

Item No. 3.6	Classification: Open	Date: 16 September 2020	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2019/20	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
From:		Overview and Scrutiny Committee	

FOREWORD - COUNCILLOR IAN WINGFIELD, CHAIR OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

In line with the Council's Constitution, I present this report to the Annual Council meeting. This last year and a quarter has clearly been more eventful than we would have predicted. It has presented huge challenges to members, officers and council services in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. I am pleased to report that the Scrutiny function and its members have risen to those challenges as the year has progressed. I would like to thank all members of the overview and scrutiny committee (OSC), the scrutiny commissions and those that have deputised for their hard work and effort in their contributions. The scrutiny function of the council has proven itself responsive to current public concerns and more inclusive of members input. This is reflected in the excellent scrutiny commission reports that have been completed, or are near completion, with innovative recommendations. I am not going to hide the fact that the lockdown initially produced more challenges both in scrutinising the council's response to Covid-19, reviewing our Council Plan and financial position, and gaps in our procedural guidance virtual meetings. However, this report demonstrates that we overcame such obstacles.

The year has also seen many important interviews with senior politicians and public servants including two Borough Police Commanders, the Fire Service Borough Commander and Cabinet Members. Scrutiny has played a pivotal role in being responsive to critical events in a rapid manner (as OSC has done with issues on the Brandon and Kingswood estates this year). OSC took the lead in ensuring that such issues were investigated thoroughly, with soundly based recommendations addressing public concerns. I must also stress that recommendations from OSC and the Commissions have come forward on a cross-party basis between Labour and Liberal Democrat Members without the need for a voting division. It has also demonstrated the importance of the Scrutiny function working in tandem with Cabinet Members to ensure the value of overview to the services received by our residents.

The future work plan continues to prioritise areas such as the impact of Covid-19, community engagement, the environment, climate change and sustainability, health inequalities, educational and employment opportunities for young people and on-going regeneration of the borough. These and more issues scrutinised will help influence the shaping of Council policy in ensuring that meeting the needs of the most disadvantaged, vulnerable and needy will always form a core part. I recommend this report to the annual council assembly meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That council assembly note the scrutiny activity for the 2019/20 year as detailed in paragraphs 9 – 46 of the report.

2. That council assembly note the proposed areas of activity for 2020/21, which builds upon some of the work undertaken in 2019/20 and the council's response to Covid-19 (paragraphs 47).

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

3. The council's scrutiny function provides a critical challenge to delivery of public services in Southwark through power to make inquiry into matters of local concern. The scrutiny function is undertaken by the council's overview and scrutiny committee and its commissions and can take a number of forms including.
 - Reviews into individual topics
 - 'Call in' – scrutiny of executive decisions taken before they are implemented
 - Call to account of officers on receipt of a petition of 500 or more signatures from the general public
 - Interviews with individual cabinet members and senior officers.
4. The overview and scrutiny committee and its commissions have specific functions in respect of policy development and review, health and wellbeing, scrutiny of decisions and performance of the council in relation to policy objectives. The committee and its commission may make recommendations to the cabinet and/or council assembly arising from the outcome of a scrutiny process.
5. The scrutiny function is significant and wide ranging – detail of its specific functions and terms of reference are set out in Appendix 1 of the report.
6. Section 2, Article 5 of the Council Constitution requires overview and scrutiny committee to report annually to council assembly on the workings of the overall scrutiny function. The committee may make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate. Section 6.1(h) of the overview and scrutiny committee procedure rules (terms of reference) requires overview and scrutiny committee to report annually to all councillors on the previous year's scrutiny activity. This report sets out the activity of overview and scrutiny committee and its commissions for the 2019/20 year and provides an indication of proposed areas to take forward for 2020/21.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Activity of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its commissions

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Membership: Councillors Ian Wingfield (Chair), Jane Salmon (Vice-Chair), Humaira Ali, Peter Babudu, Victor Chamberlain, Helen Dennis, Gavin Edwards, Alice Macdonald, Jason Ochere, Victoria Olisa, Leanne Werner

