

Scrutiny Annual Report to Council 2014/2015



To be considered at the City Council meeting
23 June 2015



Coventry City Council

www.coventry.gov.uk

Contents

Introduction	3
Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee	4
Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1)	8
Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)	10
Joint Scrutiny Boards (2) and (3)	13
Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)	14
Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)	18
Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5)	20
Details of how to find out more about Scrutiny	22



Introduction

“Scrutiny in its widest sense is an essential component of Cabinet government..... It is important that councillors test proposals by reference to their broad experience and their knowledge of the Borough and their own constituents. There should be nothing threatening about this; good officers should welcome challenge as a central part of local democracy.”

Communities and Local Government Select Committee Report:
Some Issues for Local Government November 2014



Scrutiny is under the spotlight as perhaps never before.

In 2013, the Francis Report, written after the Public Inquiry into failings at the Mid Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust, included criticisms of local scrutiny arrangements. It stressed the clear statutory responsibility to scrutinise the provider trusts in its area and the responsibility of elected members to identify and act on matters of concern.

Last year, Louise Casey’s report into child sexual exploitation in Rotherham also highlighted shortfalls in scrutiny as one element of wider failings in the authority. She said it was unclear **“how effective it has been in holding Cabinet Members and senior officers to account for their individual performance and decision-making”** and that **“Inspectors could not find much evidence of how scrutiny had changed practice or policy making.”**

For anyone in doubt about the importance of serious scrutiny, these are a wakeup call and the Communities and Local Government Select Committee’s recommendation for an inquiry into the operation of scrutiny within local government in England during the next parliament suggests that the way we work will continue to be kept under close review.

Scrutiny is not easy. It does not have any decision-making powers. It cannot set policy.

However, when it is done well, it can challenge Cabinet Members, council officers and partner organisations, holding them to account and recommending improvements for people living in, working in and visiting Coventry. I believe that fair and vigorous scrutiny of the Council Leadership and Cabinet Member policies and actions is essential to the efficient operation of our authority.

This report summarises just some of the issues that Scrutiny in Coventry has tackled over the last year, whether understanding the impacts on local people of some of the high profile issues that have dominated the national media such as female genital mutilation, child sexual exploitation and changes to welfare as well as issues of importance to the city such as access to jobs and health services.

I am grateful to the scrutiny chairs and committee members who have carried out this work and would like to take this opportunity to thank the local people, partners and officers who contributed during the year.

In the increasingly challenging world of local government I believe scrutiny is more important than ever.

Councillor Tony Skipper
Chair, Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee
2014/15

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee

Remit

In 2014-2015 the Committee was responsible for overseeing the Scrutiny function (including call-ins), considering cross-cutting issues and for the portfolios of the Cabinet Member (Policy and Leadership) and the Cabinet Member (Policing and Equalities). It was also designated the Board for oversight of crime and community safety.

Membership

Councillors Blundell, Clifford (Deputy Chair), Duggins, Innes, Sandy, Skipper (Chair), Singh, Taylor, Thomas.

Co-opted members for education matters: Mr R. Potter (Roman Catholic Church), Mrs S. Hanson (Church of England), Ms Kelly Jones (Primary Parent Governors) and 2 vacancies (Secondary Parent Governors and Other Faiths).

Activities and outcomes

At the start of the year, Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee reviewed the priority issues that had been identified at initial meetings of the boards to ensure a balanced scrutiny work programme.

One decision by Cabinet about the creation of a Public Space Protection Order (Coventry Dog Control) was called in for Scrutiny consideration during the year. One element of the call-in was accepted and considered by the Committee; after discussion the Committee concurred with the decision of Cabinet and rejected the call-in.

The Committee reviewed performance reports on the Council Plan and Equalities Strategy to ensure that progress was being made against the council's priorities and identified issues for the Scrutiny Boards to address as part of their work programmes.

The Board also scrutinised a range of issues under its remit and papers from their meetings are available via the weblink on page 22.

