

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14



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Chair's Introduction



Councillor Jeremy Moulton Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee – (OSMC) 2013/14

Funding pressures and significant changes to local public services have ensured that the relevance and value of effective scrutiny continues to grow. As a reflection of this in 2013/14 the OSMC has prioritised scrutiny of the Council's Transformation Programme, whilst the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel (HOSP) has had oversight of the integration between health and social care and the reconfiguration of local health services.

The Scrutiny Panels have completed inquiries into Apprenticeships and the controversial issue of maintaining balanced neighbourhoods through planning. The Apprenticeships Inquiry, undertaken by Scrutiny Panel B, was concluded in September 2013 and reflected evidence received from national organisations, employers, local providers as well as Apprentices and support organisations. The comprehensive recommendations were endorsed by the National Apprenticeship Service and have all been accepted by the Cabinet. Demonstrating the strength of the scrutiny inquiry we have recently been informed that the Apprenticeships Review has been shortlisted for the 2014 Centre for Public Scrutiny Good Scrutiny Awards, the results will be announced on 10th June 2014.

The planning focussed inquiry, undertaken by Scrutiny Panel A, concluded in May 2014. The inquiry considered the issues of Houses in Multiple Occupation, planning enforcement, permitted development rights as well as Neighbourhood Planning. I look forward to the OSMC receiving the report in June and considering the Executive's response to the recommendations later in 2014.

The HOSP has been exceptionally busy this year. The Panel have been undertaking an inquiry into homelessness and health, commenced scrutiny of all safeguarding, including children's since responsibility was transferred from the OSMC, as well as scrutinising the significant health and social care developments in Southampton, such as the development of the Integrated Commissioning Unit. In addition, on a number of occasions members of the HOSP and the OSMC attending joint meetings to discuss key cross cutting issues.

As well as scrutinising progress in transforming the Council to meet the financial challenges facing us, the OSMC has looked beyond the forward plan to reflect upon issues that resonate with communities. Discussion took place with ABP representatives about the development of the Port of Southampton, as well as with Cabinet Members on street cleansing standards.

There has been no use of the Councillor Call for Action procedure this year, and, perhaps reflecting improved communications and a more transparent relationship with the Executive, there were no Call-Ins in 2013/14.

For 2014/15 the scrutiny function needs to consider how social media can be used to engage more effectively with residents; develop scrutiny beyond the city council; progress scrutiny of performance and look to improve outcomes by influencing commissioning specifications.

I am grateful to members of the various scrutiny panels for their hard work and contributions throughout the year. I am also grateful to all the various local groups, charities, national organisations and individuals who have attended, made presentations and provided evidence at the various scrutiny meetings, and to Council officers and Cabinet Members for their attendance.

The Purpose and Functions of Overview & Scrutiny

Decision making context

The **Full Council** of 48 Councillors approves the policy framework which sets out the key policies and programmes for the main services provided by the Council. In February each year Council meets to set the Council Tax for the following year.

The **Executive** (Cabinet and individual Cabinet Members) make decisions relating to services provided by the Council, except for those matters which are reserved for decision by the full Council, planning and licensing matters which are dealt with by specialist regulatory panels. The Executive is made up of a Leader, elected by Council, and his or her appointed Cabinet Members.

The **Scrutiny** function helps to inform the decision making process and improve the way the Council works. They assess what impact the Executive's policies and plans will have on the City and its residents.

Scrutiny is a process for:

- Holding the Executive, chief officers and senior members of staff to account for the discharge of its functions by examining, challenging and, if necessary requesting changes to Executive Decisions made but not yet implemented.
- Scrutinising and reviewing policies and practices within a cross-service remit, assisting in the development of such policies and practices and scrutinising policy outcomes – e.g. the implementation of strategic priorities.
- Reviewing decisions and policies made by the Executive and considering whether they are right for the City.
- Assessing the Council's performance against its planned targets and monitoring critical success factors.
- Reviewing the work of other partnerships and public sector organisations in the City, particularly the Safe City Partnership and health agencies.
- Championing issues of local concern to residents and contribute to policy development and service improvement.

Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee is a parent committee that manages the overview and scrutiny process and meets on a monthly basis. The membership for Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee is appointed for the municipal year at the Annual Council meeting in May.

