



Cabinet Report

Report of: John Mothersole, Chief Executive

Report to: Cabinet

Date: 16 April 2014

Subject: Scrutiny Review

Author of Report: Michael Bowles (2735568)

Key Decision: NO

Summary:

In November 2013 the Leader of Sheffield City Council, requested that a review of Scrutiny be undertaken. The aim of the review is to identify a series of recommendations which would enable the Council to improve the impact and effectiveness of Scrutiny.

The report provides background information on key functions of scrutiny, the model operated in Sheffield, and how scrutiny is resourced.

The review highlights the options available to improve the impact and effectiveness of Scrutiny. The review has been based on the presumption that all options have to be within current resources.

The main conclusion is to make changes to the ways of working, including:

- The development of a more rigorous approach to work planning and prioritisation
- Greater engagement with the public and service users in Scrutiny, including consultation and role as “expert witnesses”

- Strengthening outcome focussed Scrutiny of city-wide issues including holding to account services delivered by other agencies across the city, as well as the Council.

There is one structural change recommended to make the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee politically proportional.

Reasons for Recommendations:

Scrutiny is an essential part of ensuring that Local Government remains effective and accountable. It operates alongside a range of other transparency and accountability processes and mechanisms for holding decisions makers and the organisation to account. These include: petitions and public meetings, Freedom of information responsibilities, financial rules, audit and legal monitoring duties, Inspections and reports to external bodies and regulators, duties to consult and provide information, performance management, complaint processes, and ultimately elections and referendums.

The Council's Overview and Scrutiny function plays a vital role within the Council by reviewing issues of local concern, examining existing policies and practices and making recommendations to Cabinet and external bodies on matters which affect the City and its residents.

This report on the Scrutiny Review identifies a series of recommendations which would enable the Council to improve the impact and effectiveness of Scrutiny, within a changing context of substantial changes in budgets and new ways of working and service delivery; changes in people's expectations of local democracy and the development of new forms of technology and communications. Scrutiny needs to adapt to these changes, to ensure local government and other organisations are accountable, help build trust with the public, and improve the effectiveness of Council services and the work of other agencies.

Recommendations:

That Cabinet

- Notes the findings of the Scrutiny Review and approves changes to the ways of working, including:
 - The development of a more rigorous approach to work planning and prioritisation, including an annual Scrutiny planning event
 - Greater engagement with the public and service users in Scrutiny
 - Strengthening outcome focussed Scrutiny of city-wide issues including holding to account services delivered by other agencies across the city, as well as the Council.
- Agree changes in time for the start of the next municipal year in relation to changing membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

to reflect proportionality of Council, whilst including Chairs and Deputy Chairs of Scrutiny Committees.

- Agree that in consultation with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, officers further develop a detailed action plan based on the issues identified in the Review as outlined in Section 7.

Background Papers:

Category of Report: **OPEN**

* Delete as appropriate

Statutory and Council Policy Checklist

Financial Implications
NO Cleared by: Paul Jeffries
Legal Implications
NO Cleared by: Nadine Wynter
Equality of Opportunity Implications
NO Cleared by: Adele Robinson
Tackling Health Inequalities Implications
NO
Human Rights Implications
NO
Environmental and Sustainability implications
NO
Economic Impact
NO
Community Safety Implications
NO
Human Resources Implications
NO
Property Implications
NO
Area(s) Affected
N/A
Relevant Cabinet Portfolio Lead
Julie Dore
Relevant Scrutiny Committee
Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee
Is the item a matter which is reserved for approval by the City Council?
NO
Press Release
NO

Report to Cabinet

Review of Scrutiny

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 In November 2013 the Leader of Sheffield City Council, requested that a review of Scrutiny be undertaken. The aim of the review is to identify a series of recommendations which would enable the Council to improve the impact and effectiveness of Scrutiny.
- 1.2 The report provides background information on
 - Key functions of scrutiny
 - The model operated in Sheffield, and
 - How scrutiny is resourced.
- 1.3 The review highlights the options available to improve the impact and effectiveness of Scrutiny. The review has been based on the presumption that all options have to be within current resources.
- 1.4 The main conclusion is to make changes to the ways of working, including:
 - The development of a more rigorous approach to work planning and prioritisation
 - Greater engagement with the public and service users in Scrutiny, including consultation and role as “expert witnesses”
 - Strengthening outcome focussed Scrutiny of city-wide issues including holding to account services delivered by other agencies across the city, as well as the Council.
- 1.5 There is one structural change recommended to make the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee politically proportional.

2.0 What does this mean for Sheffield People

- 2.1 Overview and Scrutiny is a valuable part of the governance arrangements of the Council, and operates alongside a range of other transparency and accountability processes and mechanisms for holding decisions makers and the organisation to account.
- 2.2 The review identifies areas of good practice and examples of where overview and scrutiny has delivered improvements to services and held decision makers to account. However, recent years have seen substantial changes in budgets and new ways of working and service delivery. This has occurred alongside changes in people’s expectations of local democracy and the development of new forms of technology and communications. Scrutiny needs to adapt to these changes, partly to ensure local government is accountable and also to help build trust with

the public. One aspect of this is to enable the public to play a stronger part in the process.

2.3 We have also seen the development of new ways of working and service delivery across the public sector. Many Services are no longer delivered in house, and/or have to work alongside other agencies to achieve the desired outcomes. Increasingly this has meant that Scrutiny needs to go beyond the important role of seeking to improve the effectiveness of Council services and focus on improving the outcomes of the broader commissioning processes and service providers at a Citywide level and wider. Scrutiny also provides the opportunity for Councillors to make sense, on behalf of citizens, of the often complex set of partnerships of public and other agencies, and a space to examine the work of these other agencies.

2.4 In this context it is important to review Scrutiny to ensure that it works efficiently and provides value for money, that we continue to seek to improve the impact and effectiveness of scrutiny, and that it focusses on the right things and makes a difference.

3.0 Purpose of Review

3.1 In November 2013, the Leader of Sheffield City Council requested that an internal review of Scrutiny be undertaken. The aim of the review is to identify a series of recommendations which would enable the Council to improve the impact and effectiveness of scrutiny. The Review was done by the Head of Elections, Equalities and Involvement and the Policy and Improvement officers who support the Scrutiny function

3.2 The scope of the review was to look primarily at the formal function of Scrutiny and specifically ways to:

- a. Ensure Scrutiny is a valued part of local governance
- b. Build a shared understanding of the role of scrutiny
- c. Influence policy making and support work across the council
- d. Be more outward facing and complement work to strengthen local voice and community leadership
- e. Look and feel better, performing a credible function which focuses on the right things and makes a difference.

4.0 Context

4.1 The Scrutiny function within local authorities came about as a result of a change in executive arrangements contained within the Local Government Act 2000. The general role of Scrutiny is to:

- review and/or scrutinise decisions made or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions
- make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council and/or the Executive in connection with the discharge of any functions
- consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants

- exercise the right to call-in, for reconsideration decisions made but not yet implemented by the Executive.

4.2 Scrutiny Committees may also:

- assist the Council and the Executive in the development of the Council's budget and policy framework
- review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the Executive and council officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time
- review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas
- question members of the Executive and officers about their decisions and performance
- make recommendations to the Executive and/or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process
- review and scrutinise other public bodies in the area
- report and make recommendations to the Council or Executive on matters which affect the Authority's area or the inhabitants of the area
- question and gather evidence from any person (with their consent).

4.3 There are many similarities between House of Commons Select Committees and scrutiny committees at local government level. Whilst Select Committees can also only make recommendations, in the same way that scrutiny does at a local level, they can have substantial influence. However, it is worth bearing in mind that House of Commons Select Committees are supported in a different manner with 180 staff supporting 24 Committees ¹.

