Lane. Councillor June Tandy said: *"The visits members of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook were extremely valuable in that they enabled members to better understand the difficult issues facing the Pupil Referral Units"*. Following these Site Visits, the Committee held a Select Committee meeting to explore the issue in-depth. The Committee identified a number areas, including that the whole service should be restructured. At its April 2011 meeting the Committee considered what progress had been made in meeting its recommendations.



The Committee was pleased to hear that the re-structure of the service was underway and on track to be ready for implementation in September 2011. An information passport was being piloted to improve the transmission of information between schools and the PRU and vice versa. In practice the reduction down to 2 sites had taken place with the Merttens Centre only being used for induction. Plans had been made for the remaining 11 primary school children to receive their education through other means and diversion/alternative support mechanisms were being put in place to avoid future admissions. There were also some positive immediate outcomes for the pupils with hot meals now provided onsite and access to appropriate science facilities.

However the Committee remained concerned about the level of progress that has been made in improving the physical environment for pupils at the Keresley Centre and in securing an outside play area. It therefore intends to visit the Centres again at the earliest opportunity to inspect the site facilities.

Councillor June Tandy, Chair of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee commented *"I was pleased that the committee members felt the way I do with relation to the PRUs. We would prefer not to have them but accept that in certain cases they are a necessity. We are now working towards having Learning Support Units in schools and will look to assist schools in accommodating them in their own premises"*.

Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

During 2010/11 the Communities OSC (formerly the Corporate Services and Community Safety OSC and Environment and Economy OSC) has considered a number of high profile issues, including:

High Speed Rail 2



The Committee played a crucial role towards the end of 2010 in helping to crystallise the Council's view on HS2, which then led to the full Council's unanimous decision to oppose this government project. In November, the Committee held a public interest debate, inviting evidence from a number of HS2 action group representatives in relation to the business case, economic and environmental impact of the scheme.

Rugby Western Relief Road

The Committee also held a Select Committee meeting on 15th March in Rugby to scrutinise the Rugby Western Relief Road. The Committee sought to understand why the project experienced significant delays and an overspend of £24 million. Recognising that the Rugby Western Relief Road was an issue of significant public concern, members of the public were invited to submit questions to be answered at the meeting. The Committee focussed their investigation around the following issues.



- Route Choice for the Southern Section of the road
- Procurement process and contract award
- Contingency
- Design
- Project management
- Project governance
- Risk management
- Network Rail and public utilities
- Value for Money
- Wider lessons for the Council

The Committee concluded that the delays and overspends of the project were not attributable to a single cause, but were rather the result of multiple factors and systemic failure. The Committee has identified a number of lessons that needed to be learnt for future projects and are now compiling a report and recommendations to be submitted to the Cabinet for consideration. Councillor John Whitehouse, Chair of the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, commented "*our*

recommendations to Cabinet are going to be far-reaching, and I hope they will command full support."

Modernisation of the Libraries Service

On the 1st March, the Committee considered the proposals relating to the modernisation of the Libraries service. The proposals included a re-design of the library services into three categories of service:

- Library Hubs – offering the widest range of services and opening hours
- Library Local – with opening hours that reflect community needs
- Library Direct – online library open 24/7 plus mobile and outreach services to local communities.



The proposals identify 16 library buildings that are no longer sustainable in their current form and 18 libraries proposed to move to reduced opening hours.

Whilst the Committee recognised the need to modernise the service, they expressed concern that some areas would be affected more adversely by the proposals than others. The Committee also expressed concern that the proposals were based on cost, rather than

the value that libraries provided within different communities.

The proposals will now be subject to a public consultation. Councillor John Whitehouse, Chair of the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee commented *"I hope that some really innovative ideas come forward during the consultation, because closing libraries and cutting hours is the last resort option."* The Committee will be considering the outcome of the consultation prior to Cabinet making a decision in July.