Examples of Scrutiny work undertaken by the Committee in 2014/15

Welfare Reform

Twice during the year, the Committee continued to review the impacts of Welfare Reform on local people, families and the city. They heard evidence from partners including Coventry Citizen's Advice Bureau, Coventry Law Centre, Coventry Women's Voices, Department for Work and Pensions, the University of Warwick's Centre for Human Rights in Practice and Whitefriars Housing. They were particularly concerned about the way these changes affect both vulnerable people in Coventry and the city's wider economy.

The Committee has been impressed at the detailed analysis which is being undertaken by partners in Coventry to understand these impacts and the way they are working together to use their resources to address concerns as effectively as possible.

In October 2014 the Committee considered the findings of a report, "The impact of benefit sanctions on people in Coventry". Its findings were in line with other national research in this area and raised significant concerns for the Committee about problems with communications, accuracy and the lack of flexibility to take into account the needs of vulnerable people. The Committee asked partners to report back on the work being undertaken locally to learn from the case studies in the report. It heard that many of

these problems are out of the control of local agencies and require national solutions. Following the meeting, the Chair of the Committee wrote to the city's local MPs asking them to raise these matters in Parliament.

Responding to National and Local Priorities

During the year, two of the issues that have caused significant concern across the country have been **female genital mutilation** and **child sexual exploitation**. These are extremely challenging and sensitive issues and Scrutiny has been keen to understand the extent of the issues in Coventry and assure itself that local organisations are working together effectively to protect victims and prevent future occurrences.

In October, the Committee heard evidence from Public Health and representatives of the Celestinecelest Community Organisation which provides support and education to those who are victims of or are at risk of female genital mutilation. The Committee reviewed the data available for Coventry and the responsibilities of agencies including the health sector, Police and the Council. The Committee supported the proposals for action that had been developed and asked that the Health and Well-being Board also consider a recommendation to pursue alternative educational approaches for dealing with the issue of female genital mutilation which will encourage local schools to engage in raising pupils' awareness. This was accepted by the Board.

Ending Female Genital Mutilation in Coventry

In December, the Committee invited representatives of Children's Social Care, the Police and the Safeguarding Children's Board to review the local context and approach being taken to child sexual exploitation. The Committee recognised that child sexual exploitation is a national issue which requires a multi-agency response and heard that a multi-disciplinary Team was being established in Coventry to ensure a joined up approach. The Committee welcomed the commitment of the Police and partners to the issue but asked that engagement with faith and community groups be continued and an action plan addressing risk and vulnerability be brought to a future meeting. They also asked the Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board to ensure that any links between patterns of school absence and potential child sexual exploitation are investigated.



Review of Police and Crime Board and Community Safety Partnership

In April, the Committee carried out its annual review of the work of the Police and Crime Board. Partners from the Board attended representing West Midlands Police, Voluntary Action Council, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, the Community Rehabilitation Service and Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust, as well as the Council's Youth Offending and Community Safety Services.

The Board reviewed performance against priorities for this year, investment in partnership activities to prevent and reduce the impacts of crime and considered the Board's priorities for the coming year.

While overall crime has decreased slightly over the last year, the Board questioned partners about increases in reported incidents of Domestic Violence and hate crime. They were supportive of the work being done by agencies in partnership to encourage reporting, work with victims and offenders and to prevent incidents occurring. Management of nightlife in the city centre was discussed and the Committee agreed to consider as a future work item the development of a Strategy which would give a positive and proactive approach to the creation of a safe and vibrant night time economy in the City Centre.



Air Quality

The Council is getting ready to update its plan for dealing with areas of poor air quality and the Committee wanted the opportunity to influence this work before it started.

Poor air quality puts people's health at risk, damages the environment and places a burden on local health service providers. Several studies in cities have shown that those living near busy roads are more at risk of suffering the symptoms of asthma and cardiovascular diseases while poor air quality plays a part in compounding health inequalities.

The Committee heard about how the Council monitors air quality in the city and the actions being taken to address emissions from

transport including traffic management, schemes to reduce congestion, environmental projects such as the city centre and ring road crossing by the station as well as investment in rail services on the Coventry to Nuneaton line and improved facilities for cyclists.

