



Annual Council

Monday, 22 May 2023

Subject: Overview & Scrutiny Annual Report 2022/23

Report by:

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Purpose / Summary:

To present the Annual Report from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

RECOMMENDATION(S):

- 1) That Members receive the Annual Report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

IMPLICATIONS

Legal: The Chairman of the Committee is required constitutionally (Part II, Article 7, paragraph 7.6) to submit an annual report to Council on the work the Committee has undertaken.

Financial: FIN/9/24

There are no financial implications arising from this report

Staffing: The Committee is supported from existing resources and there are no other implications arising from this report.

Equality and Diversity including Human Rights: N/A

Data Protection Implications: N/A

Climate Related Risks and Opportunities: N/A

Section 17 Crime and Disorder Considerations: N/A

Health Implications: N/A

Title and Location of any Background Papers used in the preparation of this report :

Agenda and minutes arising from the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held during the 2022/2023 civic year, all of which are located on the West Lindsey District Council website.

<https://democracy.west-lindsey.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=386&Year=0>

Risk Assessment:

N/A

Call in and Urgency:

Is the decision one which Rule 14.7 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules apply?

i.e. is the report exempt from being called in due to urgency (in consultation with C&I chairman)

Yes

No

x

Key Decision:

A matter which affects two or more wards, or has significant financial implications

Yes

No

x

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Chairman of the Committee is required constitutionally (Part II, Article 7, paragraph 7.6) to submit an annual report to council, in which she details the work her committee has undertaken through the previous civic year and summarise the proposals for the work plan over the coming year. In line with the terms of reference for the committee, the Chairman should also update Annual Council with any amendments to the committee's operating methodology.
- 1.2 The Chairman's Annual Report is set out below.

2 Chairman's Annual Report

- 2.1 The start of the 2022/23 Civic Year saw a renewed membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, including my first year as Chairman, ably assisted by Vice Chairman Councillor Patterson. Having been a Member of the Committee for some time, I was keen to continue those work streams that had already been started, as well as exploring other avenues through the course of the year.
- 2.2 Throughout 2022/23, we have welcomed several representatives from outside agencies: some returning faces and some new. We have continued to be involved in the scrutiny of the Progress and Delivery reports, as presented to the two policy committees, and we were pleased to see the introduction of the Performance Improvement Plans for closer monitoring of those services where it is needed.
- 2.3 As per our Constitution, we reviewed the Operating Methodology at our meeting in June 2022. Discussions were detailed and robust, generating some key recommendations, something that is covered in further detail in section 5 of this report.
- 2.4 At the time of writing, we are preparing for our final meeting of the year, and indeed, our current term of office. We are receiving an update report on the management of flooding risk in the district, as well as a follow up report to the work undertaken on improving the Disabled Facilities Grants process. Both work streams were initiated and overseen by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and it will be of great interest to us all to hear the progress achieved.

3 Progress and Delivery

- 3.1 Where the scrutiny committee has always been involved in the Progress and Delivery reporting cycle (even in its previous guise as the Challenge and Improvement Committee), this year has seen the introduction and

implementation of something that has long been championed by our Committee: the Performance Improvement Plans.

- 3.2 Building on the comments raised at both policy committees, and as a result of the referrals from those committees to Overview and Scrutiny, we had frequently requested a form of closer monitoring and action plan status for those areas where there were repeated concerns over two reporting periods expressed by Members.
- 3.3 At our meeting in January 2023, we received the quarter 2 P&D report, with the first version of the Performance Improvement Plans, with all Members expressing their support for the plans, and the much improved level of detail contained within the document.
- 3.4 I do anticipate that this additional information contained within the Progress and Delivery reports will greatly assist all Members, and specifically those in our scrutiny role, to have not only a better understanding of any issues, but also to be assured of the steps taken to bring about the necessary improvement.
- 3.5 As the scrutiny committee for West Lindsey, we have continued to build on our role in the scrutiny of the Council's progress and delivery commitments, and I would hope the strength of the Committee's input is continued into future iterations of the Committee.

