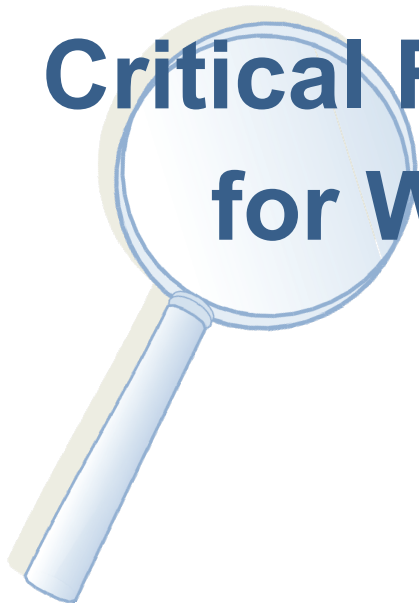


# **Overview and Scrutiny**

**The Annual Report**

**2015-2016**

**Critical Friends Working  
for Warwickshire**



**Warwickshire  
County Council**



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# Introduction

This report is an overview for the 12 months from April 2015 to March 2016 for the four Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) of Warwickshire County Council. It provides a snapshot of all the positive work that has been achieved over 2015/16.

The County Council has four OSCs comprising of Councillors who are not members of Cabinet.

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An OSC is not a decision making body; OSCs are critical friends who are able to challenge policy makers and decision makers. Their aim is to add value to the organisation and to drive improvement in public services. They should always be constructive, positive and challenging.

An OSC allows the voices and concerns of Warwickshire's communities to be heard and ensures that the Council is working in the best interest of the people who live here.

Over the last 12 months, Warwickshire County Council's OSCs have reviewed and evaluated services throughout the Council; ensuring that the core purpose and desired outcomes (set out in the One Organisational Plan) are all met.

The OSCs have worked with Warwickshire County Council Officers, external partners and agencies, members of the public as well as the Council's Democratic Services Team to provide a robust scrutiny function.

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OSCs have now entered the last year of the current County Council, with elections due to take place in May 2017.

The Council's OSCs will make certain that the success they have had over the previous three years carries on into 2016/17; continuing to help deliver service improvements to the people of Warwickshire.

The Chair and Vice-Chair of each Committee, along with spokespersons from political groups, meet with Strategic Directors and Heads of Service to discuss the items being considered at future meetings. Members then take decisions as to what items each Committee will look at in detail.

The frequent use of briefing notes between meetings allows members to gather further information on key topics, whilst enabling the formal meetings to hold focus on key areas. All the members of the committees will challenge, question and consult as part of the ongoing review of corporate performance. Overview and Scrutiny Committees also review services through Task and Finish Groups, complete appraisals of services through reviews and panels and make recommendations to Cabinet.

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# Overview and Scrutiny in Numbers



**39** Elected Members sit on **4**  
Overview & Scrutiny Committees.

**56%** of members on  
OSC also sat on **Task  
and Finish Groups**

There were **32** meetings during 2015/16.

## 5 Key Areas of 2015/16

Housing Related Support  
Multi-Agency Safeguarding  
Hub (MASH)  
Performance Management  
Safer Routes to School  
Winter Pressures



## There were **6** call-ins:

Bermuda Connection  
Home to school transport  
Housing Related Support  
Nuneaton & Bedworth Parking Charges  
Nuneaton Opportunities Centre  
Stratford Greenway Parking



## 5 Task and Finish Groups

Energy Plan for Warwickshire  
Pride in Camphill  
NHS Quality Accounts  
George Eliot Hospital  
South Warwickshire Foundation  
Trust  
West Midlands Ambulance Service

22% of the Overview and  
Scrutiny meetings were  
attended by members of  
the public.