The Committee made recommendations about improving information and education on the links between poor air quality and health, increasing opportunities to improve air quality by environmental projects such as tree planting and making sure that the new plan addresses the links between poor air quality and health in the more deprived areas of the city. The Committee will review the developing plan in the new council year.



Finance and Corporate Services Scrutiny Board (1)

Remit

In 2014/2015, the Scrutiny Board was responsible for the scrutiny of the portfolio of the Cabinet Member (Strategic Finance and Resources).

Membership

Councillors Brown, Galliers, Hammon, Harvard, Kelly, Lakha, J Mutton, Sandy (Chair), Sawdon.

Activities and outcomes

The Board scrutinised and sought assurance on a range of issues under its remit and papers from their meetings are available via the weblink on page 22.

Examples of Scrutiny work undertaken by the Committee in 2014/15

Procurement Strategy and Social Value Policy

The Council's external spend amounts to some £300m per year and the delivery of an effective approach to procurement to maximise the outcomes from goods and services procured while reducing costs is a key priority. The Scrutiny Board reviewed progress against the Council's Procurement Strategy and challenged arrangements for monitoring, governance and compliance.

The Board was particularly keen to understand how the Council can use its buying power to deliver wider Council priorities. The Public Services (Social Value) Act requires public bodies in England and Wales to consider how procurement activity can improve the economic social and environmental well-being of the local area. The Board had scrutinised the draft policy in 2013/14 and wanted to look at how successful implementation of the policy had been. The policy has enabled procurement

activity to support local jobs and companies, including when subcontracting is involved and can be used to address equality and diversity issues.

One key area of interest for the Board was the number of apprenticeships created as a result of this Policy. It was explained that there were 35 young people on the Construction Shared Apprenticeship Scheme, which is an innovative scheme as it allows apprentices to move between placements enabling them to get experience on contracts which would otherwise be too short to allow completion of an apprenticeship. Members emphasised the importance of seeking these opportunities when undertaking procurement.

Customer Journey

The Scrutiny Board have considered the customer journey twice during the year as they sought assurances that ways of accessing Council services change, the most vulnerable will still be able to contact the Council. The new automated telephony system was discussed as was the new customer service centre, which is due to open in Broadgate House in September 2015.

However, when projected spend for the new customer service centre escalated, Members re-examined the issue to find out why the costs had been underestimated and to seek assurance that calculations for future projects would be more accurate. The original business case had not included the costs of some structural alterations, the removal of asbestos or the new entrance to the Customer Service Centre as it had been discovered that the existing ramp could not provide a disability compliant route.

The Scrutiny Board also robustly questioned officers on where the additional £2m now

required would come from to deliver the scheme and have requested that the Cabinet Member be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss reducing the level of risk on the next phase of property development.

2015/16 Capital Programme Overview

The Scrutiny Board received information regarding the City Council’s Capital Programme 2015/16, which is now an annual item for the Board, with the intention of reviewing the programme and seeking assurances that the programme was delivering Council priorities and that the implications and risks associated with the programme were understood.

The Scrutiny Board questioned officers on the Coventry Investment Fund (CIF) and requested further information on the proportion of investment through the CIF to private businesses and the City Council. This was felt to be important to clarify given the cut in revenue budgets, as the public sometimes raise concerns as to how spending on high

profile infrastructure projects can be justified at a time of service cuts.

Members further discussed the level of risk associated with different projects and Members still had some concern relating to project management, particularly arising from the issues from the Customer Services Centre. Members requested that their concerns be relayed to the Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources.



Education and Children's Services Scrutiny Board (2)

Remit

In 2014/2015, the Scrutiny Board was responsible for the scrutiny of the portfolios of the Cabinet Member (Children and Young People) and the Cabinet Member (Education).

Membership

Councillors Akhtar, Bains, Bigham, Blundell, Clifford, Innes (Chair), Lakha, Lepoidevin, M Mutton.

Co-opted members for education matters: Mr R. Potter (Roman Catholic Church), Mrs S. Hanson (Church of England), Ms Kelly Jones (Primary Parent Governor) and 2 vacancies (Secondary Parent Governors and Other Faiths).