There are a number of Scrutiny Panels that support the work of the Executive and the Council as a whole. These Panels carry out an annual work programme of Scrutiny Inquiries approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee. These arrangements allow citizens to have a greater say in Council matters by holding public inquiries into matters of local concern. These Inquiries lead to reports and recommendations which advise the Executive and the Council as a whole on its policies, budget and service delivery.

In addition the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel undertakes the important statutory scrutiny of the operation of health and social care agencies in Southampton.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee also monitors the decisions of the Executive and can 'Call-In' a decision which has been made by the Executive but not yet implemented. This enables them to consider whether the decision is appropriate.

Councillor Call for Action

Enables all Councillors to refer single ward issues, or 'Local Government matters', to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Scrutiny Panels 2013/14

- Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- Scrutiny Panel A
- Scrutiny Panel B

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

Councillor Jeremy Moulton

Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee - 2013/14

Committee Members (April 2014)

Councillor Adrian Vinson (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Daniel Fitzhenry

Councillor Christopher Hammond

Councillor John Hannides

Councillor Eamonn Keogh

Councillor Sharon Mintoff

Councillor Keith Morrell

Councillor Matthew Stevens

Councillor Asa Thorpe

Appointed Members:

Mrs Urszula Topp, Church Representative

Mr Richard Wharton, Church Representative

Whilst oversight of the Council's transformation activity was a priority of the OSMC during 2013/14, including scrutinising the budget, transformation programme, LGA Peer Review outcomes and the Capita contract extension, the Committee continued to scrutinise the Executive, holding them to account for decisions planned and implemented.

In 2013/14 parking was a regular item on the agenda with numerous discussions with the Cabinet Member on parking policy proposals, including evening charges, city centre residential permits and charges for first residents' parking permits.

The OSMC has also acted as a sounding board assisting in the development of key Council policies. These included the following during 2013/14:

- Waste Management Policy
- Housing Allocations Policy
- Homelessness Strategy
- Arts and Heritage Collections Policy

To improve communications between the Executive and Scrutiny the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee have been provided with briefs on requested forward plan items. This has enabled the Committee to focus on key issues, whilst ensuring oversight of a wide range of decisions.



Scrutiny of the Southampton Safe City Partnership



As the Council is now responsible for the Youth Offending Service the OSMC scrutinised, at the September 2013 meeting, the draft Safe City Partnership Plan and the Youth Justice Strategy. The Committee welcomed the year on year reduction in recorded crime in Southampton and challenged the Partnership to improve the city's comparative position in some critical areas, including violent crime.

Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel



Councillor Matthew Stevens

Chair of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 2013/14

Panel Members (April 2014)

Councillor Matthew Claisse (Vice Chair)

Councillor Sarah Bogle

Councillor Carol Cunio

Councillor Brian Parnell

Councillor Sally Spicer

The HOSP has had to consider a wealth of information both as part of the Panel's normal business and as part of its review. This has required members and officers to listen and process often complicated data and concepts. Thank you to all who listened patiently but also those who presented information, without the willingness of all involved to contribute to the Panels business it would not have made the progress it has this year.

The HOSP have had a very busy year considering the extensive changes within national and local health services this year, alongside the Panel taking on a new responsibility for children's safeguarding. The first task of the Panel was to make clear the relationship between the Health and Wellbeing Board, patient groups, the City Council and health providers in the city and the body that scrutinises them all, the HOSP. This clarification has meant that the HOSP has been more acerbic and rapier like in its scrutiny.

Within this evolving health framework the Panel has held 10 meetings this year to ensure progress is being made on key changes, that quality is being maintained by providers, as well as undertaking a review into the impact of homelessness and poor housing on the health of single people. Key highlights for the year include:

Responding to consultations - The Panel considered several national changes including:

- **Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection:** The Panel considered proposals relating to how the CQC monitor, inspect and regulate care services.
- **NHS England Vascular Services:** The Panel were consulted on proposals to develop a Vascular Services Network for Southern Hampshire. This issue has been considered at length by the Panel and it was recommended that Phase 1 was not a substantial change and that NHS England should proceed. The Panel recognised the sensitivity of the issue across the local area and offered to work with others to avoid delays in implementation.
- **NHS England Specialist Services Specifications:** In a joint meeting with the Health and Well Being Board, the Panel considered changes proposed to some NHS England specialist services including kidney dialysis, adult cardiac, complex disability and paediatric intensive care. Overall the proposed changes for these specifications did not appear to raise any major issues for local service provision.