4.4 One of the differences between parliamentary select committees and local government overview and scrutiny is the **policy development role** carried out at a local level. This is often done through setting up Task and Finish Working Groups of Scrutiny Committee Members to review existing policy and/or develop new policy and make recommendations to the Executive. In recent years, the Council has asked Scrutiny to carry out major policy reviews on difficult and potentially controversial areas and asked it to come up with solutions and ideas e.g. Housing allocations policy

4.5 As a minimum, we require our Scrutiny function to carry out the following roles:

- A formal, public forum for holding decision makers to account through call-in and receiving questions and petitions from members of the public
- A structure that covers all areas of Council activity

¹ <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201213/cmselect/cmliains/697/697we37.htm>

- A mechanism for carrying out scrutiny of the planning and operation of health services, as required by health scrutiny legislation (that includes requirements on health agencies to present to Scrutiny)
- A designated Committee to deal with the scrutiny of crime and disorder – as required by the Police and Justice Act 2006.

4.6 Local Government is the most open and scrutinised part of the public sector. The formal scrutiny process operates alongside a range of other transparency and accountability processes and mechanisms for holding decisions makers and the organisation to account. These include:

- petitions and public meetings
- Freedom of information responsibilities
- financial rules
- audit and legal monitoring duties
- inspections and reports to external bodies and regulators e.g. Local Government Ombudsman
- duties to consult and provide information
- performance management
- complaint processes, and ultimately
- elections and referendums.

4.7 These are outside the scope of this review though they provide an important context and, alongside accountability and transparency, Scrutiny is a vital element of the Council's overall democratic assurance role. This relates not just to the work of the Council, but city-wide, where the Council's democratic mandate provides the route to scrutinising the contribution of other agencies and organisations.

4.8 Recent years have seen changes in people's expectations of local democracy and the development of new forms of technology and communications impacting transparency e.g. open data and the use of social media. As with other aspects of Council governance, Scrutiny needs to adapt to these changes, partly to ensure local government is accountable and also part of building trust with the public. One aspect of this is to enable the public to play a part in the process, rather than just observing a process performed by others.

4.9 We have also seen the development of new ways of working and service delivery across the public sector. Many Services are no longer delivered in house, and/or have to work alongside other agencies to achieve the desired outcomes. Increasingly this has meant that Scrutiny needs to go beyond the important role of seeking to improve the effectiveness of Council services and focus on improving the outcomes of the broader commissioning processes and service providers at a Citywide level and wider. Scrutiny also provides the opportunity for Councillors to make sense, on behalf of citizens, of the often complex set of partnerships of public and other agencies, and a space to examine the work of these other agencies

5.0 Models of Scrutiny

5.1 There are broadly three models of scrutiny being used nationally:

- Committee Model – where committee officers, who also support other political forums, such as the executive, provide support to the Committee.
- Integrated Model – where support is provided, from a variety of sources, including committee services, officers within departments, and corporate policy officers.
- Specialist Model – support is provided by a scrutiny support unit with dedicated officers, who only work to the overview and scrutiny function.

5.2 According to the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) annual survey, the average number of scrutiny committees on an authority is 4, although this does range from 1-11, with the lower average being amongst district councils. There are a small number of local authorities that run a different model where they have one overview and scrutiny committee that commissions time-limited panels. Around 5% of authorities have one overview and scrutiny committee that does all the work

5.3 The average numbers of elected members on an overview and scrutiny committee is eleven. Whilst this number has stayed the same for the past five years of the CfPS survey, the numbers range from 3-21.

5.4 Nationally, the number of average number of Full Time Equivalent (FTE) scrutiny officers has been decreasing with the average across all unitary authorities is 3.6 (ref). The most popular location for scrutiny teams to be located within was Democratic Service (37%) followed by the Chief Executive's Office (21%). In Sheffield, there is more limited officer capacity to support scrutiny (1.5 FTE Policy and Improvement officer time plus officer time from Democratic Services). This has meant that alongside the responsibilities for supporting the regular formal meetings, there is sufficient capacity to support each Committee in one task and finish review per municipal year, though some trade-offs can be made

5.5 The model being operated within SCC is a cross between the Integrated and specialist models with policy officers from the Policy, Performance and Communications service supporting the Scrutiny function, alongside other policy duties, supported by officers in Democratic Services. More recently, in larger scale task and finish reviews, there has also been some dedicated support from officers from other services.

5.6 There are currently five Scrutiny Committees:

- **Children, Young People and Family Support Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee** exercises an overview and scrutiny function in respect of: Early Years, Children's Social Care, Child Safeguarding, Education, Family Support and Youth Services.

- **Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee** exercises an overview and scrutiny function in respect of: Economic and Business Sector Development, Regeneration and Physical Development, Enterprise and Skills, Sustainable Development and Climate Change, Culture, Leisure and Tourism, and Transport.
 - **Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee** exercises an overview and scrutiny function in respect of: Local NHS Services and Health Service Commissioning, Local Health Services, including the power of referral to the Secretary of State for Health, Public Health, Health Inequalities, Adult Social Care and support, and Adult Safeguarding.
 - **Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee** exercises an overview and scrutiny function in respect of: Housing, Community Safety and Crime, Community Cohesion, Social Inclusion, and Locality Management.
 - The **Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee** remit is to: lead on the scrutiny work planning process, lead the scrutiny of high level cross-cutting and city-wide issues – appointing joint committees where appropriate, scrutinise the use of Council resources – Resources Portfolio, budget monitoring, annual budget setting process, and performance monitoring – referring areas of concern to the relevant Scrutiny and Policy Development Committee where appropriate.
- 5.7 These potentially cover all areas of the Council’s business and responsibilities. The first four are chaired by a member of the political party in administration with a Deputy Chair from the main Opposition party. Each Committee consists of 13 Councillors on a proportional basis to the make-up of the Council. The Children, Young People and Family Support Committee and the Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care Committee also have external representatives. The committees meet formally on a bi-monthly basis, though other activity including Task and Finish Groups takes place outside these meetings.
- 5.8 The Overview and Scrutiny Management comprises the Chairs and Deputy Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees. This Committee is chaired by the Lead Scrutiny Member who is also the Chair of the Safer and stronger Scrutiny Committee and meets on an ‘as and when’ basis.
- 5.9 All agendas, minutes and reports of these Committees are available on the Council website, alongside information about how the public can attend meetings and, like all other formal council meeting, present petitions and ask questions.

5.10 Average discretionary budgets for Scrutiny activity (excluding salary costs), covering areas such as commissioning research, field visits and travel costs for expert witnesses, print etc. have also been reducing. There is currently no discreet budget within Sheffield City Council with costs borne by the overall budget for corporate Equalities and Involvement activity.

5.0 Survey findings

6.1 As part of the Review, during November to January, Members, officers and partner agencies, Cabinet Members, Party leaders and members of the public who had been involved in Scrutiny over the last 6 months were asked to contribute to the review. A series of questions were posed and people were able to contribute views in person and via an online survey form. In total, the survey received 66 responses.

6.2 On the basis of the review brief agreed with the Council Leader, respondents were asked a series of questions including:

- 1 How can scrutiny improve its policy development role both in terms of reviewing policy or creating new policy?
- 2 How can we make sure scrutiny focuses on the most important issues?
- 3 How do we involve internal experts in the scrutiny process?
- 4 Do we need to focus more on external scrutiny to include providers as well as commissioners; and city-wide issues?
- 5 How can we improve the work planning process including broadening involvement?
- 6 How can we improve co-ordination across the committees and ensure there are not any gaps?

6.3 Appendix 1 provides an overview of the findings broken down by the different categories of respondent and focuses on where people feel scrutiny performs well and areas for improvement. The response highlighted a wide range of issues and ideas for improvement, illustrating significant interest in the scrutiny function.