# Overview and Scrutiny Committee Membership 2015/16

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## Adult Social Care and Health OSC - 2015/16

This committee reviews and scrutinises the provision of public services in Warwickshire relating to adult social care services including social care to older people and people with disabilities, policies and services for safeguarding adults and any matter relating to the planning provision and operation of health services for adults and children in Warwickshire

### Chair

Councillor Maggie O'Rourke

### Committee Members:

Councillor Richard Chattaway

Councillor Sara Doughty

Councillor Bob Hicks

Councillor Jeff Morgan

Councillor Mike Perry (Vice Chair)

Councillor Wallace Redford

Councillor Howard Roberts

Councillor Kate Rolfe

Councillor Heather Timms

### Co-opted Members: (Voting only on matters relating to health services)

Councillor Belinda Garcia - (Rugby Borough Council Representative)

Councillor Tony Lloyd - (Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council Representative)

Councillor Margaret Bell - (North Warwickshire Borough Council Representative)

Councillor Justin Kerridge - (Stratford-upon-Avon District Council Representative)

Councillor Pamela Redford - (Warwick District Council Representative)

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## **Children and Young People OSC - 2015/16**

This committee reviews and scrutinises the provision of public services in Warwickshire relating to education and skills, services for children, families and young people including schools, 16-19 years education, pre-school children, child protection, family support and social care, children with specific needs and the Youth Service.

### **Chair**

Councillor Dave Parsons

### **Committee Members:**

Councillor Mike Brain

Councillor Jonathan Chilvers

Councillor Julie Jackson (Vice Chair)

Councillor Caroline Phillips

Councillor Clive Rickhards

Councillor Dave Shilton

Councillor Angela Warner

Councillor Mary Webb

Councillor Chris Williams

### **Co-opted Members: (Voting only on matters relating to education)**

Joseph Cannon - Church Representative

John McRoberts - Parent Governor

Mike Oldridge – Parent Governor

Peter Law – Church Representative

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## **Communities OSC - 2015/16**

This committee reviews and scrutinises the provision of public services in Warwickshire relating to community safety, trading standards, transport and highways, economic development and environment, adult learning, heritage, tourism, flood risk management and emergency planning

### **Chair**

Councillor Philip Johnson

### **Committee Members:**

Councillor Chris Clarke (Vice Chair)

Councillor Sarah Boad

Councillor Yousef Dahmash

Councillor Corrine Davies

Councillor Jenny Fradgley

Councillor Mike Gittus

Councillor Joan Lea

Councillor Jenny St. John

Councillor Wallace Redford

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## **Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 2015/16**

(This Overview and Scrutiny Committee was previously known as Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.)

This committee reviews and scrutinises the provision of public services in Warwickshire relating to fire & rescue, budget, medium term financial plan, corporate business plan, planning and performance arrangements, finance, property, information technology, facilities management, workforce strategy and development, law and governance, libraries, customer service and communications

### **Chair**

Councillor Matt Western

### **Committee Members:**

Councillor John Appleton

Councillor Nicola Davies

Councillor Neil Dirveiks

Councillor Peter Fowler (Vice Chair)

Councillor John Holland

Councillor Bernard Kirton

Councillor Keith Kondakor

Councillor Phillip Morris-Jones

Councillor Chris Saint

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# Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2015-2016

This Committee has a broad remit, focussing on the services delivered not only by the County Council, but also partners in the health and voluntary sectors including Clinical Commissioning Groups, Acute Trusts and Healthwatch Warwickshire.

The Committee has to manage a challenging workload in an area of public service with continual change through new legislation, guidance and the integration of the health and social care functions. Over the past year, the Committee has considered a range of issues within that context; on NHS service delivery, public health and adult social care; and continues to develop its knowledge of services, as well as a keep a constant focus on patient safety and the quality of services



**Chair of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview  
and Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Maggie O'Rourke

[cllrorourke@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllrorourke@warwickshire.gov.uk)

*“This has been another demanding year for the Committee, demonstrated by the volume and range of issues considered at scheduled meetings, additional select committees and through the quality accounts task and finish groups. The work of the Adult Social Care and Health OSC is increasingly important. I would like to place on record my thanks to the Committee members for their support and hard work, our senior officers and those from our partner organisations who we work closely with to find early solutions.”*

# Highlights from 2015/16



The Committee held a select committee on **Winter Pressures** in October 2015, involving Clinical Commissioning Groups, Acute Trusts and other service providers, as well as the County Council's lead officers for Adult Social Care. The outcome was a series of recommendations to the lead agencies, with subsequent reports and briefings being provided to the Committee.



