

Rutland County Council Scrutiny Annual Report 2022-23



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Foreword

This has been an interesting and busy first year for the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee and this report details the variety of topics that have been considered by the committee throughout the municipal year, as well as the additional work done through task and finish groups and evidence panels. We hope you find the report interesting and informative.

The Chair and Vice Chair have met regularly with the Chief Executive and Strategic Directors to coordinate the work of Scrutiny, to share best practice and develop the work programme in accordance with the Committee's Terms of Reference. This Annual Report meets constitutional requirements, but it also gives us the opportunity to reflect on the year and recognise achievements, whilst thinking about how we could have done things differently. We have included some ideas on how we think Scrutiny could be improved in the next municipal year for member's consideration post May 2023.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for setting its own work programme and this is guided by the Council's agreed priorities as set out in the Rutland Corporate Strategy and the Future Rutland Vision

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the Scrutiny function this year including all Members of the Council, Officers, partners and the public.



Councillor Gale Waller
Chair
Strategic Overview and
Scrutiny Committee



Councillor Nick Begy
Vice Chair
Strategic Overview and
Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny in Rutland - Overview

The Council must have at least one overview and scrutiny committee to support the work of the Cabinet and the Council as a whole. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee allows Cabinet decisions to be examined and matters of local concern to be considered. These lead to reports and recommendations to advise the Cabinet, Partners and the Council as a whole on policies, budget and service delivery.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee also monitors the decisions of the Cabinet. It can 'call-in' a decision which has been made by the Cabinet but not yet implemented. This enables it to consider whether the decision is appropriate. It may recommend that the Cabinet reconsiders the decision. It may also be consulted by the Cabinet or the Council on forthcoming decisions and the development of policy.

The general role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as detailed in Part 2 of the RCC Constitution is to:

- a) review and/or scrutinise decisions made, or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions;
- b) review, develop or propose policies in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions.
- c) make reports and/or recommendations to the full Council and/or the Cabinet and/or any policy, joint or Area Committee in connection with the discharge of any functions.
- d) consider any matter affecting the area or its inhabitants; and
- e) exercise the right to call-in, for reconsideration, decisions made but not yet implemented by the Cabinet and/or any joint or Area Committees.
- f) discuss initiatives put forward for consideration by individual members of the Committee and any relevant 'call-for-action' in accordance with the Scrutiny Procedure Rules set out in Part 4 of this Constitution; and
- g) consider petitions referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in accordance with provisions set out in the Petition Scheme set out in Part 5 of this Constitution.
- h) Follow up on any Recommendations or reports.

According to the RCC Constitution, the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee was scheduled to hold 6 ordinary meetings during the 2022-23 municipal year. However, for its first year as a single scrutiny committee, 12 ordinary meetings were held. These included:

- The meeting that was adjourned in September and re-convened in October following the announcement of the death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II.

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- The additional meeting held in December to scrutinise the Public Bus Transport Review and the Leisure Strategy.
- The meeting held in January to scrutinise the budget.

In addition, there has been:

- One meeting of the Culture/Asset Review Task and Finish Group
- One meeting of the Customer Experience Task and Finish Group
- One meeting of the SEND Task and Finish Group
- Three meetings of the Economic Strategy Task and Finish Group
- Four meetings of the Homelessness Evidence Panel.

Further details of the topics considered by Scrutiny, along with the outcome of the Task and Finish Groups and the Homelessness Evidence Panel can be found within this report.

Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Summary of Items Considered

| DATE | REPORT TITLE | RESOLVED - That the Committee: |
|-----------------|--|---|
| July 2022 | Waste and Street Cleansing (Presentation) | a) REVIEWED and commented on the re-procurement of the integrated Waste and Streetscene services (including waste and recycling collection and disposal) contract as detailed in the Pre-Procurement Business Case. b) REVIEWED and commented on the Municipal Waste Management and Streetscene Strategy 2022-2035. c) RECOMMENDED that Cabinet ensured that the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee continued to consider initial work on waste infrastructure provision in a timely manner. d) RECOMMENDED that Cabinet established a log of customer questions relating to what to put in each bin to inform RCC's waste collection web page and future notices to residents. |
| | Access to NHS Dental Services within Rutland | Reviewed the report and identified areas for scrutinisation at the next meeting. |
| | Homelessness Evidence Panel: Scope | a) APPROVED the scoping document for the Homelessness Evidence Panel |
| | LLR CCGs Performance Data | Report For Information Only |
| October 2022 | SOSC Improvement Plan | a) AGREED that comments regarding the Improvement Plan should be sent to Governance (governance@rutland.gov.uk). b) AGREED that the Improvement Plan should be added to the Work Plan for the December meeting. |
| | Economic Development Strategy, Devolution & Levelling Up: Scoping Document | a) AGREED to proceed with the review of economic development, levelling up and devolution. b) APPROVED the scoping document for an Economic Development, Levelling Up and Devolution Evidence Panel. |
| | Portfolio Holders Briefing | a) AGREED that the Leader should provide a briefing/be questioned regarding the plans for economic development, levelling up and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs). |

| DATE | REPORT TITLE | RESOLVED - That the Committee: |
|------|---|--|
| | <p>Scrutiny Review of Public Transport Service Proposals:</p> <p>a) Scoping Document b) Timescale</p> | <p>a) AGREED not to continue with the review of the public transport service.</p> <p>b) REQUESTED to review the report on the Public Bus Transport Review, following its presentation to Cabinet on the 12th January 2023 for input regarding the proposed business plans prior to a final decision being made towards the end of 2023.</p> |
| | <p>Culture Review: Scoping Document</p> | <p>a) AGREED to move forward in principle with the Culture/Asset Review.</p> <p>b) AGREED to seek the advice of the Director of Places regarding reviewing culture as a whole or breaking it down in different phases.</p> |
| | <p>SEND Group</p> | <p>a) RECOMMENDED better communication and engagement between Strategic Director of Children and Families and Councillors.</p> |
| | <p>Access to NHS Dental Services within Rutland</p> | <p>a) NOTED that dental practitioners were independent contractors to the NHS. Many dental practices operated a mixed private/NHS model of care and all patients were free to choose what option of dental care they would prefer to receive.</p> <p>b) NOTED that the commissioning responsibility for all NHS dental services would transfer from NHSE to the Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland (LLR) Integrated Care Board on the 1st April 2023 and that the statutory responsibility for oral health improvement would remain with the local authority public health team.</p> <p>c) AGREED that NHS England – Midlands would return in a year to provide the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update regarding access to NHS dental services within Rutland.</p> <p>d) AGREED that the Committee would write to MP for Rutland and/or the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care regarding:</p> |

| DATE | REPORT TITLE | RESOLVED - That the Committee: |
|---------------|--|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The fluoridation of Rutland’s water. • The issues with the process of implementing new NHS dental premises. • The review of contract provision to encourage NHS dental workers and service providers • The possible use of Rutland Memorial Hospital to provide additional NHS dental services |
| November 2022 | Mid-Year Finance Update Report (Reports 156 & 157/2022) | a) AGREED that a review of the Council’s council tax support scheme should be undertaken for the 2024/25 financial year. |
| | Mid-Year Performance & Corporate Strategy Progress | a) AGREED that the Strategic Director for Resources would discuss with Human Resources the collation of data from staff exit interviews. |
| | LLR CCGs Performance Data | Report For Information Only |
| December 2022 | Corporate Asset Review and Strategy | Discussed Report No. 183/2022 on the Corporate Asset Review and Strategy that went to Cabinet on the 15 th November 2022 |
| | Portfolio Holder Update: Public Health | Noted the update briefing from the Portfolio Holder regarding Rutland's public health services |
| | Public Bus Transport Review | Noted the presentation and verbal update received from the Strategic Director of Places |
| | Leisure Strategy | Noted the presentation and verbal update received from the Strategic Director of Places |
| January 2023 | Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Investment Strategy 2023/24 (Report 21 & 22/2023) | The draft Treasury Management and Capital Investment Strategies were considered by Cabinet on 12 January 2023 and recommended for approval by Council on 27 February 2023. The Committee was invited to provide comments and views on the strategies prior to their consideration by Council. There were no recommendations from the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee. |
| | Draft Revenue and Capital Budget 2023/24 | The draft Revenue and Capital Budget for 2023/24 was approved by Cabinet for a three-week public consultation on Thursday, 12 January 2023. The Committee was invited to provide comments and views |