Activities and outcomes

The Board scrutinised a range of issues under its remit and papers from their meetings are available via the weblink on page 22.

Examples of Scrutiny work undertaken by the Board in 2014/15

The Board has worked hard this year to maximise the time available for questioning and discussion, and reducing the time given to presentations.

Children's Services Improvement Board Reports

Following a resolution at Council, the Scrutiny Board has received progress reports at each of their meetings this year. The Board has been pleased to note progress, especially in terms of the reduction in numbers of children with a child protection plan and progress with recruitment. They recognise that there is still progress to be made and will continue to

receive reports next municipal year.

The Members requested further information on certain aspects of the reports, including more data, to enable them to get a better picture of progress made.

As part of the improvement work for children's services, at their meeting in February, the Board welcomed an update from Donald Hamilton, a former judge in the family courts who is a special advisor to the Leader of the Council on child protection matters. The Board were informed of the observations Mr Hamilton had made, including the progress of the Improvement Board.

Areas that required further progress were the use of agency workers, but this was reducing; the low number of telephone lines available for the Referral and Assessment Service (RAS); the capacity of partners represented on the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) and the perception of child protection in some schools. The need to value the important role of Health Visitors and Midwives in child protection was highlighted, as they were generally welcomed into the home. The value of the specialist children's Accident and Emergency department at University Hospital was also recognised. Court training for social workers was also discussed by the Board.

Members made recommendations to the Cabinet Member to address the concerns raised, which were accepted.

Members are keen to scrutinise the work of the newly established Child Sexual Exploitation Team and also the commissioned work with missing children.

ADOPT AND FOSTER FOR COVENTRY

Fostering Task and Finish Group

At their meeting on 22nd October 2014, a task and finish group was established to look at the recruitment and retention of internal foster carers.

The task and finish group met five times between November and March, and received information from officers on the current recruitment and marketing strategy, financial information on comparative costs of in-house and independent fostering agency carers and strategies to improve the relationships between social workers and foster carers. The Members also looked at information about Council Tax exemptions for Foster Carers but decided that there wasn't sufficient evidence to support such a policy.

There were also foster carers from Coventry Foster Carers Association represented on the group. Their input was invaluable and greatly appreciated by the Members.

At the end of the process the task and finish group had identified ten recommendations for the Cabinet Member. These included ways to deliver a "team around the child" which recognises foster carers as key professionals, ways to make training more accessible to foster carers and the Council becoming a Fostering Friendly Employer.

The Cabinet Member accepted the recommendations at his meeting in April and the Scrutiny Board will be monitoring progress on their implementation next municipal year.



Childhood memories last a lifetime

Together we can give children a childhood. It's time to make a difference.

Over 600 children in Coventry need a secure, loving, stable home. Adopt or Foster for Coventry and we will provide you with your own allocated social worker, quality training package, 24 hours a day support and generous allowances, helping you to make a real difference to children's lives. To find out more **text CHILDHOOD and your name to 07950 081216** (*) or come and chat with us on:

Saturday 24 January 10-12noon
Centre AT7, Bell Green Road, CV6 7GP

Tuesday 10 February 7-9pm
Xcel Leisure Centre, Mitchell Avenue, CV4 8DY

Wednesday 4 March 7-9pm
Centre AT7, Bell Green Road, CV6 7GP

For more information call the friendly team on **024 7683 2828**

All journeys are different - start a new one today.



www.coventry.gov.uk/adoptionandfostering

ADOPT AND FOSTER FOR COVENTRY

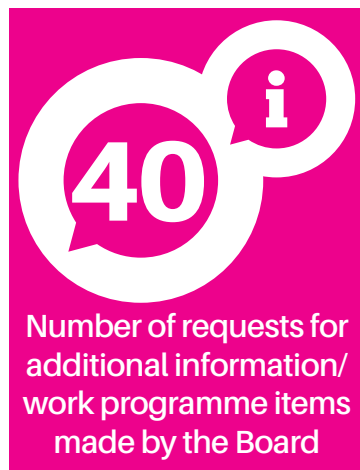


*Texts will be charged at your standard rate

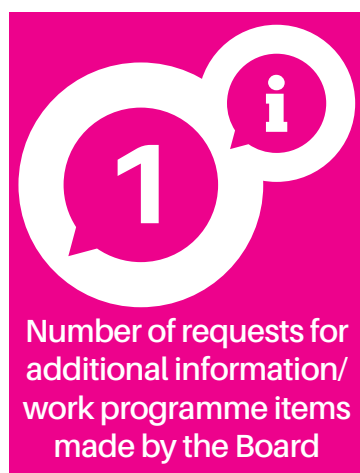
Visit to the Multi-Agency Service Hub (MASH)