Overview and Scrutiny Board

During 2010/11 the Overview and Scrutiny Board have considered a number of important issues, including:

- Corporate Business Plan
- Progress on property review and the One Front Door Programme
- A vision for consultation and engagement
- Sub-regional programme of collaboration on variety of services
- Treasury Management monitoring

Corporate Business Plan

The Overview and Scrutiny Board considered the arrangements for developing the 2011-2013 Corporate Business Plan (CBP) in January 2011. The Overview and Scrutiny Board recommended that improvements be made to the process i.e.

- The timescale for the process this year was too tight and the timeline started too late for Members to have an input.
- The Corporate Business Plan should shape the budget.
- Members needed to take advantage of the opportunities provided at the March cycle of meetings to have an input into the measures and targets within the CBP.
- In future years the Corporate Business Plan should be developed and approved earlier in the business-planning cycle, allowing the budget to be developed around approved corporate priorities and to allow Overview and Scrutiny Committees to contribute to it.



The Board and the Committees met again in March to review the suggested measures and targets within the Corporate Business Plan. There was concern over the quality of the information available and Committees have asked in future that even where targets were not available, that baseline and benchmarking information should be provided. Without this it was difficult to assess whether the targets were challenging enough. In some cases the link between the suggested measure and the ambition was unclear.

Task and Finish Groups

Since the new arrangements the Overview and Scrutiny Board has commissioned eleven Task and Finish Groups.

- Rugby Accident and Emergency
- Household Waste Recycling Centres
- Adult Social Care Prevention Services
- Review of Communication with the public and financial accountability
- Public Service Reform
- Supporting the Local Economy
- Hospital Discharges and Re-ablement
- Quality Accounts
- Waste Disposal
- Maternity Services
- Older Adults Mental Health

The progress and outcomes achieved through these Task and Finish Groups is outlined below.

Task and Finish Groups

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| Review | |
|  | Safeguarding |
| | Outcome |
| Robust and effective systems and processes to protect children and young people from harm | |
| <p>Investigations into a number of high profile tragic child protection cases elsewhere in the country, highlighted systemic failings in processes and partnership working. The nature of such cases has increased national and local awareness around child protection issues, leading to Warwickshire, along with other local authorities, experiencing an unprecedented increase in the number of child protection referrals and the number of children subject to a Child Protection Plan. The Task and Finish Group scrutinised the effectiveness of child protection processes and the impact of increased demand for child protection services. It gathered evidence from social workers, teachers, a dedicated nurse for child protection and Warwickshire Police. In addition, members undertook site visits to each of the Child Services area offices. The review highlighted that Warwickshire has robust systems and processes in place, but made a number of recommendations to strengthen the current system including introducing protected caseloads for newly qualified social workers, ensuring equity of level and nature of caseloads across the county and improving how information regarding thresholds and referral processes is provided and communicated to schools and other key partners. The recommendations were accepted by Cabinet.</p> | |

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| Review | |
|  | Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) |
| | Outcome |
| Improved access to CAMHS services and reduced waiting times across the County | |
| <p>The CAMHS Scrutiny Panel held a Select Committee meeting in June 2010 to scrutinise inequality of access and waiting times for specialist CAMHS across the County. The Panel identified a number of improvements including how CAMHS communicates with schools and parents enabling flexible approaches for appointments to reduce the level of missed appointments, enhanced promotion and use of early intervention services and better performance and financial reporting to Commissioners. The recommendations developed by the Panel were accepted by the Cabinet, NHS Warwickshire and Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust. The Adult Social Care and Health OSC reviewed the progress made in implementing the recommendations at its meeting in April meeting, whilst improvements have been</p> | |

realised in terms of reducing waiting lists and waiting times from assessment to treatment, the Committee will continue to oversee progress until all recommendations are implemented.

Review

Rugby Accident & Emergency

Outcome

Effective and efficient services that meet the needs of the local community



NHS Warwickshire in its commitment to provide the best possible services for residents in Warwickshire identified several potential options for a new model of service for emergency and urgent care in Rugby. The options went out for public consultation in July 2010. The Task and Finish Group was established to consider the proposals and whether they effectively met the needs of the local economy. The Group held a select committee in August and made a number of recommendations, including improving the road signage around Rugby to provide greater clarification regarding the services that are available at Rugby St Cross and developing an effective communication strategy to raise awareness of different services available at Rugby St Cross and University Hospital in Coventry.