(Reserves: Councillors Anood Al-Samerai, Jack Buck, Tom Flynn, Jon Hartley, Eleanor Kerslake, Sunny Lambe, David Noakes, Michael Situ, Cleo Soanes)

7. The overview and scrutiny committee established four scrutiny commissions for the 2019/20 municipal year:

- Education and Business Scrutiny Commission
 - Environment Scrutiny Commission.
 - Health and Social Care Scrutiny Commission
 - Housing Scrutiny Commission.
8. Both the Education and Business Scrutiny Commission and the Environment Scrutiny Commission were established as roving scrutiny commissions with the capacity to look into matters that came up throughout the year that were not specifically within the remit of a particular commission.

Activity

9. The overview and scrutiny committee considered a number of local issues during the 2019/20 year brought about by residents / local ward councillor concerns, which included South Dock Marina Fees, Kingswood Estate External Wall Insulation proposals and Brandon Estate issues (following three murders on the estate). The committee made a number of recommendations to cabinet on these issues.
10. The committee reviewed the allocation of local community infrastructure levy (CIL) funding and discussed the local funding programmes that were available to local people through a bidding process. The committee also held interviews with Councillor Kieron Williams, cabinet member for housing management and modernisation and Councillor Victoria Mills, cabinet member for finance, performance and Brexit. The committee also interviewed Philip Morton, Fire Brigade Borough Commander for Southwark, and Chief Superintendent Colin Wingrove, Police Borough Commander for Southwark and Lambeth.
11. The overview and scrutiny committee held its annual budget scrutiny meeting which involved interviews with all the cabinet member portfolio holders and chief officers on the proposed council budget for 2020-21 to 2022-23. The committee also held a special meeting to hear from cabinet members and council officers on the Council's response to the Covid-19 Pandemic.
12. The committee also received a presentation from the Southwark LGBT Network and Healthwatch Southwark on their joint report 'Strong in Southwark' (Southwark LGBTQ+ Community Consultation 2018-19) which explored the needs and experience of Southwark's LGBT+ communities.
13. The committee also considered a referral from Cabinet in connection with the Leisure Management Contract management arrangements - Post Covid-19.
14. The overview and scrutiny committee considered two call-ins during 2019/20:
- Contract Award - generalist community legal advice services 2020-25
 - Delivering a climate strategy for Southwark
15. The overview and scrutiny committee met ten times – its first meeting held in June 2019 (up to July 2020).

[Link to agenda and minutes](#) (overview and scrutiny committee)

Scrutiny Commissions

Education and Business Scrutiny Commission

Membership: Councillors Peter Babudu, Chair, William Hougbo, (Vice-Chair), Karl Eastham, Renata Hamvas, Eleanor Kerslake, Lorraine Lauder MBE, Eliza Mann, Lynette Murphy-O'Dwyer (co-opted member) and Martin Brecknell (co-opted member)

(Reserves: Councillors Humaira Ali, Radha Burgess, Tom Flynn, Richard Leeming, Michael Situ, Leanne Werner)

16. The education and business scrutiny commission's main areas of focus for 2019/20 were *Education: Exclusions and Alternative Provision / Procurement: Accessibility and Social Value*.

Exclusions and Alternative Provision

17. The commission investigated the rising trend of exclusions in Southwark. The Commission also looked at the educational attainment of children attending core alternative provision in Southwark, which has historically been poor. As part of the scrutiny review process the Commission interviewed various council officers, the cabinet member for Children, Schools and Adult Care, surveyed local schools and heard from young people with direct experience of exclusions. The Commission also surveyed children, parents and carers across Southwark to try to understand why exclusions were rising. The commission interviewed one of Ofsted's Inspectors and took contributions from a national charity providing alternative provision in Southwark (Chance UK). Members of the Commission also visited Southwark's Pupil Referral Unit and heard from alternative provision providers in other local authorities.
18. Following the evidence gathering sessions that were held through the course of the year, the commission formulated its report and made nine recommendations to cabinet. A copy of the full report is available to view [here](#).

