

Overview & Scrutiny **Annual Report** 2014-15



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FOREWORD

I am very pleased to introduce this Annual Report to Council which outlines the continued contributions made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees during 2014/15. Throughout the year scrutiny councillors have engaged in a number of significant reviews and have worked to add value to the delivery of City Council services in a challenging operational environment.

During the year, key areas of work have included engagement with the Crime and Drugs Partnership, reviewing the associated risks with transforming rehabilitation of offenders in Nottingham, progress made by the Council since Ofsted's inspection of its Children's Services in March 2014 and the scrutiny of a wide range of health related issues. In August, Alexis Jay published her report of the inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham. This raised important questions for the role of scrutiny and the way in which we hold decision makers to account. As scrutiny councillors we talk a lot about the need for scrutiny to work closely with the Executive and the Council's leadership and this is something we will continue to do – both providing constructive and critical challenge and gathering data from a range of sources to take scrutiny forward in a meaningful way.

In the future it will be increasingly important, as we continue to navigate our way through this period of financial constraint, that we focus our scrutiny resource on areas that matter most to the public and areas where we feel we can help the Council to work smarter and more efficiently.

As is often the case, we owe much of our achievement to the continued support and engagement of councillors and

colleagues across the Council and our partners and contributors from outside the Council. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge and thank all of those people who contributed to and supported the work of all the scrutiny committees and review panels this year.



Brian Parbutt

Councillor Brian Parbutt

Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Nottingham City Council

INTRODUCTION

Overview and scrutiny exists to help improve governance and public services. It ensures the Council's Executive is publicly held to account for its decisions and actions and promotes open and transparent decision-making and democratic accountability. It also has a wide remit to explore how the Council and its partner organisations could improve services for the people of Nottingham by:

- reviewing existing policy and contributing to the development of new policy;
- acting as a 'critical friend' to those making decisions;
- holding decision-makers to account for their decisions and actions through the call-in process (see below); and
- challenging performance to ensure that services are meeting the needs of local communities.

This annual report reviews how the Overview and Scrutiny function performed in 2014-15 and provides a snapshot of some of the contributions it made to improving public services.

The structure for Overview and Scrutiny in 2014-15 was:-

- an Overview and Scrutiny Committee to determine and co-ordinate a prioritised work programme and carry out scrutiny and review of key strategic issues;
- a series of single session reviews, carried out by review panels, with very focused scopes;
- a Health Scrutiny Panel to scrutinise health and adult social care issues within the city;
- a Joint Health Scrutiny Committee to scrutinise health issues across the Nottingham conurbation with councillors from both the City and County Councils;

- a Call-in Panel to review executive decisions when requested by non-executive councillors.

The function is supported by two Senior Governance Officers, with support from other colleagues in Constitutional Services.

Successful Overview and Scrutiny is reliant upon active participation, not only from non-executive councillors, but also from many others, including executive councillors'; colleagues'; representatives of external organisations and partners (including the voluntary sector), interest groups and individual citizens.

This year scrutiny has been supported by many organisations and individuals including: Environment Agency, Severn Trent, The Equalities and Fairness Commission, One Nottingham, Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service (NCVS), Nottingham's Education Improvement Board, Nottingham City Safeguarding Children Board, Nottingham University Hospitals NHS Trust, Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust, Nottingham CityCare Partnership, Healthwatch Nottingham and Healthwatch Nottinghamshire, NHS England Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Area Team, OSCAR Nottingham, Nottingham ME and CFS Self-Help Group (MESH), Nottingham City Clinical Commissioning Group and other Clinical Commissioning Groups in south Nottinghamshire, Arriva who provide patient transport services, the Royal Collage of Nursing, East Midlands Ambulance Service and individual patients and users of health services.

We would like to thank all those who provided us with information, attended meetings and responded to our recommendations in 2014-15.

CONTRIBUTING TO IMPROVEMENT IN PUBLIC SERVICES

The way we work

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee looks at strategic issues and the work of cross-cutting partnerships which affect the Council, the city's residents and those who work in and/ or visit the city. In this way the Committee contributes to the development of policy and strategy and identifies its review priorities. We look to maximise the opportunities for Overview and Scrutiny to be of value to the Council, our partners and citizens of Nottingham. With this in mind, the annual Work Programme is developed to ensure that each review topic has a clear purpose and focuses on achieving outcomes.

Key in the approach to scrutiny in 2014-15 was continuing to take on board the outcomes of the Francis Report (see more in the health scrutiny section below) and the Jay Report. Following the publication of the Jay Report into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham in 2014, media attention focused on the sexual exploitation of children and young people across the country. The findings of this report, as with those of the Francis Report, have overarching implications for scrutiny in general, as well as in relation to specific issues. Scrutiny should not place too much store on the assurances of people in authority that everything is in order and that they are performing well. It's important to consider a range of evidence provided by a range of contributors to get a valid picture of what is or isn't happening.

