Appendix 2

Overview & Scrutiny Committee
End of Term Report 2019/20

Chair's Introduction

Traditionally, scrutiny provides the main opportunity for opposition members to influence the administration's policies. However, this year, there has been a much more collaborative approach. This was particularly evident regarding the Climate Emergency actions, which have been a major part of the council's developmental work. With all parties involved in the Climate Emergency Working Party, scrutiny has focused on detail and implementation rather than the overall direction of travel.

This collaborative approach was also evident by Executive seriously engaging with scrutiny's comments and recommendations (see below); almost always they either agreed the recommendations or decided on sensible alternative actions. Also, not in the summary below, are the numerous questions raised by groups calling-in executive items that led to changes to reports prior to the scrutiny meetings. Although active and engaged during meetings, I would have preferred more items called in by members of the administration.

During the year, I've become aware of the desirability of several procedural changes. These include greater transparency regarding public speaking to the committee. I welcome involvement from members of the public as they may have expertise and can provide powerful testimony. The anti-Semitism discussion on 11th February was greatly helped in this way. Similarly, on 20th August a carer of a wheelchair user graphically described the challenges facing disabled users of the council's public conveniences. With committee services and the chair of F&A, we have agreed that residents need to request to speak by noon the previous day; but I would like this to be known more widely. Going forwards, for contentious issues, O&S may proactively wish to seek opposing views from residents. In the first few meetings there were very late adjustments to the proposed order of agenda items. Again, with committee services and the F&S chair, this has been tightened.

Unlike most recent years, O&S did not form any task and finish groups; it did not seem appropriate for O&S to initiate further developments with the substantial additional work required of officers associated with the Climate Emergency. Now with COVID-19 dominating all our lives, the task of scrutiny over the next few months appears to be to focus on the council's response to various aspects of the pandemic as well as addressing the climate emergency. This is a substantial task as: the council is rapidly adopting new ways of working; some council officers are under immense pressure; and the council is preparing for post COVID-19 recovery including major projects of its own.

At the start of the year, all parties agreed to consider changing governance arrangements to enable greater involvement of 'backbench' members in determining council policy. This would have a major impact on O&S going forwards. However, various reasons including the general election delayed these discussions, so formal implementation cannot be before May 2021. In the year up to that date, I'm keen that shadow portfolio groups have greater scrutiny roles and that O&S takes a more strategic approach focussing on major issues.

Cont….

I would like to thank all officers who have supported O&S and guided me through the required procedures. Also thanks go to the officers and portfolio holders who have presented written evidence and spoken to the committee. Their careful engagement and willingness to consider alternatives have made this a productive year.

Councillor Ian Davison

Items considered by Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2019/20

Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme Items

2019:
Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee
Affordable Housing Delivery
Review of Council's Sustainability and Climate Change Approach
Finance – Service Area Update
Review of Night Noise Service
Review if Housing Services – Service Area Update
Shared Environmental Enforcement with Rugby Borough Council
Public Convenience Review Timetable
Neighbourhood Services – Service Review
Development Portfolio – Service Review
Summary of the role, responsibilities and performance of the South Warwickshire Community Safety Partnership (SWCSP)
Green Space Quality Audit
Environment and Business Portfolio – Service Review
Update on the Council's Brexit Preparations
Review of Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2018/19

2020:
Chief Executive's Office – Service Area Review

Routine Items

Review of the Work Programme, Forward Plan and Comments from the Executive

Executive Items Considered by the Committee

(This section details the comments and recommendations made by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to the Executive on reports being considered by the Executive. The decisions made at the Executive meeting have been detailed if the decision was different to the recommendations in the report.)

9 July 2019:

Affordable housing purchase – Montague Road, Warwick

The Committee welcomed the report for a number of reasons but primarily because it was a way of achieving a reduction in the Council's waiting list.

WDC Discretionary Housing Payment Policy Review

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Plastic Free Resolution for Leamington & Warwick and plastics Policy Update

The Committee welcomed the report and supported the recommendation and urged that speedy progress be made to go further. The Committee also recommended that the words "plastic free" were replaced with "single-use plastic free".

Response from the Executive:
The recommendation from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to replace the words "plastic free" with "single-use plastic free" was rejected. Instead, an additional recommendation was approved, to read *"authority is delegated to the Head of Health & Community Protection in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Health & Community Protection and Business & Environment, and Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee to agree on a suitable re-wording."*

This was because the proposal from the Committee would have required significant changes to the report and instead, this additional recommendation would enable a dialogue to take place in order to ensure the aim was achieved.

Commonwealth Games 2022 (CG 2022) – CWLEP funding bid

The Committee welcomed the report and supported the recommendations.

20 August 2019:

Warwick District Leisure Development Programme – Kenilworth Facilities

A motion to support the recommendations in the report resulted in a tied vote, with the Chair using his casting vote to abstain. With no further motion forthcoming, the Committee noted the report.

Response from the Executive:
The recommendations in the report were approved.
Note: The Executive would support and encourage Kenilworth Town Council if it was minded to consider putting forward a proposal for an outdoor lido in Kenilworth.