Accessibility and Social Value

19. The commission investigated how accessible procurement opportunities in Southwark are to local businesses and community organisations. The commission placed particular emphasis on understanding how accessible procurement opportunities are to businesses that are led (at Director level) by people with protected characteristics that are typically underrepresented in business leadership. The commission also looked at the Council's early activity to implement social value provisions of its Fairer Future Procurement Framework.
20. The commission used a range of methods to gather evidence, including interviews with various council officers, discussions with local business improvement districts (BIDs) and Southwark's Chamber of Commerce, interview with the Cabinet Member for Growth, Development and Planning. The commission also received information on schemes to help local businesses to access commercial procurement opportunities and from other local authorities that have taken ambitious steps to make their procurement activity more accessible to local businesses.

21. The commission's work built on previous scrutiny and audit activity and drew upon the overview and scrutiny committees 2015 review of the Council's procurement practices and the audit, governance and standards committee's ongoing analysis of implementation of the Fairer Future Procurement Framework.
22. Following the evidence gathering sessions, the commission formulated its report and made nine recommendations to cabinet. A copy of the full commission report is available to view [here](#).
23. In addition to the main areas of focus, the Education and Business Scrutiny Commission held interview, question and answer sessions. Sessions were held with the cabinet member for children, schools and adult care in respect of council activity in connection with 'Children Returning to School' post Covid-19 lockdown and with the cabinet member for jobs, business and innovation on council activity in relation to 'Resilience for the Business Community' in light of Covid-19.
24. The commission met six times - its first meeting held in September 2019 (up to July 2020).

[Link to agenda and minutes](#) (Education and Business Scrutiny Commission)

Environment Scrutiny Commission

Membership: Councillors Leanne Werner, Chair, Graham Neale, Vice-Chair, Radha Burgess, Tom Flynn, Richard Leeming, Damian O'Brien, Michael Situ and Jeremy Leach (co-opted member)

(Reserves: Councillors Peter Babudu, Karl Eastham, Renata Hamvas, Eleanor Kerslake, Lorraine Lauder MBE, Adele Morris)

25. The environment scrutiny commission's main areas of focus for 2019/20 were *Air Quality / Review of the Climate Emergency Strategy*

Air Quality

The environment scrutiny commission looked into the issue of air quality, which is a major health problem in Southwark, one of the major contributors being transport emissions, particularly diesel. The commission's objective was to put forward recommendations that seek to recreate Southwark as an inner city area with high air quality marked by the lowest possible private car use and ownership, freight delivered sustainably and an urban environment that is highly conducive to walking and cycling.

In conducting the review, the commission heard from various senior council officers, interviewed the cabinet member for environment, transport and the climate emergency and cabinet member for growth, development and planning. The commission also heard from a number of groups, organisations and individuals and took into account a number of documents and information, including a short film, 'Southwark Voices'.

Following the evidence gathering sessions, the commission formulated its report and made 20 recommendations to cabinet. A copy of the full commission report is available to view [here](#) (see item 11)

Review of the Climate Emergency Road Map

The cabinet member for environment, transport and climate emergency presented the Climate Emergency Strategy draft road map to Environment Scrutiny Commission at their October 2019 meeting. The commission discussed the plan and heard from Councillor Adam Harrison, cabinet member for a sustainable Camden and Extinction Rebellion (Southwark).

The commission submitted a report to cabinet on the climate emergency road Map for consideration alongside the 'Delivering a Climate Strategy for Southwark' – considered by cabinet in October 2019. The commission made eight recommendations to cabinet. A copy of the full commission report is available to view [here](#) (see item 8 – appendix 3)

Second report on the Climate Emergency Strategy

Following on from the review of the climate emergency road map, the environment scrutiny commission took an overview role in examining the emerging Climate Emergency strategy. This second scrutiny commission review reflected on the cabinet response to the commission's report on the road map and took a deeper dive into a number of issues including, local transport emissions, planning, regeneration and carbon offsetting, and community energy.