In February, Members of the Board visited the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub. They had a brief tour of the offices and a presentation with input from social care, police and health colleagues. Members were updated on progress with implementation, as well as the aims and objectives of the new service. Members welcomed progress on different partners working closely together to improve services to children, young people and their families. They also heard some case studies that had been through the MASH and how information sharing and working together had improved outcomes for children. Members were pleased to hear that implementation was on track and they will receive a report on further progress at a meeting next municipal year.





Fostering task and finish group



Joint Scrutiny Boards (2) and (3)

Remit

Both the Education and Children's Services Board and the Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board wanted to look in more detail at what was being done in the city to address the issue of young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEET). It was therefore agreed that the two boards would look at the issues together.

Activities and outcomes

The joint Board met twice in September and March, calling in a range of partners to provide information about how they are working together to prevent young people from becoming NEET and also to support them into work or training if they are.

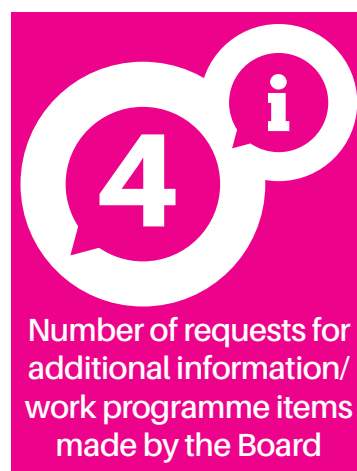
Representatives from the Council's Jobs and Economy Service attended the meetings, as well as officers from Education. There was also a representative from the local Department for Work and Pensions Job Centre Plus, RightStep (previously CSWP) who provide careers advice to schools, and the Principal from City College.

Members' main concerns were early identification and work being done with schools to support children and young people at risk of becoming NEET. They also asked questions about links with employers and the



quality of careers advice in schools. They were also concerned about the requirement for C's in English and Maths GCSE for progression to a Level 3 qualification, being a barrier for young people's progress and whether alternative learning in literacy and numeracy would be more appropriate for some young people.

Other areas of interest were around matching training courses to skills gaps and looked after children who were NEET and the effect that changes to the benefits system may be having on young people who are NEET.



Business, Economy and Enterprise Scrutiny Board (3)

Remit

In 2014/2015, the Scrutiny Board was responsible for the scrutiny of the portfolio of the Cabinet Member (Business, Enterprise and Economy) and the Cabinet Member (Culture, Leisure, Sports and Parks).

Membership

Councillors Bailey, Bigham, Birdi, Duggins (Chair), Mulhall, Skipper, Sweet, Walsh, Welsh.

Activities and outcomes

The Board scrutinised a range of issues under its remit and papers from their meetings are available via the weblink on page 22.

Examples of Scrutiny work undertaken by the Board in 2014/15

Visits to Coventry Job Shop and AT7 Centre

During the year the Board met at venues outside of the Council House. These were the Job Shop in Shelton Square and the new extension at the AT7 Centre on Bell Green Road.

These visits linked in with two important strategies being discussed by the Board, the Jobs Strategy and the Sports Strategy. Members agreed that it was most useful to visit venues where services are being delivered and want to continue this next year.

In July 2014, the Board held their meeting at the Job Shop. After a tour, Members were provided with details of the provisions and facilities available to assist the unemployed into employment through the Job Shop and the links with the Jobs Strategy.





The facility, supported by a range of partners including Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Partnership, Job Centre Plus, Public Health and Adult Education, enabled the unemployed to obtain guidance and advice about: jobs, apprenticeships and work placements; and courses and training; and gave practical assistance such as the completion of CVs and application forms.