This year scrutiny councillors have discussed what effective scrutiny is and have concluded that they must be careful not to

uncritically accept reports of activity and performance at face value and to be sure to obtain a wide range of views and evidence in order to draw conclusions and make recommendations.

Adding value and making an impact

This year scrutiny work has been carried out in Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings and in review panels, which focus on a topic in more depth over one or two meetings. Some of this work is outlined below to give a flavour of what scrutiny councillors did in 2014-15.

- Both the Leader, Councillor Jon Collins, and the Chief Executive, Ian Curryer, discussed their priorities with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to help shape the work programme for 2014-15. The Leader set out a clear context of the need to be as creative as possible to continue to provide services within severe budget constraints.
- 2014-15 has seen the involvement of scrutiny grow in key areas of development:

In response to the information provided by Ian Curryer on the Council's efforts to put citizens at the heart of decision making, the Committee made a number of recommendations, which included proposing more involvement from scrutiny to support the Council on its journey from 'Good to Great'. 'Good to Great' was introduced by Ian to give the Council a clear sense of direction by adopting a single operating model with a focus on service user outcomes ie putting the citizen at the forefront of the organisation and providing great

customer services. Scrutiny councillors can play a role in the development and monitoring of the model as they scrutinise services, checking for a balanced approach to risk, encouraging innovation and creativity and reducing unnecessary bureaucracy.

As a result of scrutinising Nottingham Plan performance for 2013/14 it was agreed that scrutiny councillors should be more involved and engaged in performance monitoring of Plan priorities and three scrutiny councillors now attend the Joint One Nottingham and Scrutiny Performance Panel to take part in regular monitoring and evaluation of progress.

- Major crime related issues are reported on annually by the Crime and Drugs Partnership (CDP) to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In June 2014, Peter Moyes, Director of the CDP, and his colleagues provided a helpful update to the Committee on the progress in meeting the targets in their Partnership Plan and the results of their Strategic Assessment 2013/14. As part of the discussion, the Committee also welcomed Paddy Tipping, the Police and Crime Commissioner; who attended to discuss and evaluate the first year of the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner. The Committee agreed to consider at a future date whether a review of partnership working could be effective in strengthening partnership working.
- Like many other services the National Probation Service is currently undergoing significant transformation. This year the Committee explored the impact of changes made to local services, focusing on how associated risks are being managed. The Overview and Scrutiny

Committee took evidence from the Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland Community Rehabilitation Company Limited (DLNR CRC), the National Probation Service (NPS) and the Crime and Drugs Partnership (CDP). The Committee offered its support for the Crime and Drugs Partnership Plan 2014/15 and the focus on tackling violence and alcohol related crime. The Committee looks forward to reviewing progress in implementing changes now that the provider for low and medium risk offenders has been appointed and commenced work.

- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee also looked at the Council's and its partners' activities to promote and build the economic climate. It has contributed to the Nottingham Plan and the Nottingham Growth Plan, focusing its input on how we can best develop a skilled workforce to ensure local jobs for local people. The growing interest in the debate about greater devolution in England was also explored during the discussion. Nottingham holds a position nationally, as one of the Core Cities, and has been at the forefront of discussions in the first wave of devolution in 2014, benefiting from the first Local Growth Deals with Local Enterprise Partnerships. The Growth Deal represents significant investment in Nottingham and has allowed the city to bring forward a number of key infrastructure and regeneration schemes. Recommendations to the Portfolio Holder for Jobs and Growth included the need to ensure support mechanisms to deliver long-term business growth and closer working with health partners to address the skills gap in the health sector. The scrutiny of major programmes and regeneration in the city is likely to form part of the Committee's work programme for 2015/16.

- Following an unannounced three-week inspection of ‘services for children in need of help and protection, children looked after and care leavers’ in March 2014, Ofsted inspectors concluded that Nottingham’s children remain safe. However, it was noted that improvements were required and in January 2015 scrutiny councillors were reassured by Paul Burnett, the Independent Chair of Nottingham City Safeguarding Children’s Board, Alison Michalska, Corporate Director for Children and Adults, at Nottingham City Council and David Mellen, Portfolio Holder for Children’s Services that inspection recommendations have been addressed and progress is being made.
- In consultation with the Nottingham Equalities and Fairness Commission (EFC) scrutiny councillors carried out a time limited review on equality principles and the Council’s commissioning and procurement processes. The review panel was commissioned to consider what action the Council was taking in relation to:
 - promoting equality through the Council’s procurement and commissioning policy; and
 - embedding equalities principles in the Council’s commissioning and procurement processes.