6.4 A number of themes emerged from the Scrutiny Review survey, though there were a range of different opinions and ideas about each of them. No one specific issue dominated the responses, though some of the key concerns are identified below:

- a. **Relationship with the Executive and independence of the Scrutiny function.** There was a public perception that at times members should be more willing to be independent of political parties. Issues were raised around all the chairs of scrutiny committees representing the same political group and the make-up of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC). Better alignment of policy and review activity was felt to be crucial. Scrutiny needed strong links with Cabinet Members, but good scrutiny also required the Executive to

respect the process and respond effectively to recommendations and questions. Generally it was felt that Scrutiny needs more authority.

- b. **Involvement of the public in Scrutiny.** Views were expressed around the potential for increased involvement in terms of suggesting topics; attending Scrutiny committee meetings, including as informed /expert contributors; involvement earlier in the process, and increasing opportunities for increased involvement in the call-in process
- c. **Role in policy development** – issues raised included ownership of policy development by Committees and buy-in from the Executive of the Scrutiny policy development role. Task and Finish groups were viewed as the best way to deliver this, though they needed to focus on issues that matter and be selective. It was also felt that the timing of reviews is critical and that early involvement by Scrutiny in the process of policy development was beneficial.
- d. **Work Planning and prioritisations** – Generally it was felt that Scrutiny meetings should cover fewer items and have more focus on key issues where scrutiny can make an impact. Better alignment with the Councils work planning and budget setting process would improve impact and there was a need to select topics carefully. It was also noted that Scrutiny needed to be clear on what information is required from officers and potential lines of enquiry. Involvement of the public in prioritising topic areas was also raised.
- e. **Co-ordinations and gaps** – There were few respondents favouring changing the current structure of the committees, though more suggested that Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee needed a clearer role. Responses included the need to look at how the OSMC operates, what it covers and political representation. There was a view that widening membership beyond Scrutiny Chairs and Deputy Chairs (through introducing political proportionality) could enable it to better fulfil its stated objectives of overseeing the work of the other committees and focussing on corporate and cross-cutting issues. A number of respondents felt it needed to meet more regularly and work with Cabinet in aligning Scrutiny work with key Council improvement issues.
- f. **External Scrutiny** – Respondents indicated that external scrutiny could include areas such as developments at city region level, and the contribution of other agencies to achieving outcomes. It was also recognised that whilst Scrutiny Committees needed to maintain their role in internal scrutiny, they also needed to look at the bigger picture and solutions, rather than focussing on the contribution of single organisations.
- g. **Capacity-** The wide scope of areas that could be covered by Scrutiny risks skimming the surface. It was widely recognised that resources to support Scrutiny in terms of administration, policy and democratic

services are finite and that this may impact on our ability to undertake external scrutiny. It was also noted that policy development takes time with implications for the workloads and contributions for members and officers.

7.0 Scrutiny impact

7.1 The aim of scrutiny is to ensure improvement in policy development and service delivery, as well as ensuring that the executive are held to account for the decisions they make on behalf of the authority. Scrutiny has the potential to have a considerable impact in terms of adding value to the organisation together with providing a challenge to the way the organisation and other public agencies function and spend public funds.

7.2 Appendix 2 provides an overview of the work done by the scrutiny and policy development committee so far this municipal year. This report from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, presented to Full Council in January 2014, present the range of issues considered by each Committee at their formal meetings and their task and finish work and some of the changes that have been made as a result. In summary each Committees has covered the following:

- **Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee** – Local Government Boundary Commission Electoral Review of Sheffield and Budget for 2014/15.
- **Children Young People and Family Support** – School Governance, Early Years provision, and teenage pregnancy. A Task and Finish Group review has been launched looking at the use of the Pupil Premium and its impact on attainment in Sheffield.
- **Economic and Environmental Wellbeing** – Streets Ahead programme, Household Waste Recycling Centres, Sheffield Food Strategy and the future of the Library Service. The Committee has also embarked on a Cycling Inquiry operating along the lines of a Parliamentary Select Committee involving a request for written and oral evidence.
- **Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care** – City Dementia Strategy, Right First Time Programme, waiting times for Memory management Services in Sheffield, Developing the Social Model of Public Health. Task & Finish Groups have been looking at Nutrition and Hydration in Hospitals and Child & Adolescent Mental health Services (CAHMS) – both in response to concerns raised by members of the public. The Committee have also held its meeting at St Luke’s Hospice that included looking at funding for hospice care.
- **Safer and Stronger Communities** – impact of welfare reform, community safety and progress of the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting (PRAM), Challenge for Change Tenants’ Scrutiny Group report

on grass cutting service, performance on homelessness, Sheffield Housing Company, and land responsibility and management arrangements.

- 7.3 Assessing the impact of scrutiny, such as the extent to which policy development or service delivery improvement have been influenced, the contribution to better decision making or ensuring public accountability, and how to put a value on these is difficult. It is also dependent on a range of factors including the willingness of the Executive to accept scrutiny recommendations; and the focus, quality and timeliness of reviews undertaken by Scrutiny.
- 7.4 Other ways of assessing impact can include the extent of public involvement and awareness of the process, the level of member involvement in task and finish groups, collaboration between scrutiny members, and the degree to which the work of public agencies has been enhanced by the scrutiny process.
- 7.5 As part of the review, scrutiny committee members were asked about how they rated the level of scrutiny's impact over the past 6 months. The evidence suggests broad improvement with some qualifications.
- 7.6 Appendix 1 includes details of where different respondents felt Scrutiny performed well. Scrutiny Members highlighted Task and Finish group work, such as:
- the work on school governance where work has taken place in response to the Scrutiny finding
 - the recent cycling inquiry, with innovative approaches to public involvement, and
 - the cross-party work on the complex review of the housing allocation policy.
- 7.7 Members also highlighted the value of speaking directly with service users, and impact on other agencies e.g. NHS Quality Accounts and Dementia services.
- 7.8 Responses from the public included appreciation of in depth discussions being held, taking and responding to public questions, and the role of specialised input and non-council members of committees. Officers highlighted the value of challenge and a different perspective along with the useful input from members knowledge of subject areas and local knowledge.
- 7.9 In addition to responses from the Survey, the review also looked at the number of recommendations made by each Committee from July to December 2013. On the whole the majority of recommendations had been completed, though further work is needed to identify the type of recommendations that can range from request for further information and future reports through to specific changes in approach to service delivery.

7.10 Over the past few years, Scrutiny Committees have reported their activity to Full Council with examples of the types of changes that have followed from recommendations. At times, these reports have included the results of surveys held with members of scrutiny.

7.11 The review has found that although there are reports covering the work Scrutiny Committees do and changes that have resulted, there is a lack of clear measures on the impact of Scrutiny or regular assessments of the activity being undertaken. In order to ensure that Scrutiny makes the best use of limited resources and at a time difficult decisions having to be made on resourcing, there is a clear need to improve how we measure impact.

8.0 Improving the Impact and Effectiveness of Scrutiny – possible solutions

8.1 This section outlines the issues that have been highlighted in the review along with possible solutions the Council may wish to adopt. As stated in section 4 the aim of the review is to improve the impact and effectiveness of scrutiny with a focus on the following 5 key areas, to:

1. Ensure Scrutiny is a valued part of local governance
2. Build a shared understanding of the role of scrutiny
3. Influence policy making and support work across the council
4. Be more outward facing and complement work to strengthen local voice and community leadership
5. Look and feel better, performing a credible function which focuses on the right things and makes a difference.

8.2 The key issues and proposed solutions are outlined in the table below, it should be noted that some of these will overlap across the 5 key areas.

