



SCRUTINY NEWSLETTER (4)

January 2014



This is the fourth in the series of Scrutiny Newsletters which are intended to be produced quarterly to provide an overview of the scrutiny work programme at West Sussex County Council. This is the first Newsletter since April 2013 due to the elections and formation of new Committees.

It includes performance information, shares best practice and highlights key aspects of the work of the Council's four select committees. This newsletter covers the period from April to December 2013 and looks forward to the issues to be covered in the next quarter's meetings. It will be reviewed by the Performance and Finance Select Committee in its role of monitoring the overall scrutiny programme.

Select Committee Developments and Best Practice

There are 4 Select Committees; Children and Young People's Services, Environmental and Community Services, Health and Adult Social Care and Performance and Finance. These Committees cover particular portfolio areas and scrutinise issues within their area of responsibility.

An all Member Scrutiny Work Programme Planning Day was held on 12 September. The purpose of the day was to identify issues that Members considered a priority for scrutiny. Information was provided to Members by external contributors such as young people, Age Concern, Gatwick Diamond and Coastal West Sussex. The outcomes from this day were discussed by the Select Committees' Business Planning Groups (BPGs). A rolling work programme was agreed by PFSC in November and approved by County Council in December. Feedback from Members who attended the session welcomed the involvement of external contributors as they provided valuable information on the issues and concerns being experienced across all aspects of life in West Sussex.

2013/14 saw the introduction of 'Project Days' for Select Committees. These days are intended to provide flexibility to ensure that the Select Committees can undertake its business in the best and most timely way. They can be used for training purposes, for Task and Finish Group (TFG) meetings or can be used as an additional formal meeting if the need arises. These days have been successfully utilised for a variety of purposes; informal induction, tour of facilities, the roles, responsibilities and challenges facing West Sussex in relation to Health and Adult Social Care and a briefing on Special Education Needs and Disability service provision which all members of the Council were invited. The days have been well received by Members and have provided an informal setting to better understand their role and responsibilities and the opportunity to raise questions with senior officers.

Overview of Select Committees

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

[CYPSSC Membership](#)

Chairman [Richard Burrett](#)

Ofsted Inspection of local authority arrangements for the protection of children (June 2013)	The Committee considered the outcome of the Ofsted Inspection and how learning from the inspection is being taken forward. The Committee recommended that the Business Planning Group should analyse performance data and monitor progress against the action plan. The Committee will be kept informed of any developments.
High Needs Funding Phase 3 – Alternative Provision College (June 2013)	The Committee previewed the Cabinet Member decision on the proposed arrangements for establishing the college. The Committee heard from external witnesses and generally supported the proposals being put forward regarding the new arrangements including; the delegation of budget, 2013-14 being a transitional year on Alternative Provision, the development of a more structured framework for placements at West Sussex Further Education colleges, the fees in place and the provision of Education at Chalkhill and Beechfield. The Committee requested that the funding model being developed with colleges should be closely monitored and reported to the Committee's Business Planning Group and that the strategy for alternative provision is shared with the Committee.
Youth Support and Development Service – Bognor Area Review (June 2013)	The Committee previewed the Cabinet Member decision to reconfigure youth provision in the Bognor Regis area. External witnesses attended the meeting to provide additional insight on the proposals put forward. The Committee supported the proposals.
Options for Future Delivery of the Learning Service (September 2013)	The approach to the development and evaluation of options for the delivery of statutory duties to schools and other clients was reviewed by the Committee. The committee had a full debate on the options presented and stressed the importance of; ensuring all schools are engaged in consultation, that further consideration is given to the assessment criteria used and how options are weighted, that the Cabinet Member gives consideration to the concerns of the staff including the impact of TUPE and pension entitlement, that further detailed investigation into the option of forming a joint venture is undertaken and the needs and attainment of Special Schools be taken on board as solutions for delivery of the SENI service are developed. This agenda item was webcast.
Youth Support and Development Service Implementation of Savings (October 2013)	The Committee heard the proposals on the savings to be made in Youth Support and Development. The savings total £1.65 million. The meeting was covered by BBC South Today and was well attended by other Members, officers and public. An officer from Unison attended to represent staff in the service. The Committee supported the proposals for a budget reduction but requested that the Cabinet Member took into account the concerns raised by the Committee before making a decision and to explore the capacity for youth workers' to add value to the Think Family programme. This agenda item was webcast.