People Directorate

Given the extent of changes underway the Panel have kept a keen eye on the progress of transformation in the People Directorate. The Panel were particularly interested in seeing improved outcomes for young people in care and vulnerable adults, and recognise that projects are in train to improve their journey. The Panel also recognised that the People Directorate transformation and wider commissioning changes will contribute significantly to mitigating future budget pressures. The Panel will continue to scrutinise this area to ensure that the redesign and

shift to earlier intervention achieves the desired outcomes to reduce, or more effectively manage demand, and release resources.

Integrated Commissioning Unit

The Panel reviewed the progress of the Integrated Commissioning Unit and how the Council and the Clinical Commissioning Group are maximising opportunities to pool budgets and improve the quality of providers in the city. In particular issues were raised around hospital acquired infections, the overall quality of local providers and continuing concerns around local nursing and residential homes. The Panel will continue to monitor progress on these issues across the city.

Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB)

In the light of the Panel's new responsibilities for children's safeguarding, alongside issues raised following the public inquiry into the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust and the Francis report published in February 2013, the Panel reviewed progress of the LSCB in September 2013 and April 2014. The Panel discussed the challenges faced by the city and the changes underway to make the LSCB more robust and effective. Progress made by the LSCB, and the wider issue of children's safeguarding will continue to be scrutinised next year.

UHS A&E Performance

In 2013 Monitor, the health sector regulator, announced they were investigating University Hospital Southampton's persistent breaches of their A&E targets. In order to check that improvements were being implemented the Panel considered regular reports from the Trust. The Panel were pleased to see significant improvements in the Emergency Department performance in the year, although the winter months remained a challenge. Progress has also been made against their Winter Plan, increasing the number of beds and staffing levels alongside working with partners to reduce the length of stay for patients in hospital. The Panel will continue to focus on ensuring that the flow of patients into and out of the emergency department is improved.



The Impact of Homelessness and Poor Housing on the Health of Single People

In 2013/14 the Panel undertook a review into the impact of housing and homelessness on the health of single people. A significant number of whom have complex needs and live unsettled and transient lifestyles. The aim of the review was to examine the difficulties that their everyday life presents to deliver a preventative and planned approach to improve their health and well being, and access to a settled and decent home.

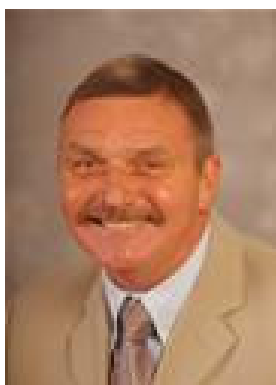
Over 6 meetings the Panel heard evidence from over 30 experts ranging from providers and landlords to GPs and a professor of psychology. Panel members also visited hostels in the city, speaking first hand to a number of homeless people and staff.

Overall the Panel identified that there is a strong homelessness model and partnership in the city, with pockets of excellent practice. The dedication and commitment of staff and officers was noted although it was recognised that the individuals in the system have to be ready to change.

The final report will be presented to Cabinet in July with emerging issues for improvement ranging from raising awareness and the professional recognition of care workers, widening the homelessness partnership, working with landlords to increase the use of HMOs for homeless clients and building a more psychologically informed environment within homeless provision.

Thank you to the officers who administer this Panel, particularly Dorota Goble whose contribution has been invaluable.

Scrutiny Panel A



Councillor Derek Burke
Chair of Scrutiny Panel A – 2013/14

Panel Members

Councillor Matthew Claisse (Vice-Chair)	Councillor Catherine McEwing
Councillor Les Harris	Councillor Sharon Mintoff
Councillor Mary Lloyd	Councillor Adrian Vinson

Maintaining Balanced Neighbourhoods Through Planning

In recognition of the concerns that some parts of Southampton are becoming unbalanced the OSMC set Scrutiny Panel A the task of examining the contribution planning can make to maintaining balanced neighbourhoods and the quality of life for their residents. The Panel were asked to focus on 3 objectives:

1. To review how effectively the City Council's Article 4 and HMOs Supplementary Planning Document (HMO SPD) is working
2. To consider the Council's approach to planning enforcement
3. To increase understanding of the various Government proposals to relax permitted development rights, including those relating to extensions and office to residential conversions, and to consider if a local response should be developed.

