

Allerdale
borough council

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Annual Summary 2020 - 21

“Allerdale – a great place to live, work and visit”

Foreword

Although it's now twenty years since Overview & Scrutiny Committees were first introduced by Local Government Act 2000, it's fair to say that their role is still not widely understood. This is something which I hope the Member Development Working Group will pick up, for non-members of the Committee, as used constructively, the overview and scrutiny process can enhance the ability of non-executive members to influence the development of Council policy and ensure that the Council is "doing the right things".

By the time this Report is presented, it may be that the Secretary of State has determined what he intends the future structure of our local Government(s) to be, in Cumbria. That's something the Committee was bearing in mind when considering the work programme for 2021-22:

- Youth, and our role as a collective parent to youngsters who have had a very rough time over the last eighteen months;
- Local communities and places and how they can relate to and be served in a much bigger local Council area;
- Culture Leisure Recreation and Sport and its place in any new Council structures and provision.

It's important that we are clear what legacy we wish to leave to our successors, although ultimately, it's for them to decide.

One other new development just taking off is the resetting of collaboration between Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Audit Committee, the subject of a recent report by the Centre for Governance & Scrutiny. A reference from Overview & Scrutiny to Audit is mentioned in the body of the Report, and no doubt there will be more as Overview & Scrutiny develops its capability to help Audit Committee in the key roles of assuring Value for Money and developing the Annual Governance Statement.

It could be an interesting year ahead.

Councillor Michael Heaslip

Co-Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Committee membership 2020-2021

The Committee consists of twelve members. During 2020-2021 the members were:

Councillor Antony Annison	Councillor Michael Heaslip
Councillor Carmel Bell	Councillor Joe Holliday
Councillor John Crouch	Councillor Daniel Horsley
Councillor Allan Daniels	Councillor Adrian Kirkbride
Councillor Malcolm Grainger	Councillor Carni McCarron-Holmes
Councillor Iain Greaney	Councillor Paul Scott

The Committee wishes to recognise the significant commitment, experience and knowledge Councillor Joe Holliday brought to its proceedings before he passed away during the year.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee met ten times during 2020/21. The Committee considered a wide variety of subjects over the course of those meetings as indicated below.

At the meeting on 19 June 2020, the new Committee members were introduced, received a presentation on the Council Strategy and considered the work programme for the year.

At the meeting on 17 July, the Committee considered its annual review of the Community Safety Partnership and the responses to the pandemic.

At the meeting on 28 August, the Committee focused on the current Maryport programmes, and the legal test for a Public Spaces Protection Order relating to dog fouling.

At the meeting on 16 October, the Committee considered the Resilient Communities and Economic Growth strategies.

At the meeting on 6 November, the Committee held a special meeting focusing on the local government reorganisation proposals for Cumbria.

At the meeting on 27 November, the Committee considered the draft Waste and Recycling Policy.

At the meeting on 15 January 2021, the Committee considered the progress of the Climate Change Group and further considered the Resilient Communities strategy.

At the meeting on 26 February, the Committee received a presentation on the project management system and further considered the Economic Recovery and Growth Strategy.

At the meeting on 26 March, the Committee considered the progress of the programmes in Workington and Maryport.

At the meeting on 23 April, the Committee heard updates from some of the Council's representatives to outside bodies and considered the final drafts of the draft Council Delivery Plan and the Economic Recovery and Growth Strategy.

Task and Finish Group activity

The Committee had agreed in previous years that each task and finish group will include at least one person from the Committee as a member and the chair of the group, however the aim is always to involve the wider membership with all members encouraged to take part in task and finish groups according to their interests and/or knowledge.

The groups which met during the year are summarised below:

Procurement Task and Finish Group

The group focused on the procurement process followed in the selection of contractors for waste collection and recycling, street cleaning and grass cutting. The group heard from officers involved throughout the process. The group concluded by producing a report with 17 recommendations which was presented to and accepted by Executive. The report was also commended by the Council's external auditor who recommended it should be overseen for implementation by the Council's Audit Committee.

The group consisted of Councillor Carmel Bell (chair), Councillor Malcolm Grainger (vice chair), Councillor Iain Greaney, and Councillor Sally Lansbury.

Response to the Pandemic Task and Finish Group

This group was established to consider aspects of the Council's response to the pandemic and ran separate sets of sessions to explore three topics: the practical response of dealing with the pandemic in the first weeks, the effect of the pandemic on young people and communities and the proposals for council staffing and delivery

of services beyond the pandemic. A short report with recommendations has been produced for each iteration.

The group consisted of Councillor Michael Heaslip (chair), Councillor Peter Kendall, Councillor Elaine Lynch, Councillor Carni McCarron-Holmes and Councillor Paul Scott.

Budget Task and Finish Group

The group considered summaries of bids for recurring growth, non-recurring growth, recurring savings, non-recurring savings, and other financial proposals and changes, all of which had been considered at a series of budget review meetings.

While the group had questions about particular aspects of the figures, the primary concern focused on was whether the proposed budget would help to deliver the Council Strategy.

The group consisted of Councillor Michael Heaslip (chair), Councillor Elaine Lynch, Councillor Alan Smith and Councillor Will Wilkinson.

Working in conjunction with Audit and Risk Committee

The Co-Chairs met with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Audit Committee during the year to explore the relationship of the two committees in terms of their respective remits, potential areas of collaboration and clarifying aspects of possible confusion in trying to determine the similarities and differences of the two committees.

Future work programme

The work programme is reviewed by the Committee at each business meeting to ensure that it remains up to date and any changing circumstances or additional emerging topics are considered.

More information on the scrutiny function, including agendas, minutes, ongoing review work, and Councillor details can be found on the Council's website at www.allerdale.gov.uk