1. Ensure Scrutiny is a valued part of local governance

Proposed solutions	
<p>Key issues</p> <p>Better alignment of policy and review activity and independence of the Scrutiny function</p> <p>A stronger recognition of the role of Scrutiny by the Executive should include a willingness to share information, respect the Scrutiny process and respond in a timely manner</p>	<p>Proposed solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of the Executive in an annual “Scrutiny work planning and prioritisation event”. A Terms of Reference be developed for a Scrutiny planning event and discussion should encompass (i) performance issues; (ii) public concerns; (iii) national policy issues; and (iv) City strategies and policies. • Quarterly meetings with the relevant Scrutiny Chair, Executive Director, Cabinet Member and relevant Policy and Improvement Officer to support effective work planning, prioritisation and timing of issues. This would also help with ensuring services are aware of the requirements of Scrutiny.
<p>Improving links to other bodies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore strengthening links between membership of scrutiny committees and other bodies that non-executive Members represent the authority on e.g. should a representative of the Safer & Stronger Communities Scrutiny Committee act as the Councils representative on the Crime and Community Safety Panel? • Map other relevant forums/meetings
<p>2. Build a shared understanding of the role of scrutiny</p>	
<p>Key issues identified</p> <p>Improving communication</p> <p>To the public, external agencies and officers about the role of scrutiny, access and impact.</p>	<p>Proposed solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review communication materials and agree actions e.g. web presence • Establish clear routes for Local Action Partnerships to highlight local issues and inform the work programme
<p>Clarifying the role of the Scrutiny Chair</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review and update the existing “role profile” for Scrutiny Chairs to reflect the current requirements of the role.

3. Influence policy making and support work across the council	
<p>Key issues</p> <p>Improving the policy development role of scrutiny</p> <p>Success in this area would require:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ownership by the Executive – including support of the relevant cabinet member and a commitment to consider the recommendations of scrutiny • Support from all parties • A selective focus on the issues that matter • A focus on the solutions required to improve outcomes rather than looking at specific services in isolation • Sufficient time and support resources to do the policy development work • Expertise to support Members with this process, including from outside the Council. 	<p>Proposed solutions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold an annual scrutiny work planning event to identify areas of work for scrutiny including policy development • Improve alignment of scrutiny with overall corporate policy and planning arrangements through the annual planning event and quarterly meeting between Scrutiny Chair, Executive Director, and Cabinet Member • Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee to develop a set of selection criteria to identify suitable topics • Explore how services can provide different types of support to scrutiny committees undertaking policy development.
<p>Key issues</p> <p>Improving the mechanism for selecting topics for scrutiny reviews and policy development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This would be through the use of a set of criteria against which potential activity can be tested at the work programming stage. <p>This could include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - setting up a review only when a clear public demand gives you a powerful mandate with which to carry out an inquiry - applying scrutiny only to issues and organisations that you have a real and legitimate opportunity to engage with and influence - understanding when a 'narrow and deep' method of scrutiny is of greater value than one that is 'broad and shallow' and being flexible in how you conduct scrutiny to tailor it to the different demands of each situation.
4. Be more outward facing and complement work to strengthen local voice and community leadership	
<p>Key issues</p>	<p>Proposed solutions</p>

<p>Improving public involvement in Scrutiny</p> <p>Including involvement from relevant groups and individuals – both as customers and 'experts'. Encouraging greater public participation will help to validate the findings of scrutiny reviews and the impact they have on local communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further explore approaches to enhancing public involvement in scrutiny, including considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - greater engagement with the public and service users in scrutiny activity e.g. as "expert witnesses" - more "user friendly" ways of involving the public and involvement in formal meetings - greater use of digital opportunities for Scrutiny to engage with the public - ways for the public to be involved in making suggestions for topics as part of the annual work planning process. This could include inviting the public to suggest ideas for the work programme, along with using information collected by services and councillors about concerns with policy and service delivery - options for taking scrutiny to the public as opposed to expecting the public to come to scrutiny through holding more Scrutiny activity away from the Town Hall
<p>Developing External scrutiny</p> <p>The Council recognises that one of the strengths of scrutiny is its democratic mandate - one of the reasons the council is best placed to scrutinise other agencies and organisations.</p> <p>Also recognises that the Council will increasingly be less of a direct delivery organisation, requiring partnership and working and commissioning of other agencies to deliver shared outcomes</p> <p>This also raises the prospect of greater joint working across Scrutiny Committees' as illustrated by recent scrutiny development work with members in relation to responsibilities for scrutinising health services e.g. Yorkshire & The Humber Joint Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen outcome focussed Scrutiny of city wide issues including holding other agencies to account • Explore ways for external bodies to identify opportunities for external scrutiny to be fed into the annual work planning process • Explore opportunities for joint scrutiny work with other local authorities (including joint member development around emerging areas) • Support the development of clear scrutiny arrangements with regards to new areas of work, e.g. Combined Authority
<p>5. Look and feel better, performing a credible function which focuses on the right things and makes a difference.</p>	
<p>Key issues</p>	
<p>Proposed solutions</p>	

<p>Improving the impact of scrutiny</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Set clear aims, objectives and timescales for Scrutiny work – to assist members, the scrutiny support and officers and agencies taking part in the scrutiny process. • Improve processes for monitoring impact • Strengthen the role of OSMC in selecting topics and monitoring impact 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use “selection criteria” to focus on areas where scrutiny can have the most impact • Develop a simple “project mandate” that can be used to outline the aims, objectives and timescales of scrutiny reviews and policy development work • Develop a broad menu of the different options Scrutiny has for conducting activity that could range from short/sharp reviews to in-depth Inquiries. This should include how to draw on relevant ‘expertise’ from within and outside the Council. • Development a clear set of measures relating to outcomes and process
<p>Strengthening the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC)</p> <p>Clarify role and oversight function Strengthen its work in considering corporate health e.g. policy, performance, finance and cross-cutting issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSMC plays a lead role in the annual work planning session, including allocating work to committees and identifying areas for joint work across committees • More regular oversight of work of the Scrutiny Committees • Introduce political proportionality including a recommendation that this would accommodate Chairs and Deputy Chairs of Scrutiny Committees. Deputy Chairs would, as now, be appointed by the Opposition. • Annual work planning session to identify corporate health and cross-cutting issues for scrutiny by OSMC
<p>Involvement in pre-decision scrutiny</p> <p>This is an area that has been underutilised in the past. It can add value into the quality of proposals, help make the decision making process more transparent, and potentially reduce the need for Call-in of decisions.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Scrutiny to be proactive in monitoring Forward Plan issues and getting involved in pre-decision scrutiny

Improve work planning and prioritisation

- Ensuring scrutiny focusses on the issues that matter
- Recognising the increasing involvement of other agencies in achieving our outcomes

- Use “selection criteria” to ensure scrutiny focusses on fewer topics but in more detail
- Annual Work Planning Event
- Additional input could be sought from the Sheffield Executive Board

- 8.3 The proposed solutions outlined above are aimed at improving the impact and effectiveness of scrutiny. The tasks range from one off pieces of work which would take place over a number of months to changes to our processes which would have ongoing resource implications, for example the introduction of selection criteria and project mandates for scrutiny topics. As already stated in this report, resources to support scrutiny are limited (officer and member) and so the resource implications of these solutions will need to be considered as part of the implementation.
- 8.4 A considerable amount of officer time is spent arranging scrutiny agenda items i.e. requesting reports and organising attendees. At present each scrutiny committee meets on average 6 times a year and covers 3-4 topics per meeting. However, as a finding from the scrutiny review was a desire to see scrutiny focus on fewer topics where it can make an impact, the proposed changes to scrutiny should mean a reduction in the amount of officer time that is spent on the administration associated with arranging topics and attendees. This capacity could then be directed towards supporting the new processes which should result in more in depth scrutiny review work being undertaken.