<p>Learning Improvement Strategy (October 2013)</p>	<p>The Learning Improvement Strategy sets out the ways in which the County Council and educational settings in West Sussex will work in partnership to secure the early identification of educational under-achievement and commission interventions to raise standards. The roles and responsibilities and statutory duties and powers of the County Council were also included. The Committee generally supported the strategy presented but made a number of suggestions for the Cabinet Member to consider before the decision is agreed; inclusion of expectations regarding Children's Services in the Memorandum of Understanding with Academies and Free Schools and suggesting to the West Sussex Governors' Association the need for all schools to make publicly available a method of contacting the Chair of Governors.</p>
<p>Worthing Age of Transfer (November 2013)</p>	<p>The Committee previewed the proposed Cabinet Member decision to approve the proposals in relation to introducing a two tier system of education in Worthing to bring them in line with the majority of the rest of the County. The issue has attracted media attention, therefore the meeting was webcast to enable the public to listen/watch the debate. Two Headteachers attended the meeting to provide the Committee with an understanding of how the proposal is being received in the schools it will affect. The Committee supported the principle of reorganisation subject to the results of the consultation and made the following additional recommendations for the Cabinet Member and Worthing CLC to consider; a phased approach of moving all infant and junior schools to straight through primaries if this approach is shown to be beneficial for educational attainment, consideration of catchment areas, look at ways to decrease the potential funding gap for junior schools losing Key Stage 3 funding, look at further provision for schools proposed to be expanded in pupil numbers that are currently rated as Inadequate or Requiring Improvement and look at ways to guarantee sibling admissions at the same schools.</p>
<p>Future West Sussex Commissioning Intentions and plans 2014/15 (November 2013)</p>	<p>As part of the development of commissioning intentions and plans all Select Committees received the proposed performance objectives for consideration. CYPSSC endorsed the commissioning intentions relating to its area of responsibility subject to the concerns forwarded to PFSC for consideration at its meeting.</p>

Environmental and Community Services Select Committee (ECSSC)

[ECSSC Membership](#)

Chairman [Graham Tyler](#)

<p>Rampion Windfarm Consultation Response (July 2013)</p>	<p>The Committee considered the authority's draft response to the public consultation. Evidence was heard from the developer, on the scheme itself, and the wider response to the consultation. The member within whose division the Bolney substation would be built was invited to address the Committee. The Committee suggested a number of aspects of the draft response which it felt could be expanded or made more robust, for the benefit of the affected communities. The Cabinet Member accepted all the recommendations, and used the comments to inform subsequent discussions and negotiations with EON and the Planning Inspectorate.</p>
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Aviation and Gatwick Airport	Local members from divisions most likely to be affected by any Gatwick expansion were invited to attend and speak at the meeting. The Committee made a number of comments, and ultimately recommended that the authority's response be strengthened with respect to highways and transport, capacity for local housing and associated infrastructure, and noise pollution.
Review of Parking Charges (November 2013)	The Committee declined to endorse the proposed changes to on-street parking charges. A more detailed report on the proposals will be considered by the Committee in February 2014.
Future West Sussex Commissioning Intentions and plans 2014/15 (November 2013)	The Committee were concerned about the lack of detail within the plans, and felt that the authority was generally failing to demonstrate adequate leadership. The Committee also suggested that the plans relied too heavily on Gatwick Airport for generating future economic growth, and that greater emphasis be placed on building more affordable housing.
Tour of the FRS HQ, and the Record Office	The Committee (with the wider membership also invited) undertook a tour of the Fire and Rescue Service Headquarters and the Record Office, learning about their current operations, as well as how both services might face the challenges ahead.

Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC)

[HASC Membership](#)

Chairman [Margaret Whitehead](#)

NHS 111	At its June 2013 meeting, HASC was updated on the NHS's new non-urgent 111 service, triggered by reports of a number of teething problems with the new service. Members heard how demand for the new telephone service had been higher than anticipated. Particular pressure was at peak weekend times when large numbers of people had abandoned their calls and given up trying to get through to the service. South East Coast Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust (which provides the NHS 111 Services in partnership with Harmoni) explained that more call-handlers had been recruited and that performance has now improved. The Committee welcomed the speedy response to dealing with the problems, but agreed to monitor performance and keep a close eye on complaints, to make sure the service is meeting local people's needs.
A&E Services	HASC reviewed the performance of local A&E Services in October 2013, to understand how the health and social care system is responding to pressures, given a national context of greater demands on the emergency care system, with increasing A&E attendances and admissions. Members evaluated how well the local health and social care system is responding to pressures, and heard evidence from witnesses from the NHS trusts providing and commissioning services for West Sussex residents. Whilst the Committee recognised that all NHS Trusts were working hard to improve and maintain performance in the face of significant pressures, it did identify a number of key concerns that will be monitored by the Business Planning Group, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ambulance service performance against key emergency response targets in some areas and handover delays between ambulance and hospital • The need for appropriate mental health service support in A&E • The need for people to know what other services are available

	and how to access them, to help avoiding unnecessary attendance at A&E
Dementia Services	In October 2013, HASC reviewed dementia services across West Sussex, focusing particularly on the Memory Assessment Service (set up in September 2012) and the effectiveness of measures to improve the rate of dementia diagnosis. HASC heard from representatives of the Alzheimer's Society and Carers' Support West Sussex and welcomed the significant improvements to services in recent years. The Committee acknowledged the good work carried out and recognised the challenges to be met in ensuring that people with dementia and their carers have access to the right support and services. Whilst Members welcomed the Memory Assessment Service, they were concerned that it is currently only available to people diagnosed after September 2012 – and agreed that the Committee should write to commissioners and service providers to ask them to consider extending this service to people with an existing diagnosis. HASC will be following up on this when it reviews the new draft Dementia Strategy in March 2014.
Short Breaks Services	A HASC Task and Finish Group has been scrutinising NHS proposals for the future of Continuing Health Care short breaks services for children with complex health needs and disabilities. These proposals included the potential closure of two of the units providing short breaks – the Cherries in Chichester and Holly Lodge in Horsham. Whilst the TFG had hoped that a solution could be found to keeping at least the Cherries open, it had unfortunately not been possible to find an alternative provider willing to take over the running of these services – and no new funding was available. So the TFG reluctantly accepted that both units would have to close, but has sought reassurance that the appropriate alternative provision has been put in place for all children currently using these services. HASC endorsed the TFG's final report in November 2013, and agreed that the TFG should be updated on transition arrangements in January 2014, and then reconvene in May to review the implementation of the service change and particularly the impact on children and their families/carers.
Healthwatch West Sussex	Healthwatch West Sussex is the new independent consumer champion for health and social care, and it updated HASC on its work since being established in April 2013. Its role includes signposting people to information, engaging with communities and influencing decision-makers. The Committee agreed that it should liaise with Healthwatch to try to identify opportunities for joint working in the future.
WSCC Commissioning Plans	In November 2013, the Committee endorsed the aspirations set out in the County Council's commissioning plans and performance objectives; asked for further detailed information on the financial implications of the commissioning plans and performance objectives for its meeting in January; and identified the following key areas of concern: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The capacity of the voluntary sector to take on the running of some services • The need for clarity around the timescales of the transformational change required, as this will need to be carried out at pace • The Council needs to work in partnership with the NHS to deliver the necessary transformational change

- It is important that safeguarding is recognised as a community responsibility and that it is not just about health and social care

Performance and Finance Select Committee (PFSC)

[PFSC Membership](#)

Chairman [Deborah Urquhart](#)

