



SCRUTINY NEWSLETTER (1)

October 2012



This is the first of a new series of Scrutiny Newsletters which will be produced quarterly to provide an overview of the scrutiny work programme at West Sussex County Council. It will include performance information, share best practice and highlight key aspects of the work of the Council's four select committees. This first newsletter covers the period from April to September 2012 and looks forward to the issues to be covered in the next quarter's meetings. It will be reviewed by the Policy and Resources Select Committee in its role of monitoring the overall scrutiny programme.

Select Committee Developments and Best Practice

A Scrutiny review was carried out in 2011/12 which led to changes in Select Committees from April 2012. The review resulted in a reduction from 6 to 4 Select Committees: -

- Children and Young People's Services
- Environmental and Community Services
- Health and Adult Social Care
- Policy and Resources

Priority will be given to the highest strategic issues with a focus on customer outcomes/experiences rather than services. Members will therefore concentrate more on performance, targets and outcomes and much less on scrutinising processes.

The **Total Performance Monitor (TPM)** is the mechanism by which the Select Committees monitor and scrutinise the performance of the County Council in terms of the budget and performance targets. Each Select Committee receives a tailored TPM report on a regular basis and PRSC receives a report at every meeting as it has the corporate overview role. This year the mechanism for monitoring performance has been strengthened through:

- PRSC and other Select Committees linking together so that issues can be referred between the Committees for review.
- issues are therefore scrutinised by the appropriate Committee within a timeframe that can make a difference to performance.
- Resulting in more effective use of time is achieved through only the relevant Committee reviewing the performance issue in depth.

Overview of Select Committees

The period began with April meetings endorsing arrangements for the new Committees such as terms of reference, membership, nominations for their Chairmen and Vice Chairmen and Business Planning Group members, which were later confirmed by the County Council.

Children and Young People's Services Select Committee (CYPSSC)

CYPSSC Membership

Chairman Richard Burrett

Improvement Board
Update
(April 2012)

The Committee receives regular updates on progress with delivery of improvements to Children's Safeguarding Services.

Improvement Board Update (June 2012)	Members were pleased to see evidence of improvement and asked a range of questions about specific aspects of performance, with a particular focus on social work staffing levels and recruitment, caseloads, adoptions and the overall number of children in care.
Education and Schools Policy - Review of Achievement (April 2012)	The recommendations of a Task Force convened to examine progress of the Learning Service against the targets set out in the Education and Schools Policy were considered. The recommendations were supported by the Committee with some amendments, in particular to reflect the discussions in the meeting about the role of local members in supporting schools in their area to improve.
Special Educational Needs seminar (April 2012)	The formal meeting was followed by a seminar open to all elected members on developments in the services provided for children with special educational needs and disabilities and their families. A number of parents participated in the seminar and provided valuable insight for members into the needs of their children and how these are being met.
Total Performance Monitor (June 2012)	The Committee considered overall performance of the service as reported in the Total Performance Monitor and spent some time considering the level of underspend on Children's Services and the impact on service provision. Recommendations were made about the presentation of the data to make interpretation easier and the Committee requested an impact analysis on College attendance following the implementation of the post-16 transport policy be undertaken.
Corporate Parenting Panel - Annual Report (June 2012)	The Committee considered the Annual Report of the Corporate Parenting Panel, which was presented by the Chairman of the Panel, David Simmons. The Committee gave its support to the strategic priorities outlined in the report and highlighted the need for the training on Corporate Parenting to have a high priority for new members of the Council following the elections in May 2013.

Environmental and Community Services Select Committee (ECSSC)

[ECSSC Membership](#)

Chairman [Duncan Crow](#)

Changes to County Council Financial Support for the Non-Commercial network bus subsidy (April 2012)	Scrutiny of phase three of WSCC's work to reduce the non-commercial network bus subsidy saw members reluctantly accepting the need for the withdrawal of funding, and recommending that the reduction be tapered.
Chingford Pond Restoration (April 2012)	Proposals to invest £348K to part fund the restoration of Chingford Ponds were thoroughly explored, with the Committee keen to understand the necessity of the work, and why the CC was required to fund it.
West Sussex Economic Strategy (April 2012)	Scrutiny of the Economic Strategy saw the Committee welcome the proposed "whole organisation" approach to fostering economic development.
Future of Mortuary Provision (June 2012)	The Committee heard the Cabinet Member's priorities for the mortuary service and Coroner, the business case for a new mortuary not being currently viable. Members stressed the need to scrutinise any emerging proposals.
FRS Efficiency Savings (June 2012)	The Fire and Rescue Service's proposals to save £2.5m by April 2013 were noted in broad "headline" terms. The Committee agreed

	to re-convene the Fire and Rescue Services Task Force to look more closely at the proposals when the necessary detail became available, and pass the recommendations back to the Cabinet Member for consideration in the context of the wider feedback arising from the public consultation.
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Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC)