9.0 Legal Implications

- 9.1 Overview and scrutiny committees were introduced into local government by the Local Government Act 2000. It is a function whereby non-executive Councillors review the effectiveness of decisions, policies and services which affect Sheffield and hold the Executive to account. Scrutiny provides non-executive Councillors with an opportunity to develop and review policy and make recommendations to the council to ensure that local people receive high quality services.
- 9.2 The current legislative provisions for overview and scrutiny committees are mostly contained in the Localism Act 2011, which inserts several new sections into the 2000 Act. A number of additional provisions have been introduced since the 2000 Act. Many of these concern external scrutiny, where the council's committees look at issues which lie outside the council's responsibilities. Specific powers exist to scrutinise health bodies; crime and disorder partnerships; and flood risk management authorities.
- 9.3 The review and recommendations are designed to ensure that the Council continues and strengthens its approach to meeting the provisions in the legislation.

10. Equality implications

- 10.1 Overview and Scrutiny is one of the ways through which the Council can demonstrate how we pay due regard to the public sector duties under the Equality Act 2010. The recommendations on work planning

and prioritisation and greater engagement with the public and service users, will continue to be done in the context of ensuring all communities have an opportunity to take part.

11.0 Financial implications

11.1 The review has been conducted on the basis of no change to resources available for Scrutiny and that changes will be carried out within existing resources.

12.0 Alternative options considered

12.1 During the course of the Review, different approaches to structures and ways of working were raised by participants in the review. In considering these it was felt that there are a range of solutions, as outlined in Section 8, that could improve the effectiveness and impact of Overview and Scrutiny. Overall, the current structure of the committees was felt to be 'fit for purpose', though a stronger approach to co-ordination and better focus on issues that matter, including corporate health, could not be achieved without making changes to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.

13.0 Reasons for recommendations

13.1 This report on the Scrutiny Review identifies a series of recommendations which would enable the Council to improve the impact and effectiveness of Scrutiny, within a changing context of substantial changes in budgets and new ways of working and service delivery; changes in people's expectations of local democracy and the development of new forms of technology and communications. Scrutiny needs to adapt to these changes, to ensure local government and other organisations are accountable, help build trust with the public, and improve the effectiveness of Council services and the work of other agencies.

14.0 Recommendations

14.1 To note the findings of the Scrutiny Review and agree changes to the ways of working, including:

- The development of a more rigorous approach to work planning and prioritisation, including an annual Scrutiny planning event
- Greater engagement with the public and service users in Scrutiny
- Strengthening outcome focussed Scrutiny of city-wide issues including holding to account services delivered by other agencies across the city, as well as the Council.

14.2 To agree changes in time for the start of the next municipal year in relation to changing membership for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee to reflect proportionality of Council, whilst including Chairs and Deputy Chairs of Scrutiny Committees.

14.3 Agree that in consultation with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee, officers further develop a detailed action plan based on the proposed solutions to issues identified in the Review as outlined in Section 8.

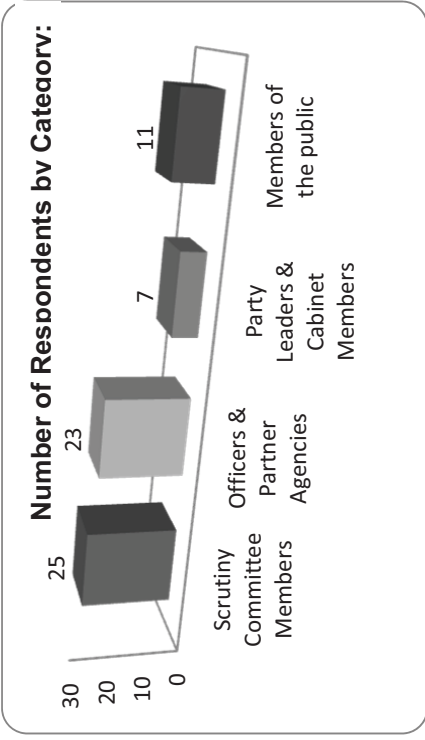
Michael Bowles
Head of Elections, Equalities and Involvement
March 2014

Scrutiny Review Survey Findings

1.0 Background

In November 2013 the Leader of Sheffield City Council, requested that a review of scrutiny be undertaken. During November-January Committee members, officers and partner agencies, Cabinet members, Party Leaders and members of the public who had been involved in Scrutiny over the last 6 months were asked to contribute to the review.

There have been a total of 66 responses.

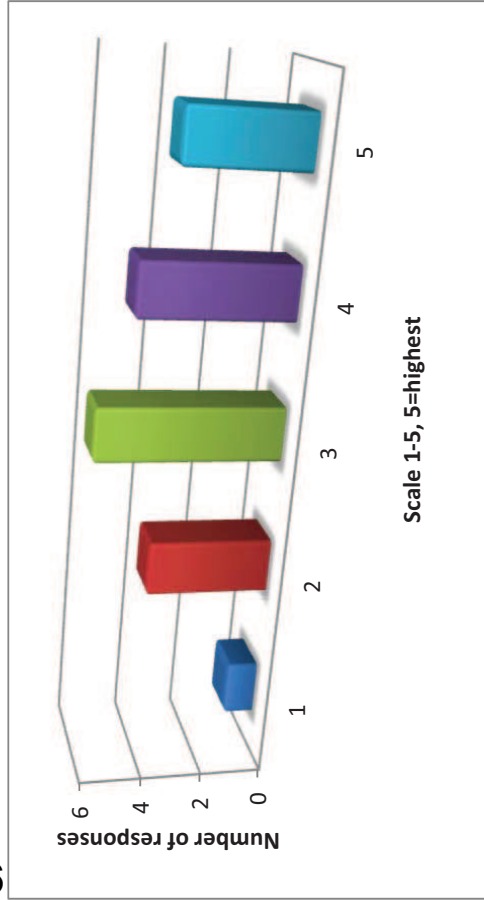


2.0 Where does Scrutiny perform well?

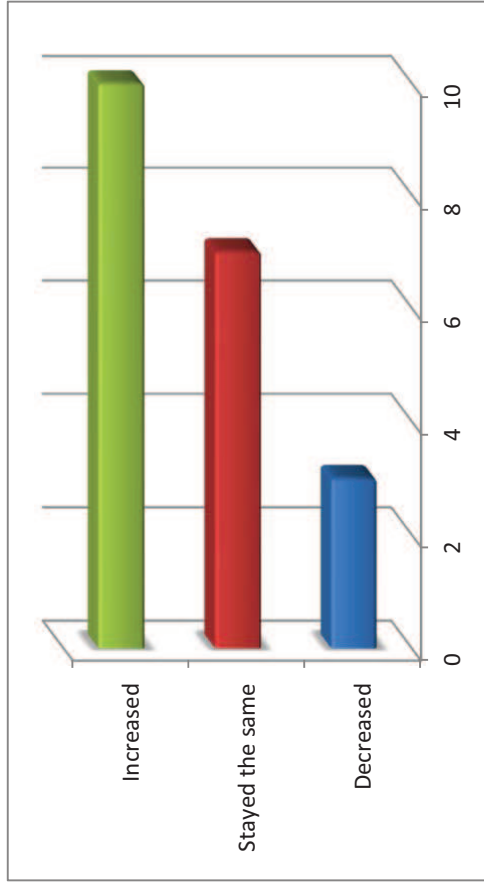
2.1 Committee members

Committee Members were asked to consider the following two questions in the context of the past 6 months.