Newbold Comyn – Update and Approach to Engagement plus confidential Appendices

The Committee unanimously supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:
The recommendations in the report were approved, subject to an amendment to recommendation 2.1 in the report, to add at the end of the sentence *"to deliver the greatest public benefit".*

26 September 2019:

Draft Business Strategy 2019-2023

The Committee noted the report. It was felt that this was a positive, high level report and that more details would be required.

Catering and Events Concessions Contract – Royal Pump Rooms and Jephson Gardens Glasshouse – Update Report

The Committee noted the report

Fees and Charges 2020/21

The Committee did not scrutinise the report, other than the pest control charges in appendix A (page 39 in the report). The Committee asked the

Portfolio Holder to confirm that the charging reductions applied for mice infestation would also apply to the new charge for rat infestation.

If this was not the case, the Committee formally recommended to the Executive that the reductions should be applied.

Charges for Lifeline services – new tenants of designated properties

The Committee supported the recommendation in the report.

Response from the Executive:
Recommendation 2.1 in the report was approved. Recommendation 2.2 had been withdrawn prior to the meeting.

Affordable Housing Purchase – Spring Lane, Radford Semele

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report and recommended that the Council determined the costs involved to improve the EPC energy rating to category A.

Regeneration of the Leper Hospital Site, Saltisford, Birmingham Road, Warwick (St Michael's Chapel and Master's House)

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report but recommended that the Council determined if energy efficiency improvements could be made and whether there would be ways to recover the costs of this.

Project Initiation Document for the replacement of various software

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report. The Committee recommended that the Project Manager referred to in 2.2 should review the PID and advise how the Overview & Scrutiny Committee could assist the Project Board through an oversight role.

Response from the Executive:
The Executive endorsed the recommendation of Overview & Scrutiny Committee as they recognised this would be a key project and the skills the Committee had would add value to the project.

The recommendations in the report were approved and along with the recommendation from Overview & Scrutiny Committee

12 November 2019:

Further technical work relating to Land East of Kenilworth Development

The Committee supported the recommendations. With the support of the Portfolio Holder, the Committee asked that when the additional highway study was completed if the view of the Head of Development Service was that further public consultation was not required, this should be a matter that the Executive took to enable public scrutiny of the decision.

Response from the Executive:
The recommendations in the report were approved, subject to an amendment to recommendation 2.3, to add at the end of the sentence: *"but if the decision is not to proceed to consultation, a further report will be presented to Executive setting out the reasons and seeking approval for the Design Brief to be confirmed as currently written."*

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) – Request to Consult

The Committee noted the report.

Housing Services Redesign – Additional Budget Requirement

The Committee noted the report and agreed that their monitoring of service benefit would be via the annual Portfolio Holder report to the Scrutiny Committee.

Climate Change Emergency Action Plan Update

The Committee welcomed the report on the initial work, the steps being taken and the proposed action plan. The Committee asked the Executive to arrange a presentation to all Councillors on the work being undertaken and proposed when the action plan came forward.

Response from the Executive:
The recommendations in the report and addendum were approved. The Executive accepted the comment from Overview & Scrutiny Committee to add recommendation 2.13, to read: *"A presentation to all Councillors be arranged at a suitable date on the work being undertaken when the action plan comes forward".*

Creative Quarter – Conclusion of Phase 1 and next steps

The Committee unanimously supported the recommendations in the report.

Affordable Housing SPD

The Committee noted the report.

Response from the Executive:
The recommendations in the report were approved, subject to an amendment to recommendation 2.1 to replace "for an eight-week public consultation" with "for a twelve-week public consultation".

17 December 2019:

Finance Systems Replacement

The Committee supported the recommendations in the report.

Response from the Executive:
The recommendation from the Finance & Audit Scrutiny Committee was approved. The recommendations in the report were approved, subject to an additional recommendation 2.3 (recommended by F&A) to read, "a non-Executive Member be appointed on the Project Board for the report".

11 February 2020:

Adopting a Definition of Anti-Semitism

The Committee supported the recommendation in the report and recommended that the following two caveats be included in the definition of Anti-Semitism:

1. It is not Anti-Semitic to criticise the Government of Israel, without additional evidence to suggest Anti-Semitic intent; and
2. It is not Anti-Semitic to hold the Israeli Government to the same standards as other liberal democracies, or to take a particular interest in

the Israeli Government's policies or actions, without additional evidence to suggests Anti-Semitic intent.

Response from the Executive:
The Executive approved the recommendations in the report but included the two caveats in the definition recommended by Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

Warwick District Climate Emergency Action Programme
The Committee supported the recommendations in the report and urged the Executive to progress them."

Items considered by Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2019/20

Health Scrutiny Work Programme Items

2019:
Refreshed Health and Wellbeing Action Plan 2019-20
Review of Health Scrutiny Sub-Committee 2018/19
Annual Status Report – Air Quality Management

2020:
Health and Wellbeing Aspects in Private Sector Housing
Physical Activity Promotion and Development

Routine Items

Review of the Work Programme and Forward Plan

Health & Wellbeing Outside Bodies Updates (Standing Agenda Items):

- Warwickshire County Council Adult Social Care & Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee; and
- Warwickshire County Council Health & Wellbeing Board