The Quality Accounts Task and Finish Groups again **worked closely with NHS** Trusts on quality assurance. This year the work was undertaken in conjunction with Coventry City Council, reflecting that services are delivered to residents of both areas by the Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust and University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire



**Specialist Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services.** The Committee received periodic updates from the County Council's lead officers, Clinical Commissioning Groups and Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust on the scope of the local CAMHS service, the national context, performance against core targets, service developments and redesign work.

## Adult Social Care

The Committee works closely with the lead officers of the People Group, both informally to address local concerns that have been raised, but also to receive advice and guidance on the **challenges** facing the Authority. This working relationship remains important with the integration of Health and Social Care, through the Better Care Fund, the introduction of Sustainability Transformation Plans, and implementation of the Care Act.

### Key outcomes:

- ✓ The tender and procurement process for Domiciliary Care was **considered in depth**, with the appointment of a member reference group from the Scrutiny Committee being consulted on development of the new contract. A workshop was held in February to which all members of Council were invited.
- ✓ Service performance is **monitored** through quarterly reports on progress against the One Organisational Plan.
- ✓ Services provided by independent care homes for older people were reviewed, looking at the **quality of commissioned services**, providers on the Council's quality risk register and expenditure to support failing providers. The Committee also received an in-depth progress report on the provision of extra care Housing in Warwickshire.

## Health

The Committee provides a **check and balance** on the **performance** of local health commissioners and providers whose services impact the lives of local residents.

The Committee has considered a range of other health issues with some examples being provided below. This includes **formal consultation** in accordance with the Committee's statutory powers on service reviews:

- ✓ The redesign and **improvement** of stroke services, particularly a proposal to review service delivery for transient ischemic attack (TIA), known as a 'mini stroke'.
- ✓ Urgent Care Services. The Committee was consulted on a review of urgent care 'walk in' services for the North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth areas, specifically whether the service should be retained its current location or be relocated to the George Eliot Hospital.
- ✓ The redesign of community / out of hospital services. There was a national drive as part of a five year 'forward view' to **develop new models of working** with a more holistic approach, to meet rising demand and changes across health and social care.
- ✓ **Review of progress** made against the Care Quality Commission Improvement Plan for University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire, following a comprehensive inspection.
- ✓ The Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust briefed the Committee on planned changes to transforming care for people with complex learning disabilities and/or autism. This was designed to support the local reshaping of services away from inpatient care to strengthened support within the community.

### Working with the Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB)

The Committee receives updates from the Chair of the Health and Wellbeing Board, and the Chair attends Health and Wellbeing Board meetings, which, in line with the **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**, ensures that there is no duplication and the different roles remain clear. During this year a **review** of the MoU took place to ensure it remains **fit for purpose**, particularly given the changes to the HWBB structure in 2015.

### Public Health

The Committee receives **regular advice and updates** from the Director of Public Health and his staff. The Committee received the Annual Report of the Director of Public Health as well as an update on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.



### Key health organisations monitored by the Committee:

- Coventry and Rugby CCG
- North Warwickshire CCG
- Warwickshire South CCG
- Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust
- George Eliot NHS Hospital Trust
- South Warwickshire Foundation Trust
- University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire
- West Midlands Ambulance Service

# Call-In of Executive Decisions



## **Housing Related Support**

In September the Committee considered a 'call-in' for a decision that was made by Cabinet regarding **Housing Related Support**, approving the proposals to re-structure Housing Related Support services in order to deliver savings targets. The Committee heard concerns that the original report had failed to provide enough detail and clarification around the assessment process and agreed to refer the matter back to full Council for reconsideration. The decision was taken to support the call-in and reverse the original decision and defer the planned saving of £300,000 from Housing Related Support; and to use the general reserve to balance the budget.



# Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2015-2016

This Committee reviews and scrutinises the provision of public services in Warwickshire relating to education and skills, services for children, families and young people including schools, 16-19 years education, pre-school children, child protection, family support and social care, children with specific needs and the Youth Service.

As well as Councillors, there are four co-opted members on the Committee who are able to vote only on matters relating to education.