2.2 How do you rate the level of Scrutiny's impact on a scale of 1-5?



2.3 Has the impact of Scrutiny:



25 Members of Scrutiny responded (20 surveys / 5 meetings with Chairs and Deputy Chairs) and said the following are areas where Scrutiny performs well:

- **Task and Finish Group** work (14), specifically:
 - **School Governance** (4) – report back to Committee looks like follow up work has taken place within the local authority
 - **Cycling Inquiry** (4) – The Cycling Inquiry approach is commendable
 - **Hydration and Nutrition** (2) – Recommendations to the hospitals trust have been taken on board
 - **CAMHS** (2) – Good cross working between members of Health Scrutiny and CYPF Scrutiny which involved calling professionals to account and involvement from parents
 - **Lettings Policy** (2) – Lettings Policy Review has been a major focus of the Committee's work
- **Engagement** (4) – speaking directly to service users gives valuable, first-hand information on future policy recommendations.
- **Holding Officers to account** (3) and 'keeping them on their toes.'
- **Early year's review** (3) – recommendation to cabinet to ensure a media strategy was in place and reconvened later in the year to ensure that all children affected had got a place.
- **NHS Quality Accounts** (3) – Have influenced change within all the Trusts and can be documented within the Trusts Quality Account documents. Scrutiny also improved content and presentation of some health Quality Accounts so the public can understand them
- **Dementia Services** (2) – Ongoing pressure over 2 to 3 years to improve services for people with dementia, both in hospital and in the community, recently followed up e.g. the Teaching Hospitals Trust established a senior physician to lead on dementia services and additional resources allocated.
- **Young Carers** (2) – Young carers' card: Scrutiny getting involved to speed up the delivery of this.

Other specific examples of work cited by individual respondents included: educational attainment; monitoring health spend; Private Housing Registration; teenage pregnancy; Streets Ahead; Cobnar Cottage Call-In; treatment of sexual disease; Council size submission to Electoral Commission. Having non-councillor members adds valuable additional, and sometimes different, insights into the subjects being scrutinised.

2.2 Public

The public questionnaire was primarily targeted at people who had attended a scrutiny meeting in the previous six months. Of the 11 responses received (7 survey / focus group with 4 people) the areas where Scrutiny performs well include:

- In depth discussions **held in public** by a mixed political group of councillors where the committee can focus on specific issues in more detail than those who made the decisions that they are scrutinising.
- Taking and responding to **public questions is good**, and ‘listening’ was cited as something Scrutiny does well.
- **Specialised input** and non-council members on Committees thought to be helpful
- Democratic Services are exemplary in the manner in which they engage with the public and facilitate the public’s inclusion.

2.3 Party Leaders and Cabinet Members

There were 6 responses by email or through meetings. Party Leaders and Cabinet Members were not specifically asked about examples of scrutiny performing well, although one response noted that scrutiny often works best when they are proactive in developing policy.

2.4 Officers

Two officers from the Council and one person from a partner organisation completed an online survey and discussions were held with EMT and 4 officers from Democratic Services. The two areas where it is thought scrutiny performs well are:

- **Challenge (7)** – Scrutiny provides a valuable challenge and a different perspective. A cross-section of members is vital to allow appropriate challenge. The “nature of scrutinising is good – challenging but friendly.”
- **Knowledge (3)** – Members’ knowledge of the subject area results in informed discussion, brings local knowledge and provides a useful input into area of work.

Other areas cited include: in healthcare scrutinises both providers and commissioners and understands respective roles; identifying issues that have the greatest impact on communities; bringing issues up in a different format than through usual channels; acknowledging areas of strength as well as weaknesses; That it is an open meeting; organisation of committee meetings; good working relationship with scrutiny officer helps ensure the right people are there to deal with the issues scrutiny wants to look at; preparing questions in advance of the meeting; checking out follow up of any actions agreed.

3.0 Areas for improvement

3.1 Scrutiny Committee Members

A questionnaire was sent to Members of all Scrutiny Committees with Chairs and Deputy Chairs offered a meeting to discuss the questions set out in the review. 25 Members of Scrutiny have responded (20 surveys / 5 meetings with Chairs and Deputy Chairs). There were a wide variety of themes:

- **Coordination and Overview:** There needs to be a real role for Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee as it does not work at the moment. Its role could include coordination of work plans and policy reviews; Budget scrutiny; and performance but it has to meet regularly. It needs to have a relationship with the Leader and Cabinet. Suggestion that the political dimension shapes the debate and it might be worth looking at membership. Worth noting some respondents happy with how OSMC operates. (14)
- **Work Plan:** Needs to take fewer items with more focus on key issues and what Scrutiny can do. Need to select topics carefully to get consensus. Specific suggestions included involving stakeholders; having 2 year work plans; avoid 'no solution' problems. (14)
- **External scrutiny:** With more services being outsourced a strong feeling that scrutiny needs to look externally at providers. Also suggestion scrutiny should look at the city region, LEP, SEB, (10)
- **Task and Finish Groups:** This was cited as the way for scrutiny to have a policy development role. (8)
- **Role of Leader and Cabinet:** "If cabinet want scrutiny to deliver policy they have to mean it" - willing to share info, respect process and respond in timely manner. Recognition that the Strong Leader model forces scrutiny to be weak (7)
- **Policy Development:** There is a "lot of mileage" if can get policy development right, but needs to not be owned by executive and embraced by all three parties on Committee. (5)
- **Membership of Committees:** The membership changeover needs to be seamless and Scrutiny would be more credible if all the Chairs were not from the majority group. (5)

Other issues suggestions made less frequently were:

- **Experts:** Using external experts seen as helpful and also recognition some Committees have external experts as members (4)
- **Role** - Scrutiny needs to have a purpose and this should include more policy development. (4)
- **Information** – Some members wanting more information and regular briefings, but one response suggested making sure Scrutiny is not just information giving (4)

- **Meeting Frequency** – A desire to have more frequent meetings, but recognition from one respondent that they know they cannot ask for this because of the cost implications. (4)
- **Links to Portfolios** – Chairs of Committees value briefings/meetings with Cabinet Member and/or Exec Directors. A suggestion that each Portfolio could follow the CYPF example and appoint a Lead Portfolio officer for each committee. (4)
- **Follow Up to Scrutiny Work** – Need to turn findings in to action and receive feedback on changes. (4)
- **Structural Options** – Only two suggestions; one single Scrutiny committee with a focus only the most pressing issues; have committees fit Cabinet Member portfolios. (2)
- **Behaviour** – remove “party political squabbling” and a lack of time to engage with officers supporting scrutiny regarding questions to ask (3)
- **Culture** – Scrutiny needs more authority and an incremental approach to change can work. Need to recognise each Committee is different. (3)
- **Involvement** – Engage the public better with more involvement from relevant groups and individuals. (3)
- **Officer Attendance** – Need to ensure officers attending are at the right level (2)
- **Resources** – More resources are required. (2)

3.2 The response from the public

The public questionnaire was primarily targeted at people who had attended a scrutiny meeting in the previous six months. Of the 11 responses received (7 survey /a meeting with 4 people) the key theme was the involvement of the public and community organisations in Scrutiny.

The Involvement of the public and community organisations in Scrutiny

A number of respondents advocated increased involvement of the public in Scrutiny. This included as members of committees, in the work planning process and also through dialogue with their Elected Representatives. In addition a number of respondents felt that both members of the public and community organisations can sometimes make only a limited contribution to Scrutiny and that they could potentially play a greater role as “well informed” or “expert” contributors and earlier in the process. The “call in” procedure was also considered an area where increased involvement could be explored. One respondent also felt that the process could be more open and transparent to the public and that Scrutiny meetings could be made more user-friendly.

In addition, two respondents commented on the political dimension of scrutiny, both expressing the view that at times Members should be willing to take a more independent line from their respective parties. There were also two comments regarding conduct during Scrutiny meetings. The following individual suggestions were also made: Any questions, and their answers, should form part of the public record; Scrutiny should be able to ensure questions are fully answered; Reviewing should be scheduled into the work plan; Visitors often can't hear – this needs to be improved; A lot of paperwork needs a more “sceptical examination;” People should be able to easily find the information they need; make the link between the things that matter at a local level and scrutiny.

3.3 Party Leaders & Cabinet Members

Of the six responses received a number of key themes have emerged.