4 Programme of Outside Agencies and Presentation Items

- 4.1 As mentioned earlier in my report, we have welcomed some new and some returning faces to present to the Committee, with the hope that we shall see some return again, in the next Civic Year. Our first presentation was from the Citizens Advice, which proved to be a timely reminder of the impact of the cost of living crisis. The Council supports the organisation through grant funding and it was both reassuring to know such a worthwhile organisation is able to continue operating, whilst also being of increasing concern that there is such a growing demand for their support and assistance. I am sure there will be continued need for their widening services, perhaps to be revisited at a future meeting.
- 4.2 Following their presentation in March 2022, representatives from Everyone Active joined us again in November last year, with a detailed and enthusiastic overview of exactly what had been achieved since their last visit to us. There was significant discussion regarding existing and proposed outreach services, with many Members committing to supporting those efforts in their wards, as well as working with Everyone Active where possible. Our guest speakers honestly acknowledged areas where there was still improvement needed, although they were able to present clear priorities and time scales for such improvements to be implemented. I speak on behalf of the Committee when I say we were

grateful for their openness and honesty, and I do hope the coming year will see further positive updates from them.

- 4.3 In September 2022, we welcomed the return of Inspector Brockie for his update on policing in the district. We heard promising news of new recruits coming to Lincolnshire and West Lindsey directly, as well as the ongoing recruitment drive for PCSO's. Inspector Brockie informed the Committee of the Force's plans for increased numbers of Officers, including a dedicated road policing team, something that was widely welcomed by Members. Although it is a statutory requirement for the Council to receive an update from the Police, their attendance at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee does allow for in depth discussion and engagement, and we look forward to their attendance at our meetings.
- 4.4 Following the presentation from the Police, at our next meeting we heard from representatives of Future 4 Me, who work with young people for the prevention and early intervention with regard to youth offending. To say it was eye-opening would be an understatement. Full details of their presentation are given in the minutes of that meeting (October 2022), but it was a shining example of where the Council can engage with such organisations through the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Not only did it aid our understanding and knowledge of their work, but it enabled our guests to reach a new audience and I'm sure they found it as positive as we did.
- 4.5 The programme of outside agencies will need to be discussed for the new Civic Year, although I do hope some of the themes that have been developed thus far will continue with the Committee's support.
- 4.6 At our final meeting of the year at the end of March, we received two update reports following on from prior work of the Committee. The first, regarding Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs), was the culmination of targeted improvements to the DFG process following an initial Progress and Delivery review through the Committee. We were heartened to hear of the reduced time to process the DFG referrals, even in the face of increased numbers of applications, and it was reassuring to know there were further service reviews planned to make even greater improvements. Where the policy committees had highlighted concerns, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was able to focus on the specifics, and it was encouraging to see the ongoing success of the team.
- 4.7 We also heard the latest news regarding the management of flood risk across the district, with the initiation of this work stream having come about following persistent focus from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Having been set up to act as an intermediary between various agencies, and for the Council to hold an influencing and facilitating role, it was excellent to hear the success of this way of working.

- 4.8 The second of the bi-annual flood reports will be received by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee around September 2023, and I am sure I speak for all when we say we wish the continued and growing success to all Officers and Members involved in the future.

5 Operating Methodology

- 5.1 As is usual practice, we gave consideration to the Committee's Operating Methodology at our first meeting of the Civic Year. Following feedback from Committee Members, it was suggested that the review of the Operating Methodology could be incorporated into preparations for the Annual Report presented to Annual Council, allowing Committee Members earlier opportunity to comment on suggested amendments.
- 5.2 With this in mind, the current Operating Methodology is attached (appendix 1), and formed a part of the discussions at our meeting in March 2023. Comments arising from that meeting have been logged and any proposed updates and amendments will be incorporated into the Operating Methodology for agreement at the first meeting of the Committee in the new Civic Year.

6 Look Forward to Next Year

- 6.1 As I have referred to previously, with the Elections looming, we have no way of knowing what the Council or the Overview and Scrutiny Committee will look like after May. Elements of the Committee work will no doubt continue without change, such as the invitations to Lincolnshire Police and the involvement with the Progress and Delivery reporting. I would like to think invitations are extended to some of our guests this year, certainly further update from Everyone Active would no doubt be welcomed.

7 Concluding Remarks

- 7.1 It has been a privilege to Chair this committee for the last year and I have greatly appreciated the valuable support of our Officers. I thank all Members of the committee for their enthusiastic and active participation and for making it enjoyable.