## **Chair of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Dave Parsons

[cllrparsons@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllrparsons@warwickshire.gov.uk)

*Once again, members of the Committee have shown commitment and energy in pushing for the very best for our young people in all aspects of the challenges they face. Continued reductions in the resources have led to some difficult decisions. Home to School Transport has been particularly challenging and the Committee assisted Cabinet on focusing on the areas of greatest need in the face of the requirement to affect savings. Equally, the Committee has been concerned with trying to promote measures which will improve the educational opportunities for those of our young people who struggle with a degree of deprivation in their present circumstances. The emerging 0-5 strategy is clearly an aspect of the Councils activities which we hope will impact on this area and the Committee is keen to ensure that resources allocated to the pursuit of the strategy will bring clear and lasting benefits to the young people of Warwickshire.*

# Highlights from 2015/16



The Committee received progress updates at each meeting in relation to the work undertaken to create an operational Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (**MASH**) for Warwickshire. Members of the Committee sought to be provided with a definitive date as to when the MASH would open. We are delighted that it is now up and running as we believe that this facility will be of significant benefit in terms of our aim to ensure the safety of our most vulnerable young people.



The **MASH** facility will look to become operational to cater for adult cases towards the end of 2016. The Committee will continue to receive updates in relation to the target opening date for the adults MASH and during the course of the operational future of the MASH shall scrutinise the performance of the facility



The Committee considered a report in relation to the **0-5 Strategy Group**. The Council have established a three year Smart Start Programme (2015-2018) which seeks to provide children in Warwickshire with the best start in life. The Council is working alongside providers of early years' education, social care and health services. After receiving a report which outlined the purpose and methodology behind the Programme, the Committee requested further updates in relation to the ongoing work being undertaken in relation to the Strategy – members are seeking assurance that the work being undertaken by the Council, partners and providers is contributing to providing the best possible start in life to Warwickshire's children.

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## Home to School Transport

With the requirement to make efficiency savings as part of the **One Organisational Plan**, a decision was taken to review the Council's **Home to School** Transport Policy.

During the year 2015-16, the Committee were presented with the proposals being considered in relation to Home to School Transport efficiency savings. Following a detailed scrutiny process the Committee took the decision to make several recommendations to Cabinet which were agreed to.

This is an example of how scrutiny can influence decision making. The net result of the involvement with scrutiny in this process was that Cabinet agreed to commission officers to undertake a further review in relation to specialist nursery transport provision. The Committee continues to analyse the work being undertaken by the Council in relation to Home to School Transport, including the consultation process and any proposed suggestions for changes to the Council's policy.



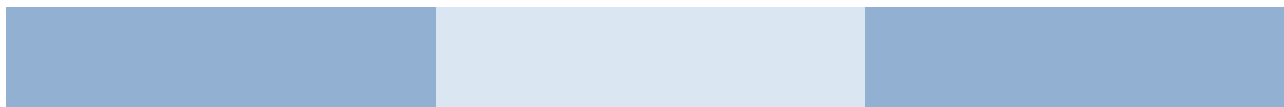
## Closing the Gap

The Committee considered a report in relation to the Council's **Closing the Gap Strategy**. The aim of the Strategy is to close the attainment gap between disadvantaged pupils and their peers in Warwickshire.

Although the Committee had noted that the gap was closing, members have requested that future reports in relation to the success of the strategy are brought before them for consideration. With **significant legislative changes** coming into force around how schools are governed and their performance monitored, the Committee will seek assurances that the necessary work is being undertaken to improve the academic attainment of disadvantaged children. With more schools converting to academies, the local authority does not have statutory responsibility to monitor their performance.

The Committee has sought assurance from officers that the Council will be working closely with the Regional Schools Commissioner to ensure that the performance of academies remains acceptable – this will include ensuring that all disadvantaged pupils are supported so that they are able to achieve.

For all local authority maintained schools, the Committee will continue to **closely monitor** the performance of disadvantaged children.



### Public Involvement

At each meeting of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee, provision is made via an agenda item for **members of the public** to address the meeting in relation to a topic/agenda item which is relevant to the business being considered.

During the year, public attendance at meetings has spiked, understandably, around topical issues which directly affect local people.

The vast majority of questions which were put to the

Committee during the past year were raised in relation to Home to School Transport.

**The participation of the public in the scrutiny process at Warwickshire is encouraged.** Blogs are produced by Democratic Services Officers which inform the public in advance of the meeting, what business will be transacted.

Although members of the public are encouraged to submit their questions in writing in advance of the meeting, we have examples this year of the Chair using his discretion to allow the

public to speak without having given prior notice.