HASC Membership

Chairman Margaret Whitehead

<u>Sussex Together</u> (April 2012)	HASC reviewed this Sussex-wide programme being led by the NHS in partnership with local authorities and other key stakeholders. The aim of Sussex Together is to ensure a clinically and financially sustainable NHS, and address a financial shortfall of £440m by April 2014. Any changes arising from the programme will be incorporated into Clinical Commissioning Groups' commissioning plans, and subject to local engagement and consultation. HASC will continue to monitor this issue.
<u>HASC Liaison Arrangements</u> (July 2012)	HASC agreed to continue to have liaison arrangements with NHS Trusts and other key organisations such as the voluntary sector. Where appropriate, joint liaison meetings between Scrutiny and Executive Members will be held.
<u>Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust Update on Service Redesign for Quality</u> (July 2012)	HASC monitored a number of changes made by Western Sussex Hospitals NHS Trust over the past year designed to improve the quality of services, focusing particularly on Worthing and Southlands Hospitals. A progress report on the provision of community beds in the area, satellite ophthalmology clinics, services for the frail and elderly and the future use of the inpatient Harness Block at Southlands Hospital was provided. The Committee agreed to monitor developments and asked the NHS to ensure that changes to services are communicated clearly to the public.
<u>Proactive Care</u> (July 2012)	HASC supported the new Proactive Care scheme to improve services and support for the frail elderly, which is an example of joint working between the NHS and the County Council. The new community-based care model will involve health and social care teams working closely together to support people at risk of worsening ill health and potential admission to hospital. The Committee agreed to monitor implementation and impact on service delivery
<u>Total Performance Monitoring Report</u> (July 2012)	HASC heard that the budget outturn for 2011-12 was balanced, and all Delivery Plan targets had been met. A verbal update on the latest budget and performance data showed that there are no budgetary issues of strategic concern, and that all performance targets are on track and heading in the right direction. An update on the 2012/13 position is due to be provided at the Committee's October meeting.

Policy and Resources Select Committee (PRSC)

PRSC Membership

Chairman – David Britton

Total Performance Monitor	The latest TPM is presented and scrutinised at each meeting of the Committee to ensure the corporate performance targets are being
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	<p>achieved and the financial position is on track.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April - broadly satisfied with performance and budget monitoring, further assurance was sought in relation to 2 performance targets which had not been met to ensure action was being taken to address the situation. • May - end of year performance was reported alongside the progress being made in closing the 2011/12 accounts. Committee recognised the success in achieving 29/31 performance targets. • July – outlined the end of year financial position. Members recognised the significant achievement of balancing the budget.
Outsourcing of back office functions (April 2012)	<p>Members asked a large number of detailed questions to seek assurance that the letting of the contract had included detailed investigation and analysis to ensure the contract would be successful. Members were concerned about the contract and performance management/monitoring arrangements and asked for a further report to be presented at the next meeting focussing on these areas.</p>
Outsourcing of back office functions - follow up report (May 2012)	<p>The procurement process was still underway but progress had been made since the last meeting on strengthening performance management, governance arrangements, learning from other LA's, management of risk in relation to contract failure, the £5.8m savings to be achieved and staffing concerns. After further detailed questioning Members were satisfied with the additional information provided by officers and the progress being made in developing the performance regime. They requested further information on the governance arrangements and Member involvement when this had been developed further.</p>
Scrutiny Annual Report (May 2012)	<p>The Scrutiny Annual Report was presented which outlined the performance and key achievements of scrutiny over the past year. The report was agreed and recommendations made in relation to future performance monitoring, including a quarterly newsletter.</p>
Service Fleet Vehicles Contract (July 2012)	<p>Members asked detailed questions about the options and asked for further information to be included in a procurement business case to be presented at the next meeting. Members were satisfied with the reasoning behind "in-sourcing" the contract until more information on the structure of the Future Council was known.</p>
Select Committee Work Programme (July 2012)	<p>The overall Select Committee Work Programme for 2012/13 was presented and endorsed for approval by County Council. The work programme is the culmination of a number of events, consultations and discussions to identify the key issues facing the Council Council. This included the all Member planning session held earlier in the year and input from the Youth Cabinet. The work programme therefore represents the issues facing local people. A cross-cutting Task and Finish Group was agreed to look at Services to Youth, initially focussing on preparing young people for work and life.</p>

Joint Scrutiny

A Joint Scrutiny Steering Group oversees the joint scrutiny arrangements and is made up of the scrutiny/select committee chairmen of the participating councils.