<p>Total Performance Monitor (TPM) (reviewed at every meeting)</p>	<p>The TPM is the means of monitoring the budget and performance position of the County Council on a monthly basis. PFSC receive the TPM at every meeting and a good level of scrutiny takes place. The Monitor contains an up-date on the projected budget position and whether performance targets are being met.</p> <p>A number of recommendations have been made to Cabinet Members, officers and Service Select Committees through the process.</p>
<p>The County Councils role in supporting the Voluntary Sector & the impact of County Council Grants (July 2013)</p>	<p>The Committee considered the governance arrangements of grants, how money is allocated, whether there is a consistent approach and how effective the County Council is in voluntary sector engagement and support. Two external witnesses attended the session to give their view of the systems and processes in place. A number of recommendations were made including the need for a single source of information regarding grants available, establishing a formal feedback mechanism to ensure VFM is achieved, that funding opportunities are investigated to ensure effective use of external funding and that information on grants is clear, consistent and accessible.</p>
<p>Financial Landscape and Strategy (October 2013)</p>	<p>A report was received outlining the national changes to Local Govt Finance and the implications for the Council in terms of its budget and income generation. The Committee supported the work being done with District and Borough Councils and stressed the importance of long term planning, particularly in relation to the continued reduction in Revenue Support Grant. The Committee encouraged further work with partner organisations, in particular the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in order to maximise efficiency.</p>
<p>Income Base (October 2013)</p>	<p>The increasing budget pressure means that the County Council should seek to ensure it receives all eligible income due and to generate additional income where it can. The findings from a consultant's report were reviewed and the Committee recommended that these were investigated further. The Committee also recommended that the County Council works to recover costs from statutory undertakers and to work with DC/BC in the pursuit of income streams.</p>
<p>Review of Capital Programme (Commercial Strategy/Build to rent) (October 2013)</p>	<p>The Committee received a report regarding the purchase of property/land for investment purposes. This links to the previous item about the generation of additional income. The Committee supported the proposal in principal and recommended that investigations take place on how this could be achieved through the delegation and establishment of the correct governance arrangements.</p>

<p>Strategic Commissioning Roadmap, Community Right to Challenge and the Social Value Act (November 2013)</p>	<p>The draft Strategic Commissioning Roadmap was presented to the Committee for review. The report also included a summary of the Community Right to Challenge and Social Value Act and the implications of these pieces of legislation on the County Council's future commissioning.</p> <p>The Committee were generally supportive of the work being done to move towards being a more commissioning focussed Authority but wanted consideration to be given to the "unintended consequences" that may arise through commissioning decisions. They stressed the need to use the legislation to help stimulate the economy and recommended that all future commissioning should include a commitment to provide work experience and apprenticeship opportunities for young people. The Committee also requested further investigation into the social care market and how this could be developed to encourage a greater choice of providers.</p>
<p>Governance of Contracts (November 2013)</p>	<p>The governance arrangements around contracts were reviewed to ensure improvements had been made since October 2012. The Committee supported the improved staff training but wanted training for Members to be developed and their role increased.</p>
<p>Future West Sussex Commissioning Intentions and Plans (December 2013)</p>	<p>As part of the development of commissioning intentions and plans all Select Committees received the proposed performance objectives for consideration. PFSC also received the concerns and issues raised by the other Service Select Committees for consideration before making recommendations to the Cabinet. The issues and concerns of all the Select Committees have been forwarded to the Cabinet for consideration before the commissioning intentions and plans are formally agreed.</p>
<p>Treasury Management - Mid Year Report (December 2013)</p>	<p>The Committee received a report outlining the performance of the treasury management process at the half year stage.</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 was established to look at Flooding by the West Sussex Joint Scrutiny Steering Group with the following aim:

To review the multi-agency responsibilities, roles, involvement in and management of major flooding incidents across West Sussex – to include during, after and between flood events.

The Group has met twice and the final report has been sent to relevant Cabinet Members, Overview and Scrutiny Committees and other interested parties. Their responses are expected by the end of February 2014 and will be reviewed at the next meeting of the Joint Steering Group.

Task and Finish Groups

Task and Finish Groups are monitored by PFSC as part of their overarching monitoring role. The [latest monitor](#) is to be reviewed at their meeting on 23 January which shows the TFGs in progress.

There are currently two cross-cutting Task and Finish Groups (TFG) in progress, which have continued from the 2012/13 work programme. The first is on Services to Youth, chaired by James Walsh, and the second is in relation to Carers, chaired by Morwen Millson.