**Public participation** in the scrutiny process can provide members with the opportunity to get a first-hand perspective on how the decisions made by the Council directly affect the local population – public participation in the process is crucial for scrutiny to be successful.



# Call-In of Executive Decisions



## Home To School Transport

In October the Committee considered a call-in following a decision made by Cabinet to withdraw **Transport to Specialist Nursery Provision** with immediate effect. Concerns were raised that the decision had pre-empted the findings of a review into specialist nursery provision and no assurances could be given that the needs of all children requiring specialist support could be met. The Committee resolved to refer the matter back to full Council with revised recommendations. An Extraordinary meeting of full Council was called to consider the Committee's recommendations. The decision was taken to defer the proposed savings on transport to specialist nursery provision until after the outcome of a planned review of specialist nursery provision completed within the next 6 months.

# Communities

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### 2015-2016

The remit of the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee was reviewed in September 2015, with scrutiny of the Fire and Rescue and Libraries services transferring to a new Resources Fire and Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The revised remit of the Committee is:

This committee reviews and scrutinises the provision of public services in Warwickshire relating to community safety, trading standards, transport and highways, economic and environment, adult learning, heritage, tourism, flood risk management and planning.



#### **Chair of the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Councillor Philip Johnson**

[cllrjohnson@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllrjohnson@warwickshire.gov.uk)

*“This has been my first year as Chair of the Communities OSC and I would like to place on record my thanks to members of the Committee for their support and hard work. Also, I would like to thank all those who have reported to the Committee, particularly the external agencies. The range and volume of work completed evidences the value of this committee to our communities.”*

#### **Public Question Time**

There has been a high level of public involvement in the work of the Committee this year. At the March Committee, seven public questions were responded to. In the main these concerned the impact of development on Rugby, with various residents asking about highways capacity, sustainable transport, the gyratory, costs, traffic models, fire and rescue service should rugby expand. A further question was submitted about bus services in Nuneaton and Bedworth.

# Highlights from 2015/16



The Committee **approved** the final report of the Task and Finish Group set up to consider the allocation of funding for **Safer Routes to Schools** and 20mph initiatives. Subsequently. An all-party School Safety Zones and Routes Task Force was established and the Committee received updates from the Chair of the Task Force, including details of its terms of reference, the funding allocation and progress of schemes.



The **Energy Plan Task and Finish Group** completed its review, with the **recommendations** being approved by Cabinet on 8 October 2015. Cabinet made a recommendation to Council that the allocation of funding to support the introduction of community energy schemes in 2016/17 and 2017/18 be used to support the areas of work recommended by the Group. Cabinet authorised officers to undertake a cost benefit analysis of installing solar panels on the school. **Work continues to implement** the findings and recommendations from this work.



The Managing Director of Stagecoach Midlands gave a presentation to the Committee in March 2016. 18 questions were submitted, with responses being provided about pricing, planning, routes, customer engagement and staffing. Members acknowledged the good reputation of Stagecoach and **positive** feedback from residents, particularly in relation to the quality of the buses, reliability and friendliness of drivers.

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## Trading Standards

A meeting of the Committee was held at the **Trading Standards** offices in Warwick. It included a tour and presentations which focused on the motor trade, animal health and protecting vulnerable people from scams.

### Key outcomes:

The Committee gained a greater **understanding** of the Trading Standards Service:

- ✓ There is a weekly alert service that advises of latest scams. Anyone can register at [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/consumeradvice](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/consumeradvice)
- ✓ In **making savings** the service has minimised the impact on consumers and residents by targeting the service, maximising income wherever possible and working with other agencies
- ✓ The scope of the service has changed. There is a **greater focus on prevention** and on tackling the exploitation of vulnerable people. The service has also been more strident than many in pursuing cases.
- ✓ The demand for 'True Call' units to prevent pressure tele-sales, is high, particularly since TV coverage of the service.



## Flood Risk Management

Warwickshire County Council became the **Lead Local Flood Authority** responsible for managing local flood risk from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses in the County. The Council is required to **consult** widely on its Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and the Committee was included in the second stage of consultation, commenting on the proposals. The Committee gained a useful insight into the requirements for flood risk management and responded to the consultation.