The Shop had seen a footfall of 50,000, 10,000 registered users, and approximately 150 people visiting daily, since it had opened in January 2013. In addition, a newly established area, the Youth Zone, had recently resulted in 700 young people, mostly not in education or training, engaged in two apprenticeship events at the Shop.

At their meeting in January 2015, Members were given a tour of the new pool and facilities that have recently opened at the AT7 Centre, before discussing progress on the Sports Strategy. Members were able to question Council officers as well as representatives from Coventry Sports Foundation.

Members heard that the mission of the Coventry Sports Strategy 2014-2024 was 'To develop a more active, inclusive and vibrant Coventry through positive experiences in sport' and was structured around eight Vision Aims and 37 Strategic Objectives. Included within these were objectives concerned with increasing and widening participation in sport; increasing the number of people receiving sports coaching; increasing the number of people volunteering in sport; establishing and embedding early specialist support services

for talented athletes; developing City Centre sports facilities that are accessible, high quality, sustainable and of significance to the Midlands; attracting high profile sporting events to the City; establishing a Coventry Sports Network; and harnessing the power of sport to promote community cohesion and address public health inequalities in the City.

Members were particularly interested in and asked officers and partners about:

Improving access to sports facilities in the City in respect of public transport links

Increasing participation levels across vulnerable groups and deprived communities

Building stronger links with schools and universities for wider public participation

Tracking sports centre registration to provide data on diversity of memberships

Investigating, through the Parks Team, the better use of existing facilities in parks e.g. measured routes for running, trim trails, marked out pitches/areas for cricket, tennis, bowls and football

Health and Inequality - Public Health to identify high inactivity areas in the City and encourage participation, and include the promotion of Passport to Leisure

City Centre Development and Friargate

Members were interested to hear about progress with the developments both at Friargate, in terms of attracting other tenants to the development and also progress with the City Centre South project.

The Board were advised that both schemes were by their nature ambitious and of regional and national importance. The Friargate scheme had outline permission for three million square foot of office led development and would complement the City Centre South Scheme

which had outline permission for 560,000 square foot of retail led development.

The Board discussed the details of the proposals for marketing together with enquiries received from a hotel operator to provide a 150 bed hotel adjacent to Coventry Railway Station; there had also been interest from retailers, restaurants and a possible cinema. The Board raised questions in respect of the anchor store proposed for Friargate, car parking facilities and timescales.

What is Friargate?

Friargate is a new business district being created by the railway station. It will help attract businesses into the city centre - which will, in turn, support the critical mass of residents and commuters in the city needed to regenerate the city centre. Upon completion, Friargate will provide...

25

new buildings



14 Grade A office blocks



9 homes,
retail and
leisure



2 hotels

Public Transport

The Board was attended by representatives from Centro, including Councillor McNicholas in his role as Chair of Centro.

The Board discussed the the bus service provision in the City with officers, the Chair and representatives of Centro on the following matters:

Progress made and the on-going proposals for the implementation of bus interchanges and improved services and bus links at the University of Warwick, University Hospital and Coventry Rail Station

The future of Rapid Bus Transit in Coventry - Pilots in Birmingham, The Black Country and Coventry

Accessibility support from drivers for passengers with mobility issues and for parents with prams/buggies

Cleanliness of buses and cleaning standards: provision of litter bins; public facing cleaning regime charts; cleaning reporting procedures

Reliability and punctuality: monitoring services through Automatic Vehicle Location System Control Centre; performance timescales and targets for drivers

Driver training: National legal requirements Certificate of Professional Competence and NVQ level 2

Following the discussion Members of the Board requested that:

Centro Officers pursue the public display of bus cleaning regime charts, to include details of the process for the public to report cleaning issues

They visit the National Express Garage - Automatic Vehicle Location System Control Centre and receive a presentation on Rapid Bus Transit



Communities and Neighbourhoods Scrutiny Board (4)

Remit

In 2014/2015, the Scrutiny Board was responsible for the scrutiny of the portfolios of the Cabinet Member (Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise) and the Cabinet Member (Public Services) including issues relating to energy, the environment, street services, waste management, highways and lighting.

Membership

Councillors Auluck, Hammon, Harvard, T Khan, Miks, Mulhall, Singh (Chair) Skinner, Thay.

Activities and outcomes

The Board scrutinised a range of issues under its remit and papers from their meetings are available via the weblink on page 22.

Examples of Scrutiny work undertaken by the Board in 2014/2015

20 mph zones and limits

During the previous year, a Task and Finish Group had considered the need for a policy or framework against which requests for 20 mph zones or limits could be assessed. As a result of this work, the Scrutiny Board proposed a city wide approach to 20 mph restrictions and made recommendations about resourcing, objectives, prioritisation, monitoring and evaluation, consultation and engagement. The Cabinet Member for Public Services had accepted all nine of the recommendations and asked for this work to be progressed.

At their first meeting of the New Year, the Board received a report setting out the proposed prioritisation criteria for introducing 20 mph

zones and limits across the city. It reported that a budget of £125,000 had been allocated from the Highways Maintenance and Investment Capital Programme budget through the Local Transport Plan for 20mph zones in 2014/15. It also supported the introduction of a range of measures to monitor the impact of the schemes including speed and personal recorded injury collision data as requested by the Board.

The Cabinet Member subsequently approved a programme for 20mph zones and 20mph speed limits in September and monitoring and preparatory work is now underway. Further resources were allocated in the 2015/16 Transport and Highways Maintenance Capital Programme agreed by Council in March 2015.

Active Citizens, Strong Communities

During the year, the Board held two meetings with the Cabinet Member for Community Development, Co-operatives and Social Enterprise to help shape the Council's approach to promoting active citizenship and strong communities.

This is an important part of the Council's ambitions for Coventry and its commitment to making the city a globally connected city that is attractive to businesses and investors – but also locally committed to improving the quality of life for all its residents. The Council recognises that the best way to make sure that economic growth and investment in the city benefits local people is to enable and empower residents, communities and groups to use and develop their own skills and potential to take control over their own lives, particularly at a time when the Council's resources are being significantly reduced.

The Board helped shape the Strategy and implementation plan that was subsequently agreed by Cabinet, including renaming the programme to make it much clearer what it was about. The Board will be keen to review progress during the coming year.



Improving the city's physical environment

The city has an unprecedented programme of physical improvements taking place, with millions of pounds being invested in Coventry's roads to create space for development and make sure traffic flows more smoothly. The city has also been successful in securing money from the Department for Transport's Local Sustainable Transport Fund to improve cycling in the city.

The Board recognised the opportunities presented by these schemes but wanted to

assure themselves that traffic management and enforcement arrangements were in place to manage the short term disruption of this activity and keep the city moving.

The Scrutiny Board looked into the use of Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras, Variable Message Signs (VMS) and how well information was communicated, as well as the work being undertaken with partners to co-ordinate street works.



Health and Social Care Scrutiny Board (5)

Remit

In 2014/2015, the Scrutiny Board was responsible for the scrutiny of health, adult social care and health inequalities, including the portfolio of the Cabinet Member (Health and Adult Services). The Board is also the designated committee under the Health and Social Care Act 2001 for scrutiny of local NHS services.

Membership

Councillors Ali, Clifford, Hetheron, Howells, J Mutton, O'Boyle, Skinner, Taylor, Thomas (Chair) Co-opted Member Mr J Mason (June - January); Mr D Spurgeon (February onwards).

Activities and outcomes

The Board scrutinised a range of issues under its remit and papers from their meetings are available via the weblink on page 22.

Examples of Scrutiny work undertaken by the Board in 2014/2015

Director of Health Annual Report 2014 and Developing a Primary Care System fit for the Future

The Scrutiny Board discussed the Director of Public Health's Annual Report 'Primary Care at the Heart of our Health' in September which focused on the primary care system and its role in addressing health inequalities, with a particular emphasis on general practice. The Board looked at the approaches being taken to enable easier access to appointments for patients, encourage better self-care and make GP practice a more attractive career opportunity for medics. Present at the meetings were representatives from the Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Board, Local Medical Council, GP Alliance and NHS Area Team, which enable the Board to gain a fuller understanding of the work being undertaken.

The Board reviewed the progress being made on this area of work in February, when they looked at developing a Primary Care System Fit for the Future. Considerable progress had been made across a number of areas. The Primary Care Quality Group were exploring asset based development approaches to encourage and empower people to have a greater role in managing their own health and Public Health had also completed a pharmaceutical needs assessment to ensure pharmacy provision was adequate in the city. The Coventry GP Alliance was established in 2014 by local GPs with the vision of protecting, improving and enhancing primary care in the city. Reference was made to a workshop held in February 2015 which was attended by representatives from across the primary care system to start building a shared vision.

The Board were informed that future work would continue to build upon these areas with innovative practice being celebrated at a GP award evening planned to take place in June. The Primary Care Quality Group will also work to address the challenges primary care faced, undertaking projects to improve GP recruitment and retention in the city and empowering and enabling people to access community, lifestyle and pharmacy services as well as looking after themselves. A successful bid to the Prime Minister's Challenge Fund 'Best Care, Anywhere: Integrated Primary Care in Coventry', means there will be lots of work undertaken in this area which the Board will continue to scrutinise as it develops.



Winter Pressures

The Board was aware of reports that in Winter of 2014/15 pressures on services at the University Hospital site reached critical levels. Pressure on Accident and Emergency Services was the topic most commonly discussed in the media however, whilst investigating this issue the Board found the actual causes were more widespread.

The Board looked at this issue twice, once in the lead up to winter, September to look at planning for winter, and once in February in response to concerns that pressures were not being managed. The Board invited representatives from UHCW, Coventry and Rugby Clinical Commissioning Group and Adult Social Care to enable them to explore the wider issues and the knock on impact this has on A&E performance. The Chair of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Warwickshire County Council was present too. The chaos experienced in some other similar hospitals was not repeated in Coventry despite high demands for care.

Clinical Management of Large Scale Chronic Diseases

The Board were informed how the services being delivered in primary care to prevent the onset or progression of long term conditions are currently commissioned by Public Health. They heard about the existing pathways designed to prevent progression and manage specific long-term conditions; detailed plans to transform existing long term conditions pathways, focusing on areas where a move towards delivery of care in primary care setting was planned; and highlighted plans to provide more integrated, holistic care for patients with multiple long term conditions or frailty rather than focussing on individual conditions.

The Board have asked to follow up on the outcomes of pilot projects which are designed to prevent onset or progression of a number of different long term health conditions due to the planned changes to treatment pathways.

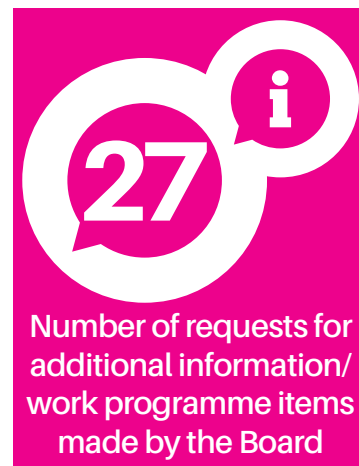


Aged 40-74?
Find out about our **FREE NHS Health Check**

Even though you might be feeling great, if you're over forty you may be at risk of heart disease, stroke, kidney disease, diabetes or dementia.

A **FREE NHS Health Check** can help you reduce these risks and make sure that you stay healthy.

If you are eligible please contact your GP to book an appointment, or call 024 7696 1590 to identify other community venues near you.



Details of how to find out more about Scrutiny

Agendas, reports and minutes for all Scrutiny meetings are on the Council's website at http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/354/council_meetings

More information on Scrutiny at Coventry City Council is available on the Council's website at www.coventry.gov.uk/scrutiny or from:

Scrutiny Team
Coventry City Council
Council House
Earl Street
Coventry City Council
CV1 5RR

If you need this information in another format or language please contact

Tel: 024 7683 1122
e-mail: scrutiny@coventry.gov.uk