

Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel

Agenda
Item:

A.3

Meeting Date: 11 June 2020

Portfolio: Cross-cutting

Key Decision: No

Within Policy and
Budget Framework

Private/Public Public

Title: Scrutiny Annual Report

Report of: Overview and Scrutiny Officer

Report Number: OS.10/20

Purpose / Summary:

This report provides the draft Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel Section, along with general sections, for the Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- Consider and comment on the attached section of the draft report.

Tracking

Executive:	Not applicable
Scrutiny:	HWSP 11/06/20
Council:	TBC

1. Background

1.1 The Constitution: Article 6 – Overview and Scrutiny Committees, 6.03 Specific functions [c] states that:

***‘Annual report.** Overview and scrutiny committees must report annually to full Council on their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate’.*

1.2 The last meetings of the 2019/20 Scrutiny year were cancelled due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the need to reduce face to face contact. Remote working practices are now being established to allow Scrutiny Panels to operate in Carlisle City Council. Section 78 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 sets out the guidelines that allow Councils to conduct public meetings in virtual, rather than physical locations.

1.3 This report contains this panel’s draft sections for the Annual Scrutiny Report 2019/20. The draft report will be considered by each panel before recommending its acceptance to Council.

2. Recommendations

2.1 That the Panel consider and comment on the draft report.

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Appendices **Draft general and Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel**
attached to report: **sections for the Scrutiny Annual Report 2019-20**

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- None

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL -

FINANCE –

EQUALITY – This report raises no explicit issues relating to the public sector Equality Duty.

INFORMATION GOVERNANCE –

Scrutiny in Summary

3 Panels



Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel (HWSP)



Business and Transformation Scrutiny Panel (BTSP)



Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel (EGSP)



panel meetings



2 special meetings



1 site visit



43+
hours
of scrutiny



83
agenda items
scrutinised



Partners engaged with:

Tullie House, Environment Agency,
Kingmoor Park, GLL and Carlisle Partnership

Introduction

The Annual Report for the Civic Year 2019-20 marks the end of a year of scrutiny that was halted abruptly due to the unprecedented need to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. Because of this, the last Panel meetings of the year took place in February 2019 and each Panel has outstanding 2019-20 workplan items, which they may wish to include in their workplans 2020-21.

Local elections for May 2020 were cancelled and social distancing measures have meant that committee meetings, including Scrutiny Panels, have been moved from physical to virtual locations for the start of the new civic year. Members will look carefully at their work programmes, working with council officers to ensure that their scrutiny activity is targeted at the most important issues and decisions that are facing the City Council as Carlisle looks to recover and move forward from the pandemic.

What is Scrutiny and why is it important?

Scrutiny is a process to ensure that decisions taken by the Council reflect the needs and priorities of communities in Carlisle. Scrutiny is carried out by Councillors who understand and promote the concerns of the people who elected them, connecting decision makers to local communities.

Council decisions can be made by Council Officers, by the Council's 'Executive' (the political leadership) and by full Council (all Councillors).

Scrutiny Panels are made up of Non-Executive Councillors who work together, across political parties, to understand why decisions are made and how the council is performing to deliver the best possible outcomes for Carlisle and its people.

Scrutiny Panels do not have decision-making powers; their role is to challenge and make recommendations that influence decision makers.

Changes to Scrutiny arrangements for 2020-21

Scrutiny Chairs Group held their final meeting of the year on 13th March 2019. At this meeting they considered feedback from all three Scrutiny Panels, and Leaders or representatives of all the political groups in Carlisle on three aspects of current scrutiny arrangements:

- Times of meetings
- Number of Members on each Panel
- Substitution arrangements

As a result of this discussion, the following changes were proposed by Scrutiny Chairs Group:

- Business and Transformation and Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panels to meet at 10:00. Economic Growth Scrutiny Panel to trial an 18:00 start time.
- The number of Members on each Panel to reduce from eight down to six Members.