## Civil Parking Enforcement Contract

The Committee reviewed performance of the contract-operated services provided over the last 12 months. Members raised concerns from the public that the contractor focused on a target driven approach to penalty notices in order to increase revenue. The evidence showed that this was not the case but members requested a further breakdown of data by District/Borough.



## Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP)

The Council representatives on the CWLEP report to each meeting providing the opportunity to review the progress of all the schemes. [www.cwlep.com](http://www.cwlep.com)

## Waste

The Committee's review of the Warwickshire Waste Strategy Implementation Plan focussed on recycling in schools, the types of materials that can and cannot be recycled in different parts of the County and the stricter approach contractors are taking towards contamination which leads to substandard products going to landfill.



Progress in tracking these issues will continue to be considered by the Committee over the next 12 months.

## Call-In of Executive Decisions

During the year the Committee has considered four decisions made by Cabinet or individual Cabinet members, that were 'called-in' for review.

The first concerned a decision to decommission the **Nuneaton Opportunities Centre**. This centre provided skills based training but had been identified for review in the Council's budget plan. The review had concluded that the centre be closed as there had been a decline in numbers using the centre and there was an increasing cost of building maintenance. The Committee had a number of concerns, in particular with regard alternative provision for users, and referred these back to Cabinet asking for the matter to be reconsidered. Cabinet, however, subsequently confirmed its decision to de-commission the Nuneaton Opportunities Centre.

At that same meeting the Committee considered a call-in of the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning's proposed consultation exercise on the **Bermuda Connection Project** (a highways project designed to improve traffic flow in Nuneaton). This had been called in by members concerned that the venues planned for consultation meetings did not include the areas most impacted by the project. The Committee considered evidence and a response from the Portfolio Holder. In this case, the Committee agreed to take no further action on this matter.

In March 2016, the Committee considered a call-in of the Portfolio Holder for Transport and Planning's decision to consent to proposed **Nuneaton and Bedworth Off-Street Parking Places Order**. (The making of such orders is for the Borough Council but the Borough has to seek County Council consent). The members who called in the decision expressed concern about the impact of charges but the Committee noted that consent was given on highways grounds and that the Portfolio Holder did propose to write to the Borough to highlight the possible impact of the changes. The Committee agreed to take no further action.

The fourth call-in was in response to public opposition to the introduction of **car parking charges** at the **Stratford to Long Marston Greenway** which had been proposed as part of the budget savings. Members of the public attended this meeting, allowing their questions to be put directly to the Committee and officers. The Committee considered all the evidence and comments put before them and referred their concerns to full Council. The Council, however, supported the introduction of charges on the basis that the implementation of charging would be assessed after six months of operation.



# Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2015-2016

The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee was renamed Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny in September 2015 after the Fire and Rescue service and Library services were added to its remit.

The remit of the Committee is now;

***“To review and/or scrutinise the functions of the council relating to the fire and rescue service, budget, medium term financial plan, corporate business plan, planning and performance arrangements, finance, property, information technology, facilities management, workforce strategy and development, law and governance, libraries, customer service and communications.”***

The committee is focused on the internal workings of the Council although the addition of libraries and fire and rescue has introduced an element of direct service delivery to the public.



## **Chair of the Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Councillor Matt Western

[cllrwestern@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllrwestern@warwickshire.gov.uk)

***“During my first year as Chair of the Resources and Fire & Rescue OSC, the work has been varied, with a new, wide ranging remit following the addition of Fire & Rescue and Libraries which has added a focus on external services. However, Members will continue to monitor the internal functions of the Council as well as customer services and communications. And as a committee, members will continue to encourage scrutiny throughout the decision making process. I would like to place on record my thanks to the members of the committee for all their hard work over the last 12 months and to all the council officers who support is vital to the success of the OSC.”***

# Highlights from 2015/16



The Committee undertook a review of the Council's Property Disposal Protocol and Peppercorn rents. This was in response to concerns that assessments of value should include a measure of social value when considering property disposal. There were also concerns that some community groups would find it increasingly difficult if rents were to increase, especially in times of austerity. The Committee's views were reflected in revised protocols which the OSC then recommended to Cabinet and which were approved.