The Inquiry took place over 6 meetings from November 2013 to May 2014. As the meetings progressed the Panel had a number of discussions relating to communities having a greater say in the future growth and development of their neighbourhoods. This led to a meeting of the Panel focussing on Neighbourhood Planning.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs)

As the Article 4 and HMO SPD had been in place for 18 months it was appropriate that the Panel reviewed the policies that were designed to prevent the development of excessive concentrations of HMOs, and to encourage a more even distribution across the city. This discussion, as anticipated, proved to be the most impassioned of the inquiry.

Evidence was provided to the Panel from various sources advocating changing the HMO SPD thresholds currently in existence, or indeed removing the thresholds altogether. The Panel were aware that it is a balancing act between protecting family housing and balanced communities and meeting housing needs for the city. The Panel, whilst recognising that the HMO SPD is not perfect, were not convinced that the evidence presented to them was robust enough to recommend changes to the existing HMO SPD thresholds. The Panel have therefore recommended that the Administration reconsider the HMO SPD thresholds once accurate and soundly based information on housing need and HMO numbers in Southampton, and the tipping point at which communities become unbalanced has been gathered.

The Panel did however make recommendations relating to the population density of HMOs, placing greater emphasis on amenity and neighbourhood character, addressing the proliferation of to-let signs, setting a target for the overall number of students living outside of university provided accommodation and supporting the roll out of the Additional HMO Licensing Scheme.

Planning Enforcement

The Panel were advised that the Planning Enforcement function was the subject of a review by Internal Audit in 2013. The review identified a number of concerns relating to policies and procedures, complaints and executing enforcement decisions within statutory and legal timeframes. The Panel recognised that planning enforcement in Southampton has improved recently but more could be done to ensure that the planning function is not undermined by a lack of prompt and effective enforcement.

Permitted Development Rights (PDRs)

The Panel were informed that on 30 May 2013 a raft of amendments to permitted development and change of use came into effect, lasting for 3 years. The two main changes are:

- The change of use from office to residential
- Increasing the size limits for single storey domestic extensions and conservatories.

Members recognised that the various PDRs had the ability to impact on the balance of neighbourhoods but were notified that neither of the PDRs has so far had a significant impact on Southampton and that they are scheduled to be removed in 2016.

Community led Planning: New ways of working – Educate, engage and enforce

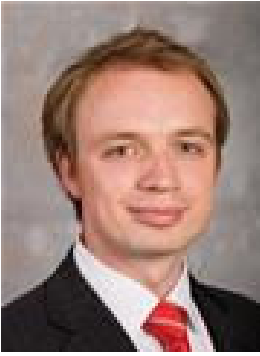
At the 5th meeting of the inquiry the Panel were updated about the new approaches that seek to empower local communities to shape their neighbourhoods. Despite limitations in approaches such as Neighbourhood Planning the Panel saw the value in encouraging, supporting and empowering communities across Southampton to work collectively to develop local solutions.



Overall the Panel made 21 recommendations, which includes recommending that the Executive review the resources allocated to deliver the Planning Service, particularly for enforcement, to ensure that it is sufficient to deliver the service required by the City of Southampton.

The final report of Scrutiny Panel A will be discussed at the OSMC on 12th June before being presented to Cabinet on 17th June 2014.

Scrutiny Panel B



Councillor Dr Darren Paffey
Chair of Scrutiny Panel B – 2013/14

Panel Members

Councillor Peter Baillie
Councillor David Furnell
Councillor Christopher Hammond

Councillor Les Harris
Councillor Maureen Turner
Councillor Lee Whitbread

Apprenticeship Inquiry

Apprenticeships are vital for equipping local people with the skills they need to prosper, and to provide Southampton with the workforce it needs to support economic growth and compete regionally and nationally. However, evidence showed that while the number of Apprentices in the city has been increasing, this growth was below regional and national averages.

Additionally the Government is increasing the age to which all young people must continue in education or training. With effect from September 2013, Raising of the Participation Age (RPA) will significantly increase the demand for Apprenticeship opportunities from young people in Southampton.

Given the information above, Scrutiny Panel B was asked by the OSMC to undertake a review of Apprenticeships in the city with three key objectives:

1. To examine work already carried out by the Council and its partners to generate Apprenticeship growth;
2. To consider the impact of Apprenticeships on the city's economy; and
3. To propose ways of significantly increasing the number and quality of Apprenticeships in Southampton.