- External scrutiny:** There were a range of comments under this theme, some individuals advocated increased external scrutiny, but there were also concerns about our ability to do this “we need to improve our own scrutiny function before we focus on others” and the need to maintain a balance with internal scrutiny. It was also noted that Scrutiny can at times go beyond the boundary of the City and so may require joint working.
- The role of minority parties:** Concerns were raised regarding the fact that all Chairs are currently from the ruling party, it was felt that this does not reflect the political make-up of the Council. Specific implications of this were also highlighted in terms of public confidence in scrutiny and the appearance of scrutiny as an “independent” function along with repercussions for engaging in genuine cross party working.
- Policy Development & focussing on the most important issues:** A number of respondents felt that there should be a policy development role for scrutiny; however this came with some concerns / conditions: Policy development would need to be done with the involvement of the Cabinet Member and with a commitment that they will look at the recommendations. It would need to be clear what type of policy development the leadership would willingly devolve to scrutiny? Committees would need the time to do this and would need to be able to feel a sense of ownership. There was also a feeling that scrutiny needs focus on the issues that matter and be selective.
- Resources:** Some concerns were raised regarding the level of resource for scrutiny, one respondent felt this may hinder our ability to look at external scrutiny and may also impact on work planning. Two respondents also felt that the wide scope of scrutiny means it would not be possible for the 1.5 Policy & Improvement Officers supporting scrutiny to be fully knowledgeable on all the topics being covered and so there is a risk that we are “skimming the surface”.
- Culture:** There were a range of comments which sit under this theme. The importance of relationships were raised, including relationships between Chairs themselves and Chairs and Cabinet members. There was also a suggestion that the role of Chairs needs to be raised so they have a bigger presence beyond scrutiny and that expectations should be clearer in terms of what being on a scrutiny board means. One respondent also felt that Cabinet Members need to be “respectful of Scrutiny”.
- Structure:** There were a number of individual comments which can be classed under this theme. There was a view that Committees should be bigger and that all meetings should be held outside the Town Hall. One respondent felt that Committees should do less as a full board and more as task and finish groups and two respondents felt there should be fewer Committees. One respondent felt that “radical change” was needed to concentrate resources and remove the thematic distinction between committees.
- Co-ordination & Gaps:** There were some concerns about OSMC, specifically that it is “not up to speed” and “does not appear to add value”, and specific gaps were highlighted as finance and performance, in terms of the latter the respondent felt this was weak across the Council. One respondent felt that having gaps was inevitable and that it will only be possible to focus on a few really important things where it will make most difference to develop policy in the long term and on holding the administration to account over most high profile issues.

The following individual suggestions were also made:

At the moment scrutiny seems to focus around the meetings, it should be a continuous process and other activities should take place – being a board member should be about more than turning up to a meeting every 1-2 months; Members of committees should be more knowledgeable about the area covered by the committee they sit on (supported by officers) so they can more effectively challenge and question; Scrutiny needs “a complete refresh”; Full council should be seen as 6th scrutiny which should be used to scrutinize the leader – current January meeting with presentation adds little value; The current Committee remit is too narrow and some don't merit their own Committee, with a suggestion to change the structure to reflect outcome boards; Planning needs to look at what's coming up in the year ahead; “Call in” process needs to be retained and strengthened; Could appear more responsive to public concerns by providing a clearer and simpler process for members of the public to get issues added to the work programme; Is there an opportunity for involving the public in suggesting ideas for scrutiny?; Role of experts – should allow them to sit at the table to ask/respond to questions alongside the committee i.e. to be part of the discussion; Role of experts - Doesn't seem to work “terribly well at the moment” – if process seen as more critical in terms of council decision making likely to get more involvement.

3.4 Officers & Partner Agencies

14 officers from the Council or partner completed an online survey and discussions were held with EMT and 4 officers from Democratic Services. The key themes to improve the impact of Scrutiny covered:

- **Impact:** Be clear what powers Scrutiny has and what changes have come about by issues taken to Scrutiny and ensure Members are aware of the difference they are making. Choice of subject matter – well-meaning but important?
- **Preparation:** Members need to ensure that they prepare for the meetings and understand what is being asked of them
- **Questions:** Being clearer on potential lines of enquiry and providing advance notice of questions enables better quality responses. Questions during meetings can be repetitive.
- **Information:** Be clear about what information is required and why, and provide it in the best way. Provide context and an evidence base (including cost effectiveness and interventions) to enable the Committee to increase their understanding.
- **Links:** Better links between Scrutiny recommendations and the Council's wider planning and budget setting cycle. Also links with service/portfolio plans so that actual activity is looked at, perhaps through discussions with Executive Directors. Need to look wider than council services and more about outcomes and other agencies contributions to achieving these.
- **Timing:** Involve Scrutiny early on in the policy development process and through its development. Bring updates in a timely manner for discussion and input. Pre-cabinet scrutiny could be considered
- **Accountability and governance:** Scrutiny should be seen as a part of the wider accountability and governance structures of the Council.

The following individual suggestions were also made:

Other suggestions individually mentioned were: being more proactive on communications; focus on policy development; ensuring follow up action; summarise evidence from councillors' casework to look at themes across wider numbers; involve outside stakeholders; focus on the potential Return on Investment of the scrutiny process; better understanding of the role of Scrutiny amongst officers; change OSMC to focus on performance and overall health; capture corporate complaints/citizen surveys; use experts for particular purpose; involve committee so they feel more ownership of work planning process.

Scrutiny – Mid-Year Update Report

1. Summary

1.1. This report provides an overview of scrutiny activity undertaken so far this municipal year. It summarises the work done through formal meetings and task and finish groups of the:

- Children Young People and Family Support
- Economic and Environmental Wellbeing
- Healthier Communities and Adult Social Care
- Safer and Stronger Communities
- Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

2. What does this mean for Sheffield people

2.1. A challenging and effective scrutiny function is a key contributor to Sheffield achieving its long term goals. The key priorities set out by the Council are reflected in the breadth of issues that Scrutiny Committees look at.

2.2. By investigating issues of local concern, reviewing performance against local targets, and making recommendations for improvements in services, scrutiny can ensure that better outcomes are achieved for Sheffield people.

3. Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

3.1. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee has focused its efforts on the Electoral Review. Sheffield City Council will be the subject of an electoral review to be carried out by the Local Government Boundary Commission.

3.2. The first part of this review will decide the number of councillors to be returned to the Council. The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee heard evidence in July from organisations and members of the public as to the most appropriate number. A draft submission on Council size has been developed informed by the evidence heard and the Committee has referred the draft to Full Council for approval.

4. Recommendation

4.1. Full Council is asked to note the work undertaken through the Scrutiny Committees to date this year.

Children, Young People & Family Support Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

Chair: Cllr Gill Furniss

Mid Year Update

The Committee have considered a range of issues which affect children and young people including **School Governance and developments in early year's provision**. A key focus for the Committee has been **educational attainment including outcomes for looked after children**. The Committee have received both an interim update and a full report on attainment data for 2012-13. This was an opportunity for the Committee to scrutinise the educational outcome data and provide constructive challenge in terms of the action being taken to address areas for improvement.

The re-design of early years

In July the Committee dedicated its meeting to the re-design of early years and the communication and transition plans. The meeting was well attended by members of the public and those involved in delivering early years services in Sheffield.

The meeting provided an opportunity for an open debate about the issues and responses to questions raised were provided by the Cabinet Member and Executive Director for Children, Young People & Families.

Teenage Pregnancy

In October 2013 the Committee considered the latest teenage pregnancy data for Sheffield and have subsequently written to the service to congratulate them on the progress that has been made.

The outcome of the discussion was a request from the Committee that "a review be conducted into the quality of sex education currently provided for young people with Special Educational Needs".

This request has been fed back to the Personal Social Health Education (PSHE) Review Team and it has been confirmed that they will incorporate provision for children and young people with special educational needs into the review. The Committee will receive an update on this work in January-February 2014.