The OSC also input into a refreshed **Smallholdings Strategy** that set out revised **commitments** and policies that included; Retaining the Estate and maximising net income; seeking opportunities for strategic development to generate capital receipts; reinvesting in the Estate to replace land disposed of for strategic development and thus maintaining income; minimising revenue costs of the Estates Team; seeking to reduce maintenance expenditure (capital and revenue) after addressing the maintenance backlog; and the generation of alternative income streams from the Estate such as renewable energy and minerals extraction. All proposed revisions were **agreed by Cabinet** in December 2015.

## Property Rationalisation and the Way We Work

In December 2015 the committee considered the **effectiveness** of the Council's Property Rationalisation Programme in terms of cost savings and the introduction of new ways of working.

The **achievements** of the programme include:

- ✓ The primary objective of £4.376M annual **savings** through a reduction of 139 physical assets - this has **protected** front line jobs.
- ✓ Customer spaces that are modern, welcoming and reflect our professional services.
- ✓ 21st century office environments that facilitate collaboration and innovation.
- ✓ An early Saltisford 2 exemplar - a key milestone in winning hearts and minds.
- ✓ A significant shift in organisation behaviour from "my space" to "our space".
- ✓ More **efficient** use of expensive office space.
- ✓ A high degree of manager and staff engagement - resulting in smooth office moves that supported service delivery.

A toolkit and training for managers and staff to ensure they have the skills and mind-set to embrace flexible working methods.

Members welcomed the programme, applauding its effectiveness and thanked officers for keeping them informed whenever properties in their divisions are prepared for disposal.

## Capital Slippage

When capital schemes are approved their inclusion in the **capital programme** is based on a 'best estimate' of when completion should be achieved. Slippage reflects delays in the physical progress of a project.

The end of each financial year is used as the fixed point in time against which the extent of progress on the delivery of a project is assessed. The extent of slippage in the capital programme was raised as a **matter of concern** by the Committee in July 2015.

The Committee reviewed the reasons for slippage and the mechanisms put in place to manage and monitor that slippage. The Committee gained an understanding of -

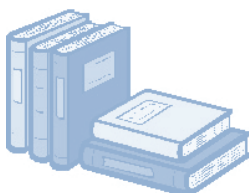
- ✓ The level of slippage in Warwickshire.
- ✓ What is meant by the term 'slippage'.
- ✓ **Consideration** of whether it matters if there is slippage in the capital programme.
- ✓ Why and how slippage can occur.
- ✓ The governance arrangements around the management of the capital programme.

Members suggested that project management should have a realistic profile of spend and where slippage might occur. This would then provide an opportunity for funds to be re-directed and used on other projects. They also requested and were subsequently provided with a schedule of those schemes where slippage had occurred.

### Looking ahead

The inclusion of Fire & Rescue and Libraries has introduced a new dimension to the work of the Committee.

As the refreshed One Organisation Plan and its attendant savings come on line so it will be increasingly important to make sure that the decisions being made around service change are the right ones.



For example, it is expected that any proposals to reduce the operating hours of our libraries will be fully debated by the Committee.



Likewise as discussions continue over changes to how the Fire and Rescue Service is delivered members will want to have to opportunity to debate these.

The Committee will continue to offer an overview of the internal workings of the Council ensuring that the way it implements its policies and faces up to new challenges are effective in ensuring the best in service delivery.



# Getting Involved

Listening to the views of Warwickshire’s residents is a crucial part of the work carried out by Overview and Scrutiny Committees. If you have any queries or questions about scrutiny please contact the Democratic Services Team

Adult Social Care and Health Overview & Scrutiny	Paul Spencer - Senior Democratic Services Officer	paulspencer@warwickshire.gov.uk
Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Ben Patel-Sadler - Democratic Services Officer	benpatelsadler@warwickshire.gov.uk
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Resources and Fire & Rescue Overview & Scrutiny	Helen Barnsley - Democratic Services Officer	helenbarnsley@warwickshire.gov.uk

You can keep up to date with the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Task & Finish groups and any other reviews or panels by visiting our website –

- [www.warwickshire.gov.uk/scrutiny](http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/scrutiny)

Or by reading the latest updates on our blog

- [www.warksdemocracy.wordpress.com](http://www.warksdemocracy.wordpress.com)

Or by contacting the Democratic Services Team –

Email us – [democraticservices@warwickshire.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@warwickshire.gov.uk)

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