The Carers TFG was reconvened for the second phase of its work in October 2013 (its phase one report having been discussed at the County Council meeting in June). This phase of its work is planned to run until March 2014 and will focus on Young Carers, caring for those with mental ill-health and dementia, the financial impact of caring, the issues parent carers face (including the transition process) and the impact of caring on Black and Asian Minority Ethnic residents. In October, the TFG reviewed the draft Young Carers Strategy, and welcomed a young carer to its meeting to help Members understand the specific issues they face – such as the difficulties many have in accessing social and educational activities. Overall, the TFG welcomed and endorsed the draft Strategy, and reported its recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Children & Families - Start of Life. The TFG will monitor the implementation and impact of the Strategy in one year's time.

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		PFSC	
	Qtr 1&2	Qtr 3						
Number of recommendations								
• Accepted	19	15	12	3	10	8	7	34
• Declined	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
• Awaiting a response	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6
Number of call-ins requested	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of call-ins	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Number of external witnesses involved in formal meetings	8	3	0	0	0	2	2	0
Number of public attending formal meetings	3	2	1	1	8	19	2	0
Member attendance at formal meetings	96%	88%	69%	83%	67%	95%	80%	93%
Agenda Items which link to objectives in the performance framework	4/6	5/6	6/7	2/3	1/4	4/5	3/8	13/15

Success stories

- 1) The TPM process has worked well this year with a significant level of interest and debate at PFSC meetings. The Committee has used its overarching role to refer specific areas of concern to other Select Committees, for example the referral to HASC of the continuing projected budget overspend. A wide variety of officers have been invited to contribute to the item to provide additional information to support the debate. Information has also been circulated to Committee Members after the meeting to provide additional detailed information of specific areas of concern.
- 2) Agenda items of particular interest to a wider audience have been webcast on six different occasions, by three of the four Committees, reaching a total audience of just under 3000 people. This included two meetings where the mobile webcasting equipment was used to broadcast from Committee Room 3, rather than the Council Chamber. There was positive feedback from members and witnesses about using the equipment in the Committee Room, with the less formal layout being considered helpful for the conduct of a Select Committee meeting.
- 3) The HASC "liaison member" arrangements were renewed in June 2013, with two Committee Members appointed to liaise with key organisations, including the eleven NHS trusts providing and commissioning services for West Sussex residents. Feedback from informal meetings held by liaison members is reported through to the HASC Business Planning Group, to help identify any issues for further scrutiny.
- 4) A range of external witnesses have input into the scrutiny programme at both select committee and task and finish group meetings, including: voluntary sector organisations (e.g. Alzheimer's Society), School Head Teachers, Trades Union representatives, a young carer and representatives of E.ON.

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)
January 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Funding Reform • Early Help and Prevention Strategy • 2014-15 Draft Budget
February 5 (Project Day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be confirmed
March 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration of preferred option for the future of the Learning Service

Environmental and Community Services	
Date	Likely Topics (subject to confirmation by the Business Planning Group)
January 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public and Concessionary Transport Policy • 2014-15 Draft Budget • Future Commissioning Plans to Support the Waste Strategy
February 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KickStart • Mechanical Biological Treatment Facility Performance • Model for the Future Delivery of Substance Misuse Services
March 28 (Project Day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be confirmed

Health and Adult Social Care	
Date	Likely Topics (subject to confirmation by the Business Planning Group)
January 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adults' Services • Care & Support at Home • 2014-15 Draft Budget
March 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proactive Care Programme – Progress report • Stroke Services • Access to Primary Care • Dementia Strategy

Performance and Finance	
Date	Likely Topics (subject to confirmation by the Business Planning Group)
January 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2014-15 Draft Budget • Draft Treasury Management Strategy 2014-15 • Total Performance Monitor • Strategic Estate: Establishment of a Property Management Company • Scrutiny Newsletter and Performance Monitor
February 28 (Project Day)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be confirmed
March 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Performance Framework – measures and targets • Total Performance Monitor • Review of Scrutiny year

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<p>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.</p>
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