Review

Permanent School Exclusions

Outcome

A reduction in permanent school exclusions and improve educational outcomes for children and young people



Whilst 2008/09 saw a decline in school exclusions within Warwickshire, since 2003/04 the general trend has been upwards. The Task and Finish Group sought to develop an understanding of the reasons why children are excluded, the processes that are in place to support them and their families and the challenges facing schools around pupil behaviour. The Group gathered evidence from a variety of people including excluded pupils. Site visits were also undertaken to teaching and learning centres to speak to staff and pupils. The recommendations identified improvements which could be made in support for schools, training for staff, partnership working and how resources are allocated. These recommendations were accepted by Cabinet in November 2010.

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|  | Review |
| | Support for Carers |
| | Outcome |
| | Improved services and support for carers |

There are an estimated 53,000 people living and working in Warwickshire who consider themselves carers. In addition to this, there are many individuals, who for one reason or another do not consider themselves as a carer. The Task and Finish Group sought to understand the challenges facing carers and the support that is available to them. Evidence was gathered from a number of sources, including carers, voluntary organisations and officers within the County Council and other statutory agencies. The Task and Finish Group found that there is a significant amount of work being undertaken by statutory and voluntary organisations to support carers. However, the Task and Finish Group identified areas for improvement in relation to joint working and the general awareness of the needs of carers. The majority of the recommendations developed by the Task and Finish Group were accepted by Cabinet in January 2011.

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|  | Review |
| | Household Waste Recycling Centres |
| | Outcome |
| | A more cost effective service that meets the needs of citizens, leading to an increased recycling rate |

A Task and Finish Group was set up in to October 2010 to review the proposals for future provision of Household Waste Recycling Centres in Warwickshire. After analysing and evaluating a range of evidence, the Group concluded that managing Household Waste Recycling Centres in-house was the best option for the future provision of the service, as it would offer potential savings and provide the flexibility to make any necessary changes to the sites and services. With this in mind the Task and Finish Group made several recommendations which were accepted by Paul Galland - Strategic Director of Environment and Economy.

Review

Adult Social Care Prevention Services

Outcome

Effective prevention services that enable older people to remain independent



A Task and Finish Group was set up in November 2010 to review the proposed changes for prevention services within Adult Social Care. The Task and Finish Group sought to understand the prevention services that are currently available, what services and service models are being proposed for the future and how they differ from current arrangements. The Task and Finish Group sought to influence the development of future proposals and consider what prevention services would be appropriate for the future needs of residents. The Task and Finish Group made a number of recommendations, including improved publication of the assistive technology services and prevention services available and that the re-tendering of Telecare ensures service provision within each of the Boroughs and Districts to ensure equitable access for all residents.

Review

Antenatal and Postnatal Services for Teenage Parents in Warwickshire

Outcome

Improved services and support for teenage parents and consequently improved health outcomes for babies born to teenage parents



Early this year the County Council successfully bid to the Centre for Public Scrutiny for funding to undertake a review aimed at addressing health inequalities. Recognising that services for teenage parents vary across Warwickshire and that babies with teenage parents often experience worse health outcomes than their peers, this review sought to establish the nature of services available to teenage parents in Warwickshire, the needs of teenage parents and the experiences of those people supplying the services. The Task and Finish Group heard evidence from a wide range of sources, including Connexions, health visitors, midwives, the family Information service and Respect Yourself Campaign, as well as talking directly to a number of teenage parents. The Task and Finish Group made a number of recommendations, including the need to engage more fully with the voluntary and community sector, the need for smooth transition between midwife and health visitor, the importance of the Connexions service and the benefits of good communication and collaboration. The recommendations were aimed at a number of stakeholders including hospitals, schools and parts of the county council.