The Panel and members from the EFC were concerned that smaller communities and voluntary sector organisations can often find it difficult to make bids for commissioning contracts. They do not always have the capacity and resources of larger providers, which are likely to have more experience of making bids and which may even have dedicated staff who can focus on bidding.

The Panel recognised the efforts of Council colleagues to support smaller groups to engage with the commissioning process and was reassured to hear that a range of resources are offered such as workshops and e-learning materials, to clarify the commissioning and procurement processes and provide guidance on bidding to be a service provider. The Panel recommended the use of jargon-free guidance for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to ensure that they are given as much opportunity as larger organisations to understand processes and procedures and that more effort is made to communicate with the hardest to reach groups in order to engage them proactively with the commissioning process.

Panel members were very appreciative of the time and support given by members of the EFC and the Council’s Commissioning and Procurement staff to this review and the helpful insights provided on how these services are managed and run.

Call-in Panel

The Call-in Panel met twice this year:

On 11 September 2014 the Panel considered a call-in request from non-executive councillors on the delegated executive decision ‘Workplace Parking Levy (WPL) Fixed Camera Trial Project’. This decision approved the trial use of fixed camera technology to reduce WPL administration. The decision was called in on the basis that there had been inadequate consultation prior to decision making and also that relevant information had not been considered. However, the Panel did

not uphold the call-in and agreed to the immediate implementation of the decision.

On 4 March 2015 the Panel considered a call-in request from non-executive councillors on the delegated executive decision 'Lease for Former Wilford Library'. The decision was to grant a 999 year lease of the former Wilford Library to the West Bridgford Spiritualist Church. The decision was called-in on the basis that there had been inadequate consultation prior to decision making and also that relevant information and viable alternatives had not been considered. However, the Panel did not uphold the call-in and agreed to the immediate implementation of the decision.

HEALTH SCRUTINY

The Council has a statutory responsibility to review and scrutinise the planning and delivery of health services in the local area and where necessary, make reports and recommendations for improvement to organisations which commission and provide NHS funded services. It also has a statutory role in considering proposals to substantially develop or vary health services affecting City residents to ensure that patients and the public have been fully consulted and their views taken into account when making significant changes, as well as ensuring that such changes are in the best interests of patients and the public.

During 2014/15 health scrutiny was carried out by the Health Scrutiny Panel and the Joint City and County Health Scrutiny Committee.

Health scrutiny has continued to build good working relationships with its partners, including with local Clinical

Commissioning Groups, Healthwatch, the Health and Wellbeing Board, Public Health colleagues within the Council, NHS England and the Care Quality Commission (CQC).

Some examples of the work of health scrutiny are provided below.

Health Scrutiny Panel

The Health Scrutiny Panel considered the Government's response to the Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust Public Enquiry (the Francis Enquiry). The good working relationships already established (as described above) stand the function in good stead. To aid this there is now a protocol on the relationship between health scrutiny, Healthwatch and the Health and Wellbeing Board in place. Close working between these bodies has helped to avoid duplication, identify opportunities to work together and to complement each other's roles while making best use of resources.

- The Health Scrutiny Panel continued its involvement in scrutinising the substantial changes to the provision of urgent care through the closure of two walk-in centres and the opening of a centre on a single site. Scrutiny was able to provide a positive contribution to the consultation and the shaping of proposals. Healthwatch representatives fed back to the panel that their close involvement with the CCG in the consultation process and development of proposals was as a direct result of the Panel's initial scrutiny of the remodelling process.

- The Panel carried out a review on the integration of Public Health within Nottingham City Council one year on, also looking at the progress made by the function across the city. The focus this year included the transition of staff into the local authority, the development and implementation of the Public Health Business Plan in line with the Council's strategic plans and the safe transition of the commissioning responsibility for health visiting and the family nurse partnership from NHS England to the local authority from October 2015. The Panel was reassured that safe and effective integration had progressed according to plan.
- The Panel has been keeping a close eye on the wide-reaching implications of the Care Act 2014 and the City Council's plans and preparation to meet its new responsibilities. The Act includes a range of general duties for the Council, including promoting wellbeing and actively seeking improvements when carrying out care and support functions and a duty to provide a comprehensive information and advice service, including signposting to independent financial advice. Colleagues have been working to tight timescales and the Panel has been pleased to hear that progress has been on track so that the Council is legally compliant with the new requirements.
- Panel members were keen to ensure that the transfer of children's public health commissioning for 0-5 year olds to Nottingham City Council in October 2015 is well planned and were reassured that ongoing discussions between NHS England and Nottingham City Council and careful planning will result in a smooth and robust transition of responsibility and funding. Nottingham recently secured £45 million of funding through the Big Lottery Funding to support the 'Small Steps, Big Changes' project within the city, which will

go some way to supporting the improvement of health and social outcomes for 0-3 year olds across four wards over the next ten years.

