

REPORT OF THE
Policy and Resources Select Committee

PART II

93. ANNUAL REPORT - SUMMARY

1. This report provides an update on the work of Hampshire County Council's Select Committees from April 2013 to March 2014. Highlights of each Select Committee's activity are set out below.

94. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE

1. **Reviews undertaken / outcomes being monitored:** In considering the budget proposals for 2015/16, the committee expressed concern about the proposed reduction in funding for short breaks for disabled children. The committee established a Task and Finish Group to understand the Short Breaks Service and its budgetary framework in the context of the service budget for Children with Disabilities, to consider the possible effect of the proposed cut on parents and the children that use the Short Breaks Service, to explore what alternatives are available for families and how the service could be managed more efficiently. The Group has met a number of times to gather evidence from County Council officers, service providers and service users and intends to prepare its report for Select Committee consideration in the summer of 2014.

2. **Call-in of Significant Executive Decisions:** None in this period

3. **Scrutiny of Budgets and Performance:** The committee has continued to monitor the 2013/14 revenue budget over the period and considered the Children's Services revenue budget for 2014/15, recommending approval by the Executive Lead Member for Children's Services. In considering the reduced funding proposals for some services, it was agreed that a Task and Finish Group regarding short breaks for disabled children be established, as detailed above.

4. The committee has monitored school performance, in particular educational attainment in Hampshire for 2013 was in line with or above the national average, including those receiving free school meals and children for whom English was an additional language. There has also been a continuing improvement in the attainment of children in care.

5. **Questioning and exploring areas of interest and concern:** The Committee has received a report on the outcomes of the Supporting (Troubled) Families in Hampshire programme and welcomed the successes of the scheme during its first year, which included 79 positive outcomes reported to the DCLG by the end of July 2013. The committee will continue to monitor progress on an ongoing basis.

6. The Committee also received an update on the performance of Children's Centres which, following a year of changes, were in a period of stability. The Committee heard about the links with partners in health and social care, in particular the

integrated work of health visitors and midwives which had seen some health based services transfer to the Children's Centres.

7. **Upcoming topics:** The work programme for the forthcoming municipal year is being developed for consideration at the next meeting of the Select Committee.

95. CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE

1. **In-depth Reviews undertaken / outcomes being monitored:** None this year.

2. **Light Touch Reviews undertaken / outcomes being monitored:** Reviews/Working Groups initiated: The Committee formed a sub-committee to consider, comment and make recommendations to the Executive Member for Culture, Recreation and Countryside on the large grant applications made under the Community Buildings Capital Grant Scheme. This group met in February 2014 in order to review six shortlisted major grant applications, and made recommendations to the Executive Member as to which should be supported and for what sum.

3. **Income Generation Opportunities –** a further update was provided to the full committee in April 2013 on income generations within the service over the 2012-13 financial year.

4. **Pre-scrutiny of Significant Executive Decisions:** The Committee has pre-scrutinised a number of proposals prior to decision by the Executive Member for Culture, Recreation & Countryside:

- 2014 Commemorations progress
- Gosport Post Office and Discovery Centre
- Hampshire Museums and Arts service: accreditation return and collections management policy
- Hampshire Talented Athlete Scheme
- Museum and Arts service – Cultural Trust

5. **Call-in of Significant Executive Decisions:** None in this period

6. **Scrutiny of Budgets and Performance:** The Committee continued to consider the proposed Revenue Budget for cultural and community services at the January 2014 meeting, as per the agreed budget scrutiny cycle.

7. **Policy Review:** The Committee has continued to review the Council's approach to securing an Olympic legacy locally. In 2013-14 it reviewed the sport and physical activity strategy in order to understand how this would encourage the public to be more active, more often. In 2014-15 the Committee will continue to review policy in relation to Olympic legacy.

8. **Questioning and exploring areas of interest and concern:**

- The Contribution, Sustainability and Value of Volunteers to the Culture and Communities sector of Culture, Communities and Business Services

- Grant Funding for Culture, Community and Recreational Organisations in Hampshire
- Hampshire Commemoration: progress
- Investment in Dance
- Library and Information Service
- Paralympic Sport
- Transforming the County's Country Parks
- World War II Centenary and 70th Anniversary of D-Day
- The Director of Economy, Transport and Environment provided the Committee with a presentation on Tourism in Hampshire.
- The committee received a presentation on the success of Hampshire events linked to the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic games, and how plans were being developed to fulfil the Olympic legacy.