Consultation

From the outset the Panel were clear that they wanted the review to be as inclusive as possible. In total 26 guests presented information at the 5 evidence gathering meetings. This included representatives from:

- National organisations (National Apprenticeship Service, National Careers Service)
- Apprenticeship employers or potential employers (Barratt Homes, University Hospital Southampton, Federation of Small Businesses)
- Apprenticeship providers (Southampton Engineering Training Association, City College, Solent Education Business Partnership)
- Apprentices and local support organisations (7 learners attended a meeting to provide the Panel with feedback on the experiences of Apprentices currently employed in Southampton, this included vulnerable young learners, Wheatsheaf Trust, Rainbow Project)
- Southampton City Council (Cabinet Member, Heads of Service)



Recommendations

The Apprenticeships Inquiry created a set of Panel recommendations, informed by the evidence gathering sessions and feedback from key stakeholders, and aligned with local, regional and national policy. Using these recommendations the Council has produced the Southampton Apprenticeship Action Plan 2014-16, to be overseen by a Steering Group including private, public and voluntary sector representation.

Examples of key actions within the action plan include:

1. Improve the Quality and Availability of Apprenticeship Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) in Schools, Colleges and for NEET young people
2. Create an Apprenticeship Ambassador Scheme
3. Introduce Southampton Apprenticeship Graduation Day
4. Develop an Enhanced Traineeship Scheme for Southampton in partnership with Solent LEP
5. Create a Southampton City Council Apprenticeship, Internships and Work Experience Programme, that will expand to apprenticeship brokerage for wider Southampton employers
6. Introduce a Southampton Apprenticeship Grant Scheme

Cabinet

At the 21st January 2014 meeting Cabinet approved all the recommendations from the Apprenticeships Inquiry. Funding was identified from existing budgets and £275,000 of new European grant income.

Outcomes

The outcomes from the Scrutiny Inquiry will be both short and long term. There has been an immediate impact, with the following outcomes already being achieved:

- A citywide campaign creating increased apprenticeship awareness, including events with schools, colleges, young people not in education, employment and training (NEET) and employers, leading to an immediate rise in apprenticeship recruitment of +3.6%.
- The creation of new Business/Education Apprenticeship 'Partnerships', working with the FSB bringing together local SMEs and secondary schools/colleges to improve Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG), Work Related Learning and progression routes to Apprenticeships.
- A policy requirement for new Apprenticeship opportunities within Council Planning (Section 106) and Procurement, leading to 88 apprenticeship 'pledges' from local contractors. The policy is now being adopted by Registered Providers (social housing) in Southampton.

Centre for Public Scrutiny - Good Scrutiny Awards 2014

In recognition of the quality and value of the work undertaken by the Scrutiny Panel the Apprenticeship Inquiry has been shortlisted for an award at the Centre for Public Scrutiny Awards 2014. The awards ceremony takes place on 10th June 2014.



The Apprenticeship Inquiry report and Cabinet response can be accessed through the link below:

<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/modernGov/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=126&MIId=2480&Ver=4>

Getting Involved

How can I get involved?

There are a number of ways in which the public and interested organisations can get involved.

- **Attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee or a Scrutiny Panel**

Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee and Scrutiny Panel meetings are held in public and anyone is welcome to attend to listen to proceedings. Meetings are currently usually held in the Civic Centre. Only on rare occasions, when certain types of confidential information is being discussed, are members of the public not allowed to attend.

- Raise issues with your Councillor and request Overview and Scrutiny to consider as part of **Councillor Call for Action**.
- Give your feedback to inquiry meetings as part of evidence gathering.

Details of forthcoming meetings, agendas, reports and minutes can be obtained from the City Council's website at www.southampton.gov.uk.

Providing Written Evidence

Scrutiny inquiries can consider written evidence and members of the public, community groups, or other key stakeholders can write in to bring evidence to the attention of Inquiry Panel members. Inevitably, scrutiny inquiries have only a limited amount of time, so they are not able to hear oral testimony from all interested people.

Written evidence provides an alternative way to receive evidence from key stakeholders—policy makers, service providers, service users and community groups. Written evidence may put forward a particular perspective of the issue being considered, or may highlight evidence to help the investigation. It can also put forward questions for witnesses, which may be taken up by members of the Panel during the discussion.

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