In addition to the above, the Panel has considered procurement of community end of life services, the school nursing service, proposals for merging GP practices, bowel cancer screening, NHS health checks, adult health care integration, the new pathway for CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health services), services delivered by OSCAR Nottingham for people with Sickle Cell Disorder/ Thalassaemia and access to services for people with ME (Myalgic Encephalopathy/ Encephalomyelitis).

Joint City and County Health Scrutiny Committee

- Transformation of services for adult mental health and mental health services for older people were considered as a substantial variation by the Committee this year. Proposed changes involved the closure of in-patient wards/ reduction of in-patient beds and new improved community service provision, including an enhanced Crisis Resolution and Home Treatment Service; a multi-disciplinary model of care; changes to care pathways and the introduction of a 'virtual ward'. The Committee considered that it had been properly consulted and that the proposed changes were in the interests of the local health service. There were some concerns about the public consultation carried out and the Committee asked commissioners to discuss the learning identified from the consultation process with Healthwatch to inform future consultations. Committee members were reassured when they received a paper outlining the results of this discussion.

- A review of the impact of intoxicated patients on the Emergency Department at NUH (Nottingham University Hospitals) resulted in a number of recommendations which were well received by the Trust. The committee was keen that the High Volume Service User Nurse role was extended beyond May 2015 and NUH agreed to consider whether to extend the secondment or make this post into a permanent position, given its success and impact to date. In addition, NUH agreed to carry out a piece of work to enable better understanding of how the behaviour of intoxicated patients affects other patients, visitors and staff.
- The Committee reviewed plans to address pressures on the urgent care system, including the preparation for dealing with winter pressures. The Committee was pleased to hear that earlier than usual notification of funding levels had allowed a level of planning, and consequently a quality of service, that had not been possible in the past. The provision of additional beds and additional Emergency Department cubicles at NUH to cover winter pressures was reassuring. Scrutiny councillors learnt that the biggest obstacle to effective responses to the additional needs in the winter was the recruitment of appropriate staff. Local and national shortages present a challenge to the Trust and the Committee continues to monitor this closely.
- Following considerable negative press coverage and feedback to local councillors on patient experiences about dermatology services, the Committee invited commissioners, providers and patients to a meeting to explore what was being done to address concerns. The Committee also received a letter from the British Association of Dermatologists expressing their concerns about the situation. The main issues were a) that as a

consequence of Dermatologists' reluctance to transfer their employment from NUH (NHS) to Circle, which provides dermatology services from the Treatment Centre, and some issues with service design and procurement, a number of valued dermatology specialists left their employment; and b) the existing service model was flawed and needed to be remodelled for a sustainable service. Councillors were reassured to find that an independent review of dermatology services had been commissioned, but concerned that dermatologists who had now left their employment had not been consulted at a stage where they could have contributed their views. There had been a significant impact on services as a result in the reduction in staff and there was a challenge ahead to attract consultants back or recruit new consultants in order to rebuild the service. The Committee intends to monitor the situation closely in the coming months.

- We have built on the successful approach established last year for reviewing and contributing to health providers' Quality Accounts. By considering the performance of providers against their stated priorities for the year and their intended priorities for the future in small, focused groups, scrutiny councillors, in partnership with Healthwatch, have taken a robust approach to this work and have again been able to provide more meaningful comment for inclusion in each published Quality Account document.

In addition to the above, the Committee has considered the use of the Government's Challenge Fund to improve access to primary care, Patient Transport Services, Hospital Pharmacy delays, NHS 111 Service performance, out of hours dental services, an apparent breach of control at a local dental practice, new strategies for EMAS (East Midlands Ambulance Service), eye casualty services, NUH's approach to

environment and waste, NUH's performance against the four hour emergency department waiting time targets and transformation plans for psychiatric services for children, young people and families.

LOOKING AHEAD

All scrutiny committees will have their annual workshop sessions where they put time aside to hear about the priorities of relevant councillors, colleagues and partners and explore potential scrutiny topics for 2015/16.

The work of health and adult social care scrutiny in the city has grown significantly in 2014/15. In 2015/16, the Health Scrutiny Panel will be renamed the Health Scrutiny Committee and will meet monthly, rather than every other month as it has to date.

In 2015/16 we will be putting together proposals for a Children's Services Scrutiny Panel. The intention is to explore a range of topics allowing councillors to review post-Ofsted inspection updates as well as thematic and strategic topics like Missing Children and Child Sexual Exploitation. We want to ensure that we take forward the recommendations outlined in the Jay Review and the Casey report for a strong role for scrutiny in holding decision-makers to account and identifying potential risk in relation to vulnerable children and young people.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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