9. **Upcoming topics:** Over the coming year the Committee has the following topics on the work programme:

- Countryside access (overview)
- Libraries strategy (policy development)
- Transforming country parks (monitoring)

96. ECONOMY TRANSPORT AND ENVIRONMENT SELECT COMMITTEE

1. **In-depth Reviews undertaken / outcomes being monitored:**

Flood Risk Management – the committee agreed at the June 2013 meeting to undertake scrutiny of flood risk management. Written evidence was invited from stakeholders in October 2013 and an oral evidence session with invited witnesses took place in December 2013 as part of a conference involving partner authorities. The findings and recommendations are due to be approved by the Select Committee at the April 2014 meeting, with monitoring of responses to these recommendations and any learning arising from the flooding experienced in the winter of 2013/14 subsequent to the scrutiny to be undertaken over the course of 2014/15.

2. **Light Touch Reviews undertaken / outcomes being monitored:**

A Board Policy – in 2012 the Select Committee supported the introduction of a policy on A Boards, allowing district councils to use a discretionary licensing scheme for A Boards if there were areas where use of A Boards would benefit from being managed. At the June 2013 meeting Members received an update on progress since introduction of the policy. The committee supported the County Council's policy position and recommended that the District and Borough Councils be written to, to remind them of the policy.

3. *A3 Zip Bus Priority Corridor* – in 2012/13 the Select Committee had a Working Group on this topic, to follow up issues identified by a joint scrutiny review undertaken by Havant Borough Council and East Hampshire District Council. At the June 2013 meeting the Select Committee received an update on the actions taken to address the issues discussed by the Working Group. Members were satisfied the issues raised had been addressed appropriately.

4. **Pre-scrutiny of Significant Executive Decisions:** *Local Flood Risk Management Strategy* – at the June 2013 meeting the Select Committee considered the draft of this strategy, to establish how the County Council will fulfil its responsibilities to manage 'local' flood risk. The Committee commended the strategy to the Executive Member for Economy Transport & Environment for adoption.

5. *Traffic Management Policy & Guidance* – at the November 2013 meeting the Select Committee considered the draft Traffic Management Policy & Guidance document, which brought together the County Council's traffic management policies. A deputation was received regarding the policy on use of 20mph speed limits. The Committee commended the document for approval by the Executive Member for Economy Transport & Environment, subject to further investigation of the 20mph speed limits issue.

6. *Highway Maintenance Management Plan* – at the November 2013 meeting the Select Committee considered the draft Highway Maintenance Management Plan, which brought together the County Council's highway maintenance policies. The Committee commended the document for approval by the Executive Member for Economy Transport & Environment.

7. **Call-in of Significant Executive Decisions:** None in this period

8. **Referrals:** *Fracking* - At the May 2013 meeting of County Council a motion was tabled regarding hydraulic fracturing to access shale gas (fracking). This was referred to this Committee for consideration, which took place at the November 2013 meeting. The Select Committee were briefed on the fracking process, and the independent review of the major risks undertaken by the Royal Society and Royal Academy of Engineering. The committee recommended to County Council that no further action was required by the County Council at that time as the committee was satisfied that rigorous regulations and controls were in place to manage the potential risks from shale gas extraction. The committee also recommended that as this area was at an early stage in the UK, that the regulatory framework and government guidance remain under review, and that the recommendation of the independent review regarding development of specific shale gas guidelines be supported.

9. **Scrutiny of Budgets and Performance:** The Committee monitored progress with achieving the efficiency savings required by the Economy Transport & Environment Department in 2013/14 at the November 2013 meeting.

10. Members pre-scrutinised the revenue and capital budget for 2014/15 onwards for the Economy Transport & Environment portfolio at their January 2014 meeting. Following questions, Members agreed with the recommendations set out to the Executive Member for Economy Transport & Environment in relation to both the revenue and capital budget.