This will require a change to the Council's Constitution and is not being taken forward at this point, while the Council adapts its working practices to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel (HWSP)

Chairs Report, Councillor Jack Paton

This has been the most traumatic year I can ever remember; my thoughts go out to all those people who have lost their lives to this horrific virus. I am sure that we are all united in this.

As can be appreciated, we did not get through all our meetings for 2019-20. We are going forward with scrutiny in 2020-21 using video link for meetings.

Meeting of 6th June 2019 focussed on the re-development of the Sands Centre with the integration of the Pools, plus a modern fitness centre and an area dedicated to NHS physio. Work has started on this development; we look forward to seeing the completion and all the state-of-the-art equipment.

At 11th July 2019 HWSP, we were given a presentation on the Carlisle Partnership which was very detailed and laid out its plans for the future, including a Big Lunch and funding. The Partnership were looking into setting up a group on climate change, they would work closely with the Council and all parties on this. It was noted that the County Council had not been present at the Carlisle Partnership meetings. On the request of the panel, I wrote as HWSP Chair to the Leader of the County Council. The reply that we received was courteous but did not resolve the Panel's concerns.

Also in July, we received a report about air quality and the monitors that have been put in place to tell us the impact on human health. It was refreshing to hear that the air quality was improving. Due to recent restrictions on travel I would imagine that air quality has further dramatically improved.

On 21st November 2019, the budget was the first item on the agenda and the Council's financial forecast was set out for the next 5 years. It was pleasing to the panel that the Sexual Assault Referral Service was added to the budget on a recurring basis. A significant budget review will probably be required due to the coronavirus; I assume that much will have to change after the lockdown has been lifted.

HWSP on 9th January 2020 was chaired by the Vice Chair, Cllr Finlayson, as I was on front line duty. However, I promised my family I would retire when I reached 70 (a recent milestone) so as promised, I have complied.

I would like to thank all the staff and officers for all their hard work and dedication in keeping all the services functioning. Also, my thanks go to HWSP Members and last but not least to Cllr Christine Finlayson, my Vice Chair, for stepping into the breach.

To all staff and Members, please stay safe and we will all meet up again when this is all over.

Comment from Councillor Elizabeth Mallinson, Portfolio Holder for Communities, Health and Wellbeing

Over the last year Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel has done some positive work in the area covered by my Portfolio. Just to mention a few areas they have been involved in that added value to decisions of the Executive include:

The Disabled Facilities Grants Action Plan:

This was a useful exercise in publicising the work done by the Housing and Pollution Group and Homelife in delivering housing support. HWSP reviewed the data in the Action Plan, supporting its progression. This support for the Action Plan has directly assisted the Council in responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, as the Homelife Liaison Officer post is now working closely with the Hospital to ensure Disabled Facilities Grants are used to move people safely back to their homes, thereby releasing hospital facilities and reducing admissions.

Domestic Abuse and the Council's actions:

HWSP looked at the provision for tackling domestic abuse and the Impact of the Homeless Reduction Act 2017. The Council works very closely with all key agencies and supports those in the wider community to keep people safely in their homes where possible. HWSP were very supportive in the work done by our Officers.

Review of Equality Objectives with a Task and Finish Group:

When the draft Council's Equalities Policy went to HWSP there were such positive outcomes that it was suggested that a Task and Finish Group was set up to look into the draft document. The recommendations of this T&F group helped to formulate the Council's Equalities Policy prior to it going to the Executive for adoption.

I would like to thank the committee for all the hard work that they do and that I fully support the role of scrutiny in adding value to the council work and to holding the Executive to account.

Potential items for Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel in 2020-21

The following items are topics that Health and Wellbeing Scrutiny Panel are likely to find particularly helpful to include in their workplan for 2020/21:

- Emergency Planning and Promoting Community Engagement
- Interagency Homelessness Strategy
- Healthy City Strategy
- Local Environment (Climate Change) Strategy