| DATE | REPORT TITLE | RESOLVED - That the Committee: |
|------------------|---|---|
| | | regarding the draft budget before the final budget was considered by Cabinet on 14 February 2023 and recommended for approval by Council on 27 February 2023. There were no recommendations from the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee. |
| | Fees and Charges 2023/24 | The Fees and Charges for 2023/24 were due to be considered by Cabinet at their meeting on 14 February 2023, for recommending to Council for approval. The Committee was invited to provide comments and views on the report prior to its consideration by Cabinet. There were no recommendations from the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee. |
| February 2023 | Portfolio Holder Update: Access to GP Services: Review of Actions | Noted the presentation and verbal update from the Portfolio Holder for Health, Wellbeing and Adult Care. |
| | Culture/Asset Review Task and Finish Group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) AGREED that the Culture/Asset Review Task and Finish Group should cease. b) AGREED that Councillor E Baines would, with the support of Governance, continue to seek information from educational establishments as to how the culture offer would be of most benefit to students and how they might become more involved. c) AGREED that, after the elections in May 2023, the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee should consider recommending the Culture/Asset Review Task and Finish Group with updated Terms of Reference following the outcome of the Council's transformation programme. |
| | Customer Experience Task and Finish Group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) AGREED that the Customer Experience Task and Finish Group should cease. b) AGREED that, after the elections in May 2023, the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee should consider recommending the Customer Experience Task and Finish Group with updated Terms of Reference following the outcome of the Council's transformation programme. |
| | Minerals Authority Contract Evidence Panel: Scope | Requested that an update on the Minerals Authority Contract should be prepared for |

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| DATE | REPORT TITLE | RESOLVED - That the Committee: |
|--|---|---|
| | Homelessness Evidence Panel: Report | consideration at the meeting of the Committee on the 20th April 2023. a) ACCEPTED the report of the Homeless Evidence Panel. b) AGREED that recommendation 6.2 of the report would be re-worded and submitted to the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 9 th March 2023 for discussion/approval. c) APPROVED the remaining recommendations (6.1, 6.3,6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 6.7, 6.8) |
| <p style="text-align: center;">March 2023</p> | LLR CCGs Performance Data | Report For Information Only |
| | Portfolio Holder Update: Visions Children Centre, Childcare Sufficiency Statement & Child Care Review | Noted the verbal update from the Portfolio Holder for Education and Children’s Services. |
| | Economic Strategy Task and Finish Group: Update | Noted the verbal update from Councillor A Brown. |
| | Levelling Up Fund Round 2 - Acceptance of Grant Funding | a) NOTED that a report would be presented to Council on 27 March 2023 with these proposed draft recommendations: A) Approves the Memorandum of Understanding for the Rutland and Melton ‘Rural Innovation in Place’ Levelling Up Funding (LUF) grant from the Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities and delegates authority to the Chief Executive and Director of Resources in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Policy, Strategy, Partnerships and Economy and Portfolio Holder for Resources to sign the agreement on behalf of Rutland County Council. B) Approves that Rutland County Council acts as the grant administrator (Accountable Body) for the Levelling Up Fund capital grant and delegates authority to the Director of Resources (s151 Officer) |

| DATE | REPORT TITLE | RESOLVED - That the Committee: |
|------|--------------|--|
| | | <p>to manage the Accountable Body function.</p> <p>C) Delegates authority to the Chief Executive and Director of Places in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Policy, Strategy, Partnerships and Economy to finalise and enter into a grant agreement between Rutland County Council (as Accountable Body) and Melton Borough Council (as grant recipient) to apportion responsibility for delivering the requirements of the Levelling Up Fund Memorandum of Understanding.</p> <p>D) Approves the use of Developer Contributions to provide £1.2 million match funding to contribute to the Rutland element of the Levelling Up Fund proposition as identified in the indicative allocations previously agreed by Cabinet.</p> <p>E) Delegates to the Director of Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Places the administration and implementation (including project delivery) of the Levelling Up Fund grant requirements and monitoring returns.</p> <p>b) ADVISED of any additional issues or areas of concerns that Council may need to consider in making an informed decision about the acceptance of the Levelling Up Fund capital grant and Rutland County Council acting as Accountable Body.</p> <p>The Committee AGREED the following recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That clarity be provided to members at Council on Monday evening around the transformation project and the potential |

| DATE | REPORT TITLE | RESOLVED - That the Committee: |
|------|---|--|
| | | <p>change in services resulting in the investment of the LUF and that benefits will be brought forward accordingly.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. That the Economic Strategy Task and Finish Group be involved in reviewing the new Baseline calculations, timelines and the GO/NO-GO gateways potentially involving Cabinet decisions. 3. That the Transformation Governance Meeting involving Group Leaders be tasked with reviewing the savings achieved by the capital expenditure under 1 above. 4. That clarity be provided to members at Council on Monday evening of the potential of extending the scope of the LUF to provide wider and deeper health provision in Oakham. 5. That Scrutiny Committee consider the LUF Project Board Terms of Reference when it comes to Cabinet later this year in order to consider the implications of whether it should be considered as a 'Very High Risk' project requiring Council approval rather than a 'High Risk' project. 6. That a member visit be considered to a Medi-Hub, similar in style to that proposed, to understand the concept and the opportunities. |
| | Highways and Speeding | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) AGREED that the Highways and Speeding Task and Finish Group should cease. b) AGREED that, after the elections in May 2023, the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee should consider re-commencing the Highways and Speeding Task and Finish Group. |
| | Homelessness Evidence Panel: Recommendation 6.2 | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) AGREED that the phrase 'domestic violence' be amended to 'domestic abuse'. b) APPROVED recommendation 6.2 of the Homelessness Evidence Panel to read as follows: 'That Cabinet, as part of its performance |

| DATE | REPORT TITLE | RESOLVED - That the Committee: |
|---------------|--|---|
| | | monitoring, review data on rehousing victims of domestic abuse to provide reassurance that the housing provided is suitable for the needs and safety of this cohort of homeless people.' |
| April 2023 | CQC Inspection Framework | Noted the presentation and verbal update from Adult Social Care Principal Social Worker and Quality Lead. |
| | Minerals Authority Contract: Update Report | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CONSIDERED the report on the first year of the contract with North Northamptonshire Council for the provision of minerals and waste planning advice to the County Council. 2. RECOMMENDED to the Leader that minerals waste was explicitly identified within a portfolio and that the Portfolio Holder and Members received a quarterly overview report regarding the progress of the minerals waste contract and the monitoring visits and that the details of the monitoring visits should be shared with the Rutland Quarry Forum. 3. RECOMMENDED that Cabinet considered the SMART objectives within the Minerals Waste Contract and developed them to be SMART i.e. more robust. 4. RECOMMENDED to Cabinet that the minimum planning conditions as detailed in the Greetham Quarry contract should be adopted as the standard for future quarrying contracts by Rutland County Council. 5. RECOMMENDED that Cabinet should undertake to investigate a plan to increase minerals monitoring and enforcement skills/resource and review potential funding through the Local Plan funds, monitoring visits and planning fees. |
| | MiCARE CQC Inspection: Outcome | Noted the presentation and verbal update from the Head of Community Care Services. |

Chair's Review (Councillor G Waller)

The Municipal Year 2022-23 saw the new Overview and Scrutiny Committee come into being. It replaced a pattern of three scrutiny committees; Children's, Adults and Health and Growth, Infrastructure and Resources. Any new system takes a while to become embedded and reducing activity to one committee will inevitably cause some grumbles as not every area of interest will be scrutinised. However, having one committee does focus thinking and encourage prioritisation. This did happen and enabled the Committee to be proactive; for example in reviewing homelessness and the minerals contract. Inevitably, though, events happen which require the Committee to be able to react. For example, one dental practice's decision to hand back their NHS contract at the end of June 2022 led to the loss of a quarter of the NHS dentistry provision in Rutland. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reacted and insisted that the NHS commissioners met with the Committee to outline their plans for meeting this deficit.

Relations between the Committee and the Council's Cabinet were positive with Cabinet members attending scrutiny to talk about specific aspects of their portfolios and sharing with the Chair and Vice-Chair issues which were likely to benefit from the Committee's attention. However, not all of the Committee's views were conveyed to Cabinet and I hope that, as the Committee becomes better established, a formal process of conveying both views and recommendations to Cabinet is established with Cabinet, in turn, having a process to report back to the Committee.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its various working groups worked best when members were committed to the topic being considered and thus spent time preparing for meetings and doing research.

Vice Chair's Review (Councillor N Begy)

This was the first year moving to one scrutiny committee and it was a year with challenges.

With this having been the final year before elections, for whatever reason engagement was low from panel members in many cases and it was difficult to get some breakout groups off the ground.

It was a year of learning and the decision has been made to trial this system for a further year and, with new members, we hope for higher engagement.

Scrutiny is key to running a successful council and member engagement is key to strong scrutiny. I hope with new leadership we will see a productive year.

Groups and Panels Summary

| Name | Membership and Chair/Lead Member | Purpose | Recommendations | Status as of May 2023 |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| Homelessness Evidence Panel | Led by Councillor Waller with Councillors Burrows, Lambert, Payne and Toseland. | <p>For members of the Council to get a better understanding of the legislation related to homelessness; how RCC responds to both legislative demands and needs of residents and make recommendations for improvement.</p> <p>For members of the Council to better understand who in Rutland is at risk of homelessness and to explore ways which might reduce such risk.</p> | <p>6.1 That the Leader of the Council designates one 'Portfolio Holder' to take the lead on housing and for that person to actively engage with his/her colleagues, as appropriate, on housing matters.</p> <p>6.2 That Cabinet, as part of its performance monitoring, review data on rehousing victims of domestic abuse to provide reassurance that the housing provided is suitable for the needs and safety of this cohort of homeless people.</p> <p>6.3 That RCC explores with its registered social landlords the possibility of increasing the number of homes in Rutland available for temporary accommodation.</p> <p>6.4 That Cabinet, as part of the Council's Asset Review, explores the options for developing new temporary</p> | <p>FINISHED</p> <p>Recommendations approved by the Scrutiny Committee on 23rd March 2023.</p> |

| Name | Membership and Chair/Lead Member | Purpose | Recommendations | Status as of May 2023 |
|------|----------------------------------|---------|---|-----------------------|
| | | | <p>accommodation in Rutland to house those who have been made homeless.</p> <p>6.5 That RCC reconsiders the development of a 'Choice Based Lettings Policy,' using learning from other councils' policies and in consultation with registered social landlords, to better meet current needs.</p> <p>6.6 That the Housing Allocations Policy be reviewed so that it is transparent and easy for applicants to use, with a user-friendly 'Customer Guide' and that it takes into consideration aspects highlighted in this report e.g. 'Means Testing' and the needs of the over 60's in the context of an increasing elderly population in Rutland and the type of accommodation they could be considered for.</p> <p>6.7 That Cabinet review the contract with Peterborough City Council for the provision of services in relation to private landlords with a view to</p> | |

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| Name | Membership and Chair/Lead Member | Purpose | Recommendations | Status as of May 2023 |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| | | | <p>improving data collection on the private sector in Rutland.</p> <p>6.8 That Cabinet review the 'Housing Services Review— Strategy and Operations Group' ensuring that it, or any successor group, has clear terms of reference and appropriate membership.</p> | |
| Minerals Authority Contract Evidence Panel | Led by Councillor Begy with Councillor G Brown. | <p>With the growing level of quarrying activity within Rutland it is important that these operations are carefully monitored and within the terms of the contract.</p> <p>Understand any current or future constraints to the contract and its operation such as specialist staffing.</p> | Following a discussion with the Strategic Director of Places, it had been agreed that a working group would not be the best way forward but that an update report would be more appropriate. | <p>CEASED</p> <p>Update report from the Strategic Director of Places to be presented to Scrutiny Committee: 20th April 2023</p> |
| Economic Strategy Task and Finish Group | Led by Councillor A Brown with Councillors Ainsley, Baines, Begy and Waller. | <p>The aim of this review is to analyse available data and experiences of other authorities to recommend key focus areas to be considered in the production of an economic development strategy. This strategy needs to align with other plans within Rutland such as the Local Plan, Local Transport Plan and Health and</p> | Engagement continues with officers with further meetings of the group planned in the Spring of 2023. | <p>ONGOING</p> |

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| Name | Membership and Chair/Lead Member | Purpose | Recommendations | Status as of May 2023 |
|--|--|--|---|-----------------------|
| | | Wellbeing Strategy so we can effectively deliver the communities 'Future Rutland' vision we have endorsed as a council. | | |
| Culture/Asset Review Task and Finish Group | Led by Councillor A Walters with Councillors Baines, Begy, Fox and Waller. | <p>On the 5th October 2022, Scrutiny Committee:</p> <p>AGREED to move forward in principle with the Culture/Asset Review.</p> <p>AGREED to seek the advice of the Director of Places regarding reviewing culture as a whole or breaking it down in different phases.</p> | <p>On the 9th February 2023, Scrutiny Committee:</p> <p>AGREED that the Culture/Asset Review Task and Finish Group should cease.</p> <p>AGREED that Councillor E Baines would, with the support of Democratic Services, continue to seek information from educational establishments as to how the culture offer would be of most benefit to students and how they might become more involved.</p> <p>AGREED that, after the elections in May 2023, the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 15th June 2023 should consider re-commencing the Culture/Asset Review Task and Finish Group with updated Terms of Reference following the outcome of the Council's transformation programme.</p> | CEASED |

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| Name | Membership and Chair/Lead Member | Purpose | Recommendations | Status as of May 2023 |
|---|---|---|---|-----------------------|
| Customer Experience Task and Finish Group | Led by Councillor Begy with Councillor K Bool | | <p>On the 9th February 2023, Scrutiny Committee:</p> <p>AGREED that the Customer Experience Task and Finish Group should cease.</p> <p>AGREED that, after the elections in May 2023, the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee should on the 15th June 2023 consider re-commencing the Customer Experience Task and Finish Group with updated Terms of Reference following the outcome of the Council's transformation programme.</p> | CEASED |
| Highways and Speeding Group | Led by Councillor P Browne with Councillor Bool | Scoping document to be produced and work to be carried out in conjunction with Parish Councils. | <p>On the 23rd March 2023, Scrutiny Committee:</p> <p>AGREED that the Highways and Speeding Task and Finish Group should cease.</p> <p>AGREED that, after the elections in May 2023, the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee should on the 15th June 2023 consider re-commencing the Highways and Speeding Task and Finish Group.</p> | CEASED |

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| Name | Membership and Chair/Lead Member | Purpose | Recommendations | Status as of May 2023 |
|------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| Public Transport Group | None identified | To provide evidence based advice to Cabinet and Council to help shape the future commissioning of bus services within Rutland. | On the 5 th October 2022, Scrutiny Committee: AGREED not to continue with the review of the public transport service. REQUESTED to review the report on the Public Bus Transport Review, following its presentation to Cabinet on the 12th January 2023 for input regarding the proposed business plans prior to a final decision being made towards the end of 2023. | CEASED (An update was instead provided directly to the Committee) |
| SEND Group | Led by Councillor Ainsley with Councillors Baines, Begy, P Browne, Payne and Webb. | Meeting held on the 15 th July 2022: SEND Group to decide if they would like to be involved in the SEND Peer Review or wait until 2023 when the new SEND guidance had been finalised and implemented. | On the 5 th October 2022, Scrutiny Committee: RECOMMENDED better communication and engagement between Strategic Director of Children and Families and Councillors. | CEASED |

Scrutiny Review

On 11 April 2022, the Council agreed to change its operational Overview and Scrutiny function, moving from three committees broadly based on directorates, to a single Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

This followed a review in the 2021-22 municipal year which identified a strong need for change to provide better value and outcomes from Scrutiny.

Some of the objectives in establishing a single Committee included:

- Establishing more informal methods of Scrutiny to facilitate greater involvement from Members beyond those appointed to the Committee.
- Ensuring better communication between Scrutiny and the Executive including informal discussions on potential items for review.
- Better focused Scrutiny undertaking detailed examination of certain items.
- Enabling Scrutiny to become more strategic and better able to examine cross-directorate themes based on those of the Corporate Strategy.
- Delivering work of genuine value and relevance to the work of the wider Council and not stuck in unnecessary bureaucracy and meetings.

As part of the resolution, it was agreed that there would be a review done within the first year on the effectiveness of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee in delivering its set objectives.

The review consisted of:

1. A whole membership consultation and involvement process by way of an online survey.
2. A questionnaire seeking the views from other stakeholders including senior officers, officers who had supported or reported to the Committee and external partners who had been involved with Overview and Scrutiny at Rutland.
3. A report to the Constitution Commission on the 2nd February 2023.
4. A report to [Council](#) on the 27th March 2023, with proposed amendments to take effect from May 2023.

The findings from the work done for the review helped identify if some of the Committee's key responsibilities had been met during the Municipal year:

| Responsibility | Finding |
|---|---|
| Review and/or scrutinise decisions made, or actions taken in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions. | A number of updates on various Council areas have been received by the Committee. |

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| Responsibility | Finding |
|---|--|
| Review, develop or propose policies in connection with the discharge of any of the Council's functions. | The only agreed direct recommendations concerning Council policy have come from the Homelessness Evidence Panel and on Waste management early in the municipal year. |
| Conduct research, community and other consultation in the analysis of policy issues and possible options. | <p>Wider community consultation has not taken place with regard to the work of the Committee and its groups, although the opportunity to do was available with several groups that did not proceed.</p> <p>The Committee and its groups have not undertaken community or other consultation in this year. Several proposed groups that did not proceed may have involved community consultation.</p> |
| Consider and implement mechanisms to encourage and enhance community participation in the development of policy options. | As above this has not taken place. |
| Question members of the Cabinet and/or Committees and senior officers about their views on issues and proposals affecting Rutland. | All members of the Cabinet have attended and taken questions from the Committee on at least one occasion. |
| Liaise, review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the Scrutiny Committee and local people about their activities and performance; and | This has been undertaken with regard to dentistry and certain services via the Homelessness Evidence Panel only. |
| Review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas; | The Committee has received a performance report but only one recommendation regarding collection of one indicator was suggested. |

Looking Ahead

During the review, concerns were raised by members and officers over the effectiveness of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee. As a result, Council agreed the following recommendations for implementation after the elections in May 2023:

1. That the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee develop and implement an improvement plan addressing areas of concern early in the new municipal year.
2. That as part of the 2023 Member Induction, all Councillors, regardless of role, be mandated to attend relevant training events on the role of scrutiny and the skills required.
3. That the membership of the Committee remained at nine elected Members, with effect from Annual Council in May 2023.

It is planned that these recommendations will provide an opportunity to address those concerns and improve the effectiveness of the Strategic Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the next municipal year.

Further Information

If you would like further information about Overview and Scrutiny, please use the contact details below:

Democratic Services
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Rutland LE15 6HP

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A large print version of this document is available on request.



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