

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2018/19**

## FOREWORD FROM THE 2018/19 CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY, COUNCILLOR ADRIAN LYTHGOE



This Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report highlights the activity and work of the committee and the Task and Finish Groups. It is important for scrutiny members to be involved in decisions at an early stage to ensure they influence the decision-making process and play an important role of 'critical friend'.

I am particularly pleased this year by the work done and progress made on performance management performance management as this work nears completion. As part of this process it was particularly pleasing and informative to meet with senior managers, Christine Lamb and Clare Law to gain further insight into the good work being done and the challenges they face within their areas.

It is a pleasure to work with the task and finish groups as there is such good cooperation and positive input from all members regardless of political persuasion and officers but particularly Jenni Cook whose initiative, efficiency and organisational ability makes running this committee and the Task and Finish groups very straightforward. The Scrutiny in a Day method continues to be an effective and efficient way of dealing with some issues and is now something that is firmly embedded in our practice.

We are grateful for those external to the Council who gave up their time to attend meetings and who have contributed to the work of both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Task and Finish Groups.

As always, I would like to thank all members and officers.

## MESSAGE FROM COUNCILLOR SEAN SERRIDGE – PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR REGULATORY SERVICES 2018/19



Overview and Scrutiny is a crucial process that ensures we are delivering both Council services and those services of its partners in an appropriate way.

The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee continues to support and at the same time, challenge the Cabinet in providing assurance in respect of policy development and review across the Council and its partners, acting as a 'critical friend'.

Both councillors and officers continue to work together in these difficult and challenging times ahead to ensure the best provision of services for the people of Rossendale and I have confidence that the scrutiny process will make sure we do this.

## 1. Overview and Scrutiny – The Basics

- 1.1 The Overview and Scrutiny process is a way of achieving open and democratic accountability for the provision of public services.
- 1.2 All local authorities operating a Cabinet and Scrutiny model have a Cabinet made up of the Leader of the Council and, in Rossendale, there are five other members who make up the Cabinet.
- 1.3 The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) role is carried out by non-Cabinet members. In Rossendale we have one politically balanced committee made up of 10 members and one co-opted member.
- 1.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is supported by one officer who works 30 hours per week in Committee and Member Services.
- 1.5 Overview and Scrutiny is not a decision making body, but is a body which monitors and influences those that are, i.e. the Cabinet. Overview and Scrutiny report their work back to Cabinet who then decide whether recommendations will be accepted, and if not, why not.
- 1.6 In Rossendale the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a role in performance monitoring, which enables members to scrutinise detailed performance reports on a quarterly basis.
- 1.7 Scrutiny members/non-Cabinet members undertake reviews which are called Task and Finish Groups (T&F). These are usually made up of 5 members who are asked to look in-depth at particular issues and make recommendations which may suggest a change in policy or service provision.
- 1.8 Overview and Scrutiny is not a mechanism for the investigation or settling of individual complaints from the public or members. The Council has a separate complaints process and a member enquiry service. Nor can Overview and Scrutiny look at individual planning or licensing decisions.
- 1.9 Overview and Scrutiny welcomes suggestions from councillors and the general public regarding issues that could be investigated. Committee and Member Services consult with the public, councillors and managers each year and their suggestions are considered for the Annual Work Programme.

## 2. Work carried out in 2018/19

### 2.1 Quarterly Performance Reports

The new format of the Quarterly Performance continues to be well-received by members. It is a work in progress and feedback continues to be given and implemented with regards to the layout and targets. Whilst the major changes in content and format will soon be finalised this is something that will continue to evolve as needs and circumstances change.

### 2.2 Other Reports

The committee received a variety of reports during 2018/19 with some of them being part of the annual work programme and some being brought to O&S for a specific reason and discussion, including:-

- Annual Equality Report
- Local Government Ombudsman Annual Letter and Council Feedback (Complaints) Update.
- HR Policies
- The Prevention of Homelessness Strategy and Review 2018-2023
- Disabled Facilities Grant Policy
- Customer and Digital Strategy
- Adoption of a Temporary Accommodation Policy

## 3. External Scrutiny

3.1 The committee received a number of presentations from external organisations as follows, which are summarised below.

### Lancashire Constabulary – Crime Figures

3.2 As set out in the O&S Terms of Reference, the committee monitors crime and disorder issues and under the Police and Justice Act and related statutory guidance from the Home Office on the scrutiny of crime and disorder, Lancashire Police are invited to the committee each year to give a presentation on performance and progress against crime indicators. Inspector Clarke attended in January 2019 and presented an analysis of the crime figures. The update was discussed by members.

### Rossendale Leisure Trust (RLT) Update

3.3 Rossendale Leisure Trust presented their annual update in January 2019 via a YouTube video, accompanied by a short summary document. The video was very well received and informed members of the Trust's key achievements during the year.

### Community Leisure Association Whitworth (CLAW)

3.4 CLAW provided the committee with an update in January 2019 and the report highlighted their key achievements and challenges.

3.5 Transdev

Transdev agreed to attend the March 2019, taking the slot that Rosso used to attend. This update provided members with information on achievements and was an opportunity to raise any issues. It should be noted that Transdev were not obliged to attend the O&S Committee.

3.6 Updates were also received from grant recipients:-

- Bacup Credit Union
- First Choice Credit Union
- Citizens Advice

**4. Task and Finish Group work in 2018/19**

4.1 Task and Finish Groups are established by the O&S Committee to conduct an in-depth review of any service, policy or issue that affects the borough. Usually there are five politically balanced members (non-Cabinet Members) and at the first meeting a Chair and Terms of Reference are agreed. Only two groups are able to operate at the same time.

4.2 Excess Winter Deaths

This Group was established following publication of the 2015/16 winter death figures. The Group took a new approach to investigation and tried a 'Scrutiny in a Day' approach. The report was put before O&S in June 2018 and endorsed by the Cabinet. An update from East Lancashire CCG is scheduled for September 2019 to inform members of how the Health and Wellbeing Plan has been implemented.

4.3 Holiday Hunger

This Group was established following a motion put to Full Council in September 2018 and utilised the 'Scrutiny in a Day method'. It is clear that this is not a quick or easy issue to resolve. The Group has recommended that a pilot scheme be established to look at ensuring there is a constant source of fresh food available to those who need it. It should be noted that this is not a service that the Council is responsible for, however, the Communities Team should be able to provide co-ordinating assistance to enable schools and community, voluntary and faith sectors to work together.

**5. Issues for 2019/20**

5.1 Members should consider topics for Task and Finish Groups and also the format of the groups. The 'Scrutiny in a Day' continues to be an efficient method, however, it should be noted that this may not be a suitable format for all Task and Finish Groups.

**6. 2019/20 Meetings and Work Programme**

- 6.1 The O&S Committee meetings for 2019/20 are confirmed and listed in the Committee Schedule. The O&S Committees take place at 6.30pm in the Council Chamber.
- 6.2 As per last year, the September meeting has been moved to mid-month to allow additional report preparation time following the summer period.
- 6.3 The Work Programme is a separate document and sets out the basic work to be carried out by O&S Committee during 2019/20. This will include the usual updates from partners, quarterly performance reports, task and finish items and any other policies or items as they arise. This will be taken to Full Council, along with this report in July 2019.