Importantly the review was sponsored by the Centre for Public Scrutiny so that it could gather experiences and intelligence with a view to developing a “Health Inequalities

Overview and Scrutiny Toolkit". Warwickshire's experience has been instrumental in developing the Toolkit, which will be a valuable resource for other Local Authority's seeking to address health inequalities through scrutiny. The Health Inequalities Toolkit is due to be published Spring 2011.

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|  | <p>Review</p> <p>Supporting the Local Economy</p> |
| | <p>Outcome</p> <p>Recognisable improvements in the local economy</p> |

A Task and Finish Group has been established to scrutinise the role the Council and key partners can play in supporting and stimulating the local economy. This review has come at an interesting time as resources for economic development and regeneration are reduced and the new Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is being developed for Coventry and Warwickshire. Members have no intention to scrutinise the LEP at this early stage in its existence but the Task and Finish group has stated that it will be interested to monitor the ways in which the LEP's performance will be assessed in the future.

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| <p>Review</p> <p>Communication with the Public and Financial Accountability</p> |  |
| <p>Outcome</p> <p>Improve communication, transparency and accountability</p> | |

A Task and Finish Group was established to explore the way in which the Council communicates with the public regarding financial issues and whether our processes for financial management are transparent and understandable. The review was prompted by the prospect of a very significant reduction in the council's budget and the implications that this will inevitably have for services.

The task and finish group worked with officers from Communications to research practices being rolled out by other authorities, identify good practices, develop an approach tailored to Warwickshire's particular needs and roll this out. The Task and Finish Group made a number of recommendations in relation the first element of the review. These were inward facing and, amongst other things called for more information to be shared with staff and for there to be greater clarity over the Transformation 2013 project currently being undertaken. Many of the recommendations made by the Task and Finish Group have now been implemented.

The Task and Finish Group has now embarked on the second stage of the review,

focusing on how financial information is presented to elected members and ways in which it can be best utilised to ensure that the decisions they make about spending are informed and that financial accountability systems and processes are effective. The Task and Finish Group will be undertaking a member's survey to in order to understand the information needs of members.

| Review | |
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|  | Hospital Discharges and Reablement |
| Outcome | |
| Recognisable improvements in discharge processes and outcomes | |

A Task and Finish Group was set up in December 2010 to review hospital discharge and reablement services in Warwickshire. The Group has considered the protocol arrangements for hospital discharge and the eligibility criteria for reablement services. The Task and Finish Group have learned the priority for Adult Social Care is to promote independence by encouraging customers to do things for themselves rather than carers doing things for them. The plan is that every customer will be given a reablement package if they are FACs eligible (Fair Access to Care). The Task and Finish Group will be considering what works well and not so well when patients are discharged from hospital and how Warwickshire's performance measures against other counties.

| Review | |
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| Public Service Reform |  |
| Outcome | |
| A clear vision of the future for relevant public services in Warwickshire shared by partners | |

The central government programme for public sector reform is moving rapidly. In July 2010 a Task and Finish Group was established to look at some of the implications for the Council and its key partners to look at how the public sector landscape might change and the impact on the Council. The scope of the potential changes is vast and with proposals emanating thick and fast from government the Group decided to focus on the areas of adult social care, health, education and police services. Following a number of roundtable sessions with partners and a workshop the Group reported to the Overview and Scrutiny Board with its initial recommendations about the future direction of the Council, including moving towards a strategic commissioning model, developing a clear vision and transition plan to support the model, any proposals for trading, outsourcing, collaborative models to be supported by a proper business case and proposals for collaboration be based on what makes sense in service terms and not restricted to specific geographic areas i.e. 'Warwickshire' or the sub-region. These were accepted by Cabinet on 27 January

2011.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board has commissioned further work from the Group. In its next phase the Group will be looking at the Council's proposals for a strategic commissioning model and how well this aligns with partners. The Group will also be reviewing whether further economies could be achieved in the purchase of goods and services which all public sector bodies require.