Task & Finish Group

Pupil Premium Task & Finish Group

In addition to its bi-monthly meetings the Committee have established the Pupil Premium Task & Finish Group which will undertake a focussed review between January-April 2014. The aim of the review is to identify best practice and any policy recommendations in terms of the use of pupil premium and its impact on attainment in Sheffield Schools. The Inclusion & Learning Service will also be providing support to this work.

The Task & Finish Group will use a range of information gathering techniques to inform the review, including site meetings, interviews with teachers and pupils and desk top research. A report will be presented to the full Committee for sign off in April 2014.

Work Programme for 2012-13

Topics for consideration during the remainder of the year:

- Annual Report on Adoption & Fostering
- Sheffield Safeguarding Children Board (SSCB)- Annual Report
- Report on looked after children and care leavers
- Annual Meeting with Young People, Young Carers and the Children in Care Council (tbc)

Economic and Environmental Wellbeing Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

Chair: Cllr Cate McDonald

Mid Year Update

The Committee has considered a wide range of issues. During discussion of the **Streets Ahead** programme it was highlighted that Northern Power Grid are responsible for a significant number of the streetlights that are not working. The Committee decided that if performance from Northern Power Grid does not improve, it will invite a Senior Officer from the Company to attend a future meeting to report on their performance. Changes to the opening hours of the **Household Waste Recycling Centres** were scrutinised.

The Committee scrutinised the Future of Sheffield's Library Service and was confident that the approach taken would result in the Council being able to provide an efficient and comprehensive Library Service and asked officers to return following the consultation. The Committee contributed to the policy development of the **Sheffield Food Strategy** through an early discussion with the Cabinet Member and lead officers. Through the Call In process the Committee considered a decision to dispose of **Cobnar Road Cottage**, **Graves Park**. Since the Scrutiny discussion the Cabinet Member has agreed the Friends of Graves Park Group would be given up to 12 months to progress an alternative option.

Work Programme for 2012-13

Topics for consideration during the remainder of the year:

- Cycling Inquiry
- City Centre Vibrancy
- Streets Ahead
- Libraries

Cycling Inquiry

The main focus of the Committee's work has been on a **Cycling Inquiry**. The Inquiry has operated along lines similar to that of a **Parliamentary Select Committee**, requesting written evidence and taking oral evidence. A final report will be produced in early 2014.

The key part of the Inquiry's work is to identify measures to broaden and increase participation in cycling in Sheffield, with a particular emphasis on the economic, health and environmental impacts of these measures. The Council's Cabinet Member for Business, Skills and Development will be asked to respond to the report.

The Inquiry involves the whole of the Committee, with a Task and Finish Group doing work between the Committee's formal meetings. As well as members of the Committee this group includes Mick Nott, the Chair of Cycle Sheffield and Dick Proctor, the Council's Transport Vision and Strategy Manager. It is too early to fully assess the impact as this work has not yet been completed. However, there has been significant engagement with members of the public and organisations. Over 260 responses to the Call for Evidence were received and 9 organisations took part in an oral evidence session with the Committee.

The Committee has also made sure it hears from a wide range of voices, for example the views of motorists and pedestrians were sought. The views of groups that did not respond through the Call for Evidence were also sought in other ways, for example, a representative from the Youth Parliament gave oral evidence.

Healthier Communities & Adult Social Care Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

Chair: Cllr Mick Rooney

Mid Year Update

The Committee have considered a wide range of issues across health and social care including the **Dementia Strategy** for the City and the second phase of the **Right First Time Programme**. The Committee have also scrutinised proposals to reduce waiting times for **Memory Management Services In Sheffield**. This followed a request from Scrutiny In March 2013 that the Health and Social Care NHS Foundation Trust, worked with the Primary Care Trust to identify what steps could be taken to further reduce waiting times. The resulting proposals were presented to the Committee in November 2013, the outcome of which has been a request from the Committee that the timescales for implementation be reduced from 12-24 months to 12 months. The Committee have also submitted feedback on the content and layout of the draft **Adult Social Care Local Account** and following a "call in" held an extraordinary meeting to discuss a Report on **Developing the Social Model of Public Health**. In January 2014 the Committee will hold its meeting at St Luke's Hospice, this will include a discussion on the nature of **funding for hospice care** in Sheffield.

2 Task & Finish Groups

Nutrition & Hydration In Hospitals Working Group

In October 2012 a public question raising concerns about the quality of hospital food in Sheffield resulted in the Committee establishing this Working Group. To date the focus has been on the Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trusts Northern General Hospital. The Group have undertaken a series of observation visits, where they have spoken with staff and patients, as well as conducting interviews and carrying out desk top research.

A report outlining a series of recommendations has been produced and shared with the Trust. The Working Group will review this in 12 months' time (November 2014) to ascertain the impact of its recommendations. In addition to this the Working Group have proposed extending this piece of work from January 2014 by carrying out observation visits to Weston Park, Royal Hallamshire (including the Jessops Wing) and the Children's Hospital to see how the new production kitchen food service has embedded across the Trust.

Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) Working Group

In response to concerns from members of the public regarding waiting times for the CAMHS service, the Committee established the CAMHS Working Group in November 2012. The Group have met with providers, commissioners and young people who access services and their parents to gather information and develop lines of inquiry. The Group have recently drafted a report and recommendations. This was shared with commissioners and providers on 13th December and a further follow up meeting is planned for January 2014.

Work Programme for 2012-13

Topics for consideration during the remainder of the year:

- The Francis Report
- Dilnot Commission & Care Bill 2013
- Public Health Investment
- GP Practices in Sheffield
- Developing the Social Model of Public Health

Safer and Stronger Communities Scrutiny & Policy Development Committee

Chair: Cllr Chris Weldon

Mid Year Update

The Committee looked at the **Impact of Welfare Reform** on Sheffield's residents and requested officers to publicise the Council's policy that tenants in rent arrears would not face eviction provided they were engaging with the Council. The Chair also wrote to the Deputy Prime Minister to raise the impacts with him. The Committee have regular written updates and have requested a further report in the New Year which will include examples of how other local authorities are dealing with the issues and case studies on the impact in Sheffield.

On community safety the progress of the **Partner Resource Allocation Meeting (PRAM)** and feedback from a Local Government Association Review of PRAM, which had taken place in June, 2013 was considered. The Committee approved the proposed City-wide development of the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting and requested efforts be made to improve relations between the Partner Resource Allocation Meeting and the Neighbourhood Action Groups.

The Committee considered a report of the **Challenge for Change Tenants' Scrutiny Group** which examined the grass cutting service delivered by Sheffield Homes (now the Council Housing Service) and the Council's Parks and Public Realm Service. The Committee requested the report be presented to the Cabinet Management Team and the Executive Management Team and that the relevant Cabinet Member reports back to the Committee on the Council's response to the report's recommendations.

The Committee scrutinised performance on **homelessness**. It decided that Social Landlords in the City could do more to provide accommodation for homeless people and that the Chair would write to the Cabinet Member for Homes and Neighbourhoods to inform him of their view. In the summer four members of the Committee visited some of the **Bed and Breakfast accommodation** used to accommodate homeless households. The Committee were pleased to see that the Council had no homeless families in Bed and Breakfast accommodation. The Committee provided its input into the revision of the 'Schedule of Requirements' that is in place between the Council and Bed and Breakfasts used to accommodate homeless households.

Other issues covered include a progress update on the **Sheffield Housing Company** and looking at future land responsibility and management arrangements within the Council.

Work Programme for 2012-13

Topics for consideration during the remainder of the year:

- Welfare Reform
- Private Sector Landlords
- Community Safety Partnership
- Implementation of Allocations Policy
- Relationships between external contractors and housing
- Kier Contract
- Review of HRA Business Plan
- Challenge for Change: Grass Cutting

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