11. **Policy Review:** *20mph Speed Limits* – At the January 2014 meeting Members considered the County Council's policy with regard to use of 20mph speed limits. Two deputations were received in favour of more widespread use of 20mph

limits. Following debate, the Select Committee supported the existing policy of undertaking pilot 20mph schemes prior to further implementation, however the Committee recommended that an additional rural area be included in the pilots, and agreed to revisit the policy when evidence from the pilots is available.

12. **Questioning and exploring areas of interest and concern:**

- At the first meeting under the new administration (June 2013), the Select Committee was briefed on the service areas within the remit of the committee
- control of weeds on the highway – at the January 2014 meeting Members received a report detailing the current procedures for managing weed growth on the public highway. The Committee resolved to initiate a light touch task and finish group on this topic, to consider whether improvements could be made to how weed control maintenance is undertaken (to take place in 2014/15, work programme pressures permitting)

13. **Upcoming topics:**

- Term Highway Contract
- Waste Strategy
- Local Enterprise Partnership funding and local growth deals
- Flood Risk Management - ongoing monitoring

97. POLICY AND RESOURCES SELECT COMMITTEE

1. **Reviews undertaken / outcomes being monitored:** None initiated in this period.

2. **Call-in of Significant Executive Decisions:** None in this period.

3. **Scrutiny of Budgets and Performance:** Members pre-scrutinised the revenue and capital budget for 2014/15 onwards for the Policy & Resources portfolio at their January 2014 meeting. Following questions, Members agreed with the recommendations set out to the Executive Member for Policy & Resources in relation to both the revenue and capital budget. Some Members of the committee had concerns about proposals to cease the Accredited Community Safety Service, which were passed on to the Executive Member for Policy & Resources (however not as a formal recommendation as not a consensus).

4. **Policy Review: Consultation** - At the April 2013 and October 2013 meetings the Committee considered the County Councils approach to consultation and work taking place to develop corporate consultation guidance. As a result of the October 2013 meeting a Working Group was established to feed in Members views on the draft corporate guidance. This Working Group is expected to report back to a future meeting of the Select Committee in 2014/15.

5. *Corporate Priorities 2013-17* - At the October 2013 meeting the Executive Member for Policy & Resources was questioned regarding the corporate priorities laid out in the refreshed strategic plan 'Shaping Hampshire' and how performance against the plan would be monitored.

6. *Partnership Working* - At the October 2013 meeting the committee considered the work taking place to progress key corporate policy areas such as increased partnership working across the public sector and improvements in how services are delivered in communities. This topic is due to be pursued further at the April 2014 meeting of the committee.

7. *Transformation to 2015* - At the January 2014 meeting the Chief Executive presented the County Council's strategy for managing the budget reductions required up to 2015/16 to place Hampshire County Council in a strong position to continue to provide quality public services.

8. **Questioning and exploring areas of interest and concern:**

- Economic Development - the committee considered economic development issues at the April 2013 meeting. Under the new administration, scrutiny of this area now sits with the Economy Transport & Environment Select Committee
- Census Data – the committee received an update in April 2013 on the recently published 2011 census data and how this was being analysed to support service provision
- Financial context – at the first meeting under the new administration the committee was briefed on the financial context for the County Council (July 2013)
- Performance context – at the first meeting under the new administration the committee was briefed on the performance context for the County Council (July 2013)
- Priority Corporate Policy Areas – at the first meeting under the new administration the committee was briefed on priority corporate policy areas, to support consideration of future work programme items (July 2013)
- Managing Attendance – the performance update received at the July 2013 meeting indicated that the corporate stretch target for sickness absence had not been met. The committee considered a report on this at the October 2013 meeting. Members were satisfied that appropriate measures were in place to manage attendance and heard that sickness absence had been reduced compared to previous years to below the average for County Councils.
- Annual IT Update – the committee received the annual update on IT issues at the January 2014 meeting, recognising the contribution of IT to a range of corporate change projects

9. **Oversight of other Select Committees:** The Policy & Resources Select Committee has oversight of the work undertaken by the other Select Committees. This has been undertaken through this committee receiving proposals for task and finish groups for approval, undertaking regular monitoring of work programmes facilitated by Select Committee Chairmen reporting at the quarterly meetings, and the Chairman of

the Policy & Resources Select Committee attending the meetings of the other Select Committees as an observer.

10. **Upcoming topics:**

- Annual Corporate Performance Monitoring
- Joint Working with Communities continued monitoring
- Other topics to be determined

98. SAFE AND HEALTHY PEOPLE SELECT COMMITTEE

1. **Statutory Duties undertaken, In-depth Reviews / outcomes being monitored:** *Crime and Disorder Scrutiny:* The Committee hold the responsibility for the scrutiny of 'Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships' (now termed as 'Community Safety Partnerships'), as per the Police and Justice Act 2006, and therefore invite representatives of the County Strategy Group annually to make reports on the work of such groups. In 2013/14, the Committee reviewed items relating to Domestic Abuse and the 'Supporting Troubled Families' programme in Hampshire, and received a briefing on Integrated Offender Management, which included information on national offender management reforms.

2. **Light Touch Reviews undertaken / outcomes being monitored:** *Safeguarding Adults:* The Committee received a biannual report from Adult Services on safeguarding matters and related issues. Members were regularly informed of the protocols that are in place to support the safeguarding of adults, and the monitoring of this topic has allowed Members to make comments and recommendations to key officers and the Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health on any issues of concern.

3. **Pre-scrutiny of Significant Executive Decisions:** *Outcome of the Consultation on the Future of Four Residential Care Homes and One Day Centre and Proposed Recommendations:* The Committee pre-scrutinised the proposed decision to be put before Cabinet to close three residential care homes and one day centre in Hampshire. The Committee received multiple deputations and comments from members of the public on the future of the homes and one day centre, and listened to presentations from officers before moving to questions and discussion. After significant debate, Members endorsed all of the recommendations to Cabinet, in addition to making their own recommendation on Bulmer House. Members will monitor the implementation of these recommendations in 2014/15.

4. **Call-in of Significant Executive Decisions:** None in this period

5. **Scrutiny of Budgets and Performance:** A cross-party group of Members continued to meet prior to Select Committee meetings in order to monitor the Department 'risk-list', and review efficiency saving programmes.

6. **Revenue and Capital Budget 2014/15:** Members pre-scrutinised the revenue and capital budget for 2014/15 onwards at their January 2014 meeting. Following questions, Members agreed with the recommendations set out to the

Executive Member for Adult Social Care and Public Health in relation to both the revenue and capital budget.

7. **Policy Review: Care Bill:** The Committee have formed a small cross-party Working Group to explore the impact of the Care Bill on the County Council, and to help review and shape the response by Adult Services to both the content of the Bill, and the implementation of the Bill when it becomes an Act. This group has met twice in 2013/14, in order to review the consultation on the funding elements of the Bill, and to comment on the draft wording of the proposed new eligibility criteria for service users and for carers. Further meetings will be arranged in 2014/15 to coincide with the release of more detailed information and guidance from Government.

8. **Questioning and Exploring Areas of Interest and Concern:**

- Better Care Fund – to understand the implications of the new Better Care Fund on the adult services department.
- Delayed Transfers of Care – to review delayed discharges in acute hospitals due to Hampshire patients with social care needs.
- Dementia in Hampshire – to understand work ongoing within the County prior to the Committee’s overview of dementia friendly communities.
- Mental Health Joint Commissioning Strategy – to monitor the implementation of the mental health joint commissioning strategy.
- Village Agents Programme – to receive an overview of the progress of the village agents programme, which is funded by the Department.

9. **Upcoming Topics:**

- Community Nutrition Strategy (*monitoring*)
- Dementia Friendly Communities (*overview*)
- End of Life Care (*policy review*)
- Integrated Offender Management (*monitoring*)
- IT support to Adult Services (*overview*)
- Mental Health Joint Commissioning Strategy (*monitoring*)
- Older People’s Day Services (*monitoring*)
- Promotion of Healthy Lifestyles (*scrutiny review*)
- Supporting People (*overview / pre-decision scrutiny*)
- Transformation of Reablement Services (*overview / pre-decision scrutiny*)
- Welfare Fund (*pre-decision scrutiny*)

Further details can be found at www.hants.gov.uk/councilmeetings.htm

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