The commission made 16 recommendations to cabinet. A copy of the full commission report is available to view [here](#).

The commission met seven times – its first meeting held in July 2019 (up to July 2020)

[Link to agenda and minutes](#) (Environment Scrutiny Commission)

Health and Social Care Scrutiny Commission

Membership: Councillors Victoria Olisa, Chair, David Noakes, Vice-Chair, Helen Dennis, Paul Fleming, Maria Linforth-Hall, Darren Merrill and Charlie Smith

(Reserves: Councillors Jack Buck, Dora Dixon-Fyle MBE, Jon Hartley, Jane Salmon, Bill Williams, Leanne Werner)

26. The health and social care scrutiny commission's main areas of focus for 2019/20 were *Care Homes Quality Assurance / Mental Health of Children and Young People*.

Care Home Quality Assurance

27. The health and social care scrutiny commission investigated the quality of care of Southwark providers and out of borough placements used by Southwark adults, to ensure people in both local and out of borough placements are safe, well and in suitable accommodation. The review had a particular focus on examining the assurance and inspection processes in place to see if they are performing well.
28. In carrying out the scrutiny review the commission received evidence from

various officers in the council and CCG, Healthwatch Southwark, former Lay Inspectors, Age UK Lewisham and Southwark, Unions, Carers. The commission also considered CQC reports.

29. Following the evidence gathering sessions, the commission formulated its report and made 13 recommendations to cabinet. A copy of the full commission report is available to view [here](#).

Mental Health of Children and Young People

30. The scrutiny review into the mental health of children and young people focuses on how the council plans to meet the ambitious 100% of young people requiring support, how the new Open Access hub can help meet this need, how people will access the service and other community solutions targeted at certain communities, e.g. BAME and young men in crisis. This scrutiny review is still ongoing.
31. In addition to the main areas of focus the commission has also looked at the revision of the Community Pharmacies contract to ensure that there was sufficient geographical spread of needle exchange and drug (methadone) consumption service across the borough. The commission has received updates and briefings from Council and CCG officers on a number of Covid-19 related issues in respect of impact on residents and staff in Care Homes and the Home Care Service, impact on the general population of Southwark and the NHS, and the equalities impact of Covid-19.
32. The commission has also received information from the South East London CCG on the merger of the six CCGs in south east London (Bexley, Bromley, Greenwich, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark) and the impact of the merger on NHS services, and the various communities across the south east London area.
33. The commission will have met seven times - its first meeting held in October 2019 (up to September 2020).

[Link to agenda and minutes](#) (Health and Social Care Scrutiny Commission)

Housing Scrutiny Commission

Membership: Councillors Gavin Edwards, Chair, Hamish McCallum, Vice-Chair, Jack Buck, Dora Dixon-Fyle MBE, Jon Hartley, Nick Johns, Bill Williams, Cris Claridge (co-opted member), Ina Negoita (co-opted member)

(Reserves: Councillors Anood Al-Samerai, Helen Dennis, Paul Fleming, Darren Merrill, Victoria Olisa, Charlie Smith)

34. The housing scrutiny commission's main areas of focus for 2019/20 were *the Housing Repairs Service / District Heating and Heat Networks*.

The Housing Repairs Service

35. The housing scrutiny commission investigated service delivery and methods of monitoring in the repairs service to establish how well it was performing since it came back in house and to make recommendations to improve it. The review was undertaken with prioritisation given from the perspective of tenants and leaseholders who rely on the service.
36. In carrying out the scrutiny review, the commission held formal and informal interviews with officers, interviewed the cabinet member for housing management, spent a day with the housing repairs team, attended Tenants Council and visited Islington Council (who took Repairs back in-house in 2014). The commission also considered information/reports on the status of the repairs service, key performance indicators for the repairs service, missed appointments statistics, complaints and member enquiry statistics, reviewed examples from councillors' casework and carried out a repairs service user survey.
37. Following the evidence gathering sessions, the commission formulated its report and made nine recommendations to cabