



<b>Report of:</b>	<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Councillor John Ibison, Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Council	22 April 2021

## **Overview and Scrutiny Committee: Annual Report 2020/21**

### **1. Purpose of Report**

- 1.1** To inform Council about the work that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undertaken since the last periodic report was submitted on 3 October 2019.

### **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1** That the report be noted.

### **3. Background**

- 3.1** Since the last periodic report to Council the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has met on eight occasions (four in 2019/2020 and four in 2020/21).
- 3.2** The unprecedented global Covid-19 pandemic resulted in the cancellation of five scheduled meetings. The meetings that were conducted before March 2020 and the subsequent meetings, in the latter half of 2020 and the start of 2021, have enabled the committee to complete necessary task group work and begin to plan for 2021/22.
- 3.3** Despite the unavoidable disruption caused by the pandemic, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has some valuable work to report to Council.
- 3.4** In recent years the committee's Annual Scrutiny report has been presented to Council as a periodic report, but on this occasion the report has reverted to the more traditional Annual Report format (see Appendix 1).

<b>Financial and legal implications</b>	
Finance	There are no financial implications associated with this report.
Legal	There are no legal implications associated with this report.

### **Other risks/implications: checklist**

If there are significant implications arising from this report on any issues marked with a ✓ below, the report author will have consulted with the appropriate specialist officers on those implications and addressed them in the body of the report. There are no significant implications arising directly from this report, for those issues marked with a x.

<b>risks/implications</b>	<b>✓ / x</b>
community safety	x
equality and diversity	x
sustainability	x
health and safety	x

<b>risks/implications</b>	<b>✓ / x</b>
asset management	x
climate change	x
ICT	x
data protection	x

### **Processing Personal Data**

In addition to considering data protection along with the other risks/ implications, the report author will need to decide if a 'privacy impact assessment (PIA)' is also required. If the decision(s) recommended in this report will result in the collection and processing of personal data for the first time (i.e. purchase of a new system, a new working arrangement with a third party) a PIA will need to have been completed and signed off by Data Protection Officer before the decision is taken in compliance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

report author	telephone no.	email	date
Marianne Unwin, Assistant Democratic Services Officer	01253 887326	Marianne.Unwin@wyre.gov.uk	22/03/2021

<b>List of background papers:</b>		
name of document	date	where available for inspection
N/a		

### **List of appendices:**

Appendix 1 Scrutiny Annual Report



# Annual Report

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Covering the period October 2019 to April 2021**



## **Chairman's foreword.**

### **Overview and Scrutiny Chairman 2020/21: Councillor John Ibison**



**“The threat of the Covid-19 pandemic had a dramatic effect on all our personal lives and the council. Therefore, Overview and Scrutiny Committee (O&S) has not undertaken the greater portion of what we set out to achieve before the pandemic struck. However after a period without meetings, virtual meetings have commenced and the committee is hoping to further develop this new method of working.**

**It must be noted that our officers be congratulated for their hard work and commitment to the borough this past year. Many have had to fundamentally change their methods of working and embrace new roles and responsibilities.**

**My hope is that we will soon be able to return to a new normal where we will be able to take stock, learn from our experiences of lockdown and review the priorities of our community and that of the council. I am confident that O&S is ready to do its part to ensure the best for Wyre residents.”**

## **1. What is Overview and Scrutiny?**

### **The purpose of scrutiny – the critical friend.**

- 1.1** The principal power of an O&S committee is to influence the policies and decisions made by the council and other organisations involved in delivering public services. The O&S committee gathers evidence on issues affecting local people and makes recommendations based on its findings.
- 1.2** A major function of councillors is to scrutinise and check the work of the executive and where necessary call the Cabinet or its members to account publically for their actions.
- 1.3** The O&S committee is not a decision making body. However, the provisions in the Local Government Act 2000, which would hold the executive to account, were as important as the choice of executive model. Snape et al., (2000) expressed “Overview and scrutiny is potentially the most exciting and powerful element of the entire local government modernisation process. It places members at the heart of policy-making and... is the mechanism by which councillors can become powerful and influential politicians”.
- 1.4** The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny have created four principles of good scrutiny, which are at the heart of scrutiny here at Wyre Council:
  - provide constructive “critical friend” challenge;
  - amplify the voice and concerns of the public;
  - be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role;
  - drive improvement in public services.
- 1.5** O&S Committee welcomes suggestions from councillors and the general public regarding issues that could be investigated. The Committee aims to consult with the public, councillors and officers each year and their suggestions are considered for the Annual Work Programme.

## **2. Overview and Scrutiny at Wyre**

### **Committee Membership 2020/21**

**2.1** The committee consists of 14 members of the Council.

**2.2** The political make-up of the committee is as follows:

11 Conservative Councillors, two Labour Councillors, and one Wyre Alliance Councillor.

### **Functions**

**2.4** The Committee will discharge the functions conferred by Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 or Regulations under Section 32 of the Local Government Act 2000.

**2.5** In addition, the committee will:

(i) assist the Council and the Cabinet in the development of its budget and policies;

(ii) challenge the boundaries of existing policies and think creatively about possible new policies or solutions to problems;

(iii) conduct research, community and other consultation and consider possible options;

(iv) make a positive contribution to the improvement of services;

(v) liaise with external organisations operating in the area, to ensure that the interests of local people are enhanced by collaborative working;

(vi) review and scrutinise the decisions made by and performance of the Cabinet or individual portfolio holders and by council officers where decisions have been delegated, both in relation to individual decisions and over time;

(vii) review and scrutinise the performance of the Cabinet in relation to the Council's policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas;

(viii) make recommendations to the Cabinet and/or the Council arising from the scrutiny process.

(ix) undertake the Council's statutory requirements to scrutinise the Crime and Disorder partnership.

(x) consider any Councillor Call for Action (CCfA) submitted to it by the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager. If appropriate, the Committee will make recommendations to the Cabinet, in accordance with the procedures set out in the Council's CCfA Scheme (Part 5.09).



### **3. Committee Meetings October 2019 – March 2021**

**3.1** On 8 January 2018 Councillor Ibison was elected as Chairman of the Committee, and has remained in that role since. Councillor Matthew Vincent was also elected to continue as Vice Chairman.

**3.2** The committee's work has focused on the delivery of the annual Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme. The committee's Work Programme has remained sufficiently flexible to accommodate other issues as and when they have arisen.

#### **3.3 Invited Attendees from October 2019 – March 2021:-**

- Carl Green, Head of Engineering Services x 1
- Chief Inspector Chris Hardy, Lancashire Constabulary x 1
- Clare James, Corporate Director Resources and Section 151 Officer x 4
- Councillor David Henderson, Leader of the Council x 3
- Councillor Roger Berry, Neighbourhood Services and Community Safety Portfolio Holder x 3
- David McArthur, Housing Services Manager x 1
- David Thow, Head of Planning Services x 1
- Garry Payne, Chief Executive x 4
- Inspector Kevin Lister, Wyre Neighbourhood Inspector x 1
- Inspector Richard Hurt, Lancashire Constabulary x 1
- Marianne Hesketh, Corporate Director Communities x 3
- Neil Greenwood, Head of Environmental Health & Community Safety x 3
- Pamela Holroyd, Housing Options Team Leader x 1
- Police Constable Paul Parkes, Counter Terrorism Policing North West-Cumbria & Lancashire x 1

#### **3.4 Agenda Items between October 2019 – March 2021:**

- MyHomeChoice - review task group recommendations
- Homelessness and Rough Sleeper Strategy – consultation
- O&S Work Programme 2019/20 - update report
- Neighbourhood policing
- Review of fees and charges 2020/21
- Cost profiles - benchmarking results 2019/20
- Business Plan 2019/20 - Quarterly performance statements
- Business Plan 2020/21
- Scrutiny of performance
- Flooding Task Group - review of implementation of recommendations
- Wyre Community Safety Partnership- annual scrutiny review x 2
- Small businesses and Wyre's High Streets
- Resident Car Parking Permit Scheme Task Group – draft report

- Leadership Essentials: Effective Scrutiny – feedback
- Covid-19 update
- Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/21 - update and planning
- Review of fees and charges 2021/22
- Cost profiles - benchmarking results 2020/21
- Annual schedule of planned investment in assets- 2020/21
- Business Plan 2021/22
- Treasury management
- Business Plan 2020/21 – Quarterly Performance Statement
- Update on Tourism and Visitor Services
- PREVENT- LGA guidance

**3.5** All non-executive Councillors will normally be invited to express an interest in being a member of a Task and Finish Group. The membership of each Task and Finish Group will then be decided either by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee or by a mechanism agreed by the Committee. There is no requirement for Task and Finish Groups to be politically balanced. If any members have questions regarding task groups, please contact Democratic Services.