[Joint Scrutiny Membership and further details](#)

A Joint Scrutiny Task and Finish Group (TFG) was established by the West Sussex Joint Scrutiny Steering Group with the following aim:

To review and consider the performance and outcomes of the current arrangements for generalist legal advice, to consider the needs of the county and to contribute to the development of a specification for a sustainable future generalist legal advice service for the residents of West Sussex.

The TFG comprised 8 elected members – one from each District and Borough Council within the County and one from the County Council. The TFG met twice – in June and July 2012 - to consider evidence and develop recommendations. In accordance with the agreed protocol on Joint Scrutiny in West Sussex, the TFG recommendations will be presented to the relevant executive decision makers within each partner local authority via the relevant overview and scrutiny committees in those authorities. The primary recommendation from the TFG is that the existing contract with the West Sussex Citizens Advice Bureau Consortium for the provision of generalist advice should be extended for a further two years at the current level of funding. The report is due to be presented to the HASC meeting on 3rd October.

A formal evaluation of the project will be undertaken, but verbal feedback from the elected members who participated was very positive.

Task and Finish Groups

Task and Finish Groups are monitored on a quarterly basis by PRSC as part of their overarching monitoring role. The latest monitor is to be reviewed at their meeting on 11th October.

A cross-cutting Task and Finish Group (TFG) was agreed as part of the 2012/13 work programme. The TFG will look at Services for Youth, concentrating initially on preparing young people for work and life. The Chairman of the TFG is Dr James Walsh, membership of the group is to be confirmed. PRSC will be considering the appointment of a further TFG at its meeting in October.

Performance Monitoring

In order to assess the effectiveness of Scrutiny performance will be monitored on a quarterly basis. Performance indicators have been established as part of the Business Planning and Scrutiny Review process.

	CYPSSC	ECSSC	HASC	PRSC
Number of recommendations				
• Accepted	14	5	0	4
• Declined	0	0	0	0
• Awaiting a response	0	0	1	5
Number of external witnesses	0	0	4	0
Number of public attending meetings	1	1	4	1
Member attendance at meetings	85%	71%	88%	81%
Links to performance framework	5/6 83%	7/8 88%	5/6 83%	6/8 75%

Future meetings and topics to be covered

Topics to be covered in the next quarter include:

Children and Young People's Services	
Date	Likely Topics (subject to confirmation by the Business Planning Group)
4 October 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement Board Update • Total Performance Monitor • LCSB • Safeguarding Champion Annual Report
7 November 2012 (additional meeting)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Funding Reform
28 November 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Framework and Budget 2013/14 • Early intervention • Education Welfare Service • Music Education Hub • Establishment of Task Force to review progress with delivery of Education and Schools Policy

Environmental and Community Services	
Date	Likely Topics (subject to confirmation by the Business Planning Group)
27 September 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed submission draft Waste Plan • Fire and Rescue Service • Aviation Consultation • Thameslink Rail Franchise Consultation
21 November 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance of the highways maintenance contract • Performance Framework and Budget for 2013/14 • Quarter 2 Total Performance Monitor • Building for Growth: Investment in Infrastructure to support growth (Kickstart)

Health and Adult Services	
Date	Likely Topics (subject to confirmation by the Business Planning Group)
4 October 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of changes to Adult Social Care eligibility criteria/Implementation of preventative services/health and wellbeing programme/access to services for people with moderate levels of need • Sussex Together • Sussex Community NHS Trust • Total Performance Monitor • Community Legal Services Contract – report of Joint Scrutiny Task and Finish Group • BPG report
15 November 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Health Services (themed meeting) • Performance Framework and Budget 2013/14

Policy and Resources	
Date	Likely Topics (subject to confirmation by the Business Planning Group)
11 October 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract Management • Service Vehicle Fleet Contract • Quarterly Scrutiny reporting
7 November 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Strategy 2013/14
6 December 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance Framework and Budget 2013/14 • Review of income generation project

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Hard copies of any of the documents referred to in this newsletter are also available on request from Susanne Sanger. Further information is also available via the [internet](#).