## **4. Task Groups**

### **Task Groups 2019/20 – 2020/21**

#### **4.1 Resident Parking Permit Scheme Task Group**

Started September 2019 - concluded February 2020

**The task group made eleven recommendations to Cabinet, of which the following were accepted:**

**7.** That if a resident changes their vehicle within six months of purchasing a permit, a replacement could be available to purchase at a reduced cost – Cabinet agreed a fee of £12.

**9.** That the revised Resident Parking Permit Scheme be publicised widely throughout the borough so that all residents are aware of it and have the opportunity to take part in it.

**10.** That the implementation of the recommendations agreed by the Cabinet be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee after twelve months.

**11.** That the impact of the changes to the Resident Parking Permit Scheme, including the impact of any changes made regarding Blue Badge holders, be reviewed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee two years after the revised scheme has come into operation.

#### **4.2 Poulton-Fleetwood Link Task Group**

Started April 2019 - partially concluded February 2020 (waiting for more information from key stake holders).

#### **4.3 District Environmental Enforcement Task Group**

October 2019 - to be reinstated. Work paused due to the pandemic.

#### **4.4 Citizens Advice Review Task Group**

February 2021 - to be concluded at the end of March and to be submitted to Cabinet in June 2021.

#### **4.5 Review of Wyre's Call-In Procedures Task Group**

To be started.

## 5. Call-in Meetings

### Call-in 15.12.2020

#### 5.1 Additional contract variation for Fylde Coast YMCA to facilitate the recovery of leisure centre provision- call-in

In December 2020 there was a call-in meeting.

The meeting was broadcast live to YouTube and was very well attended by members of the public.

The Call-In was not supported.

## 6. Outside Scrutiny Commitments

#### 6.1 Councillor Emma Ellison and Councillor Ballard - Chair and Vice Chair of the North West Strategic Scrutiny Network.

The Strategic Scrutiny Network is part of North West Employers core membership offer and is designed to support councillors in the development of their scrutiny function and role, share good practice and highlight local and national drivers.

#### 6.2 Councillor Matthew Vincent - Lancashire Enterprise Partnership Scrutiny Committee.

The Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is a strategic collaboration between business, universities and local councils, which directs economic growth and drives job creation.

#### 6.3 Councillor Robinson - Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee (Co-opted member).

The Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee scrutinises matters relating to health and adult social care delivered by the authority, the National Health Service and other relevant partners. The Committee shall include twelve non-voting Co-opted district council Members.

#### 6.4 Councillor Berry and Councillor Le Marinel - Lancashire Police and Crime Panel.

The Police and Crime Panel (PCP) have the power to scrutinise Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) activities, including the ability to review the Police and Crime Plan and annual report, request PCC papers and call PCCs and the Chief Constable to public hearings. The PCP can also veto decisions on the local precept and the appointment of a new Chief Constable.

## **7. Training and Development – Looking to the future.**

### **Training and Development**

- 7.1** Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have attended several courses run by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny, LGA and LGiU.
- 7.2** Scrutiny members have been regular attenders at the North West Strategic Scrutiny Network, coordinated by North West Employers. This is a forum, which is held three times a year, to discuss and promote best practice in scrutiny.
- 7.3** Currently a scrutiny review is taking place, facilitated by the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny. Once the findings of this review is completed, the report will be presented to O&S and a future task group may commence to review the conclusions.

### **Future Work**

#### **7.4 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2021/22**

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2021/22, including both proposed Task and Finish Group reviews and key issues for consideration, will be reviewed at every meeting of the committee. The programme will be developed after taking into account the views of the Cabinet, Corporate Management Team, members of the Committee and following consultation with all Councillors.

A reminder that, as per the constitution, any Councillor shall be entitled to give notice to the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager that they wish an item relevant to the functions of an Overview and Scrutiny to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting of the Committee. On receipt of such a request, the Democratic Services and Scrutiny Manager will consult with the Chairman (or in their absence the Vice-Chairman) who will decide whether or not the item will be included on an Agenda for a meeting of the Committee. If an item is included on the agenda, the Councillor requesting it will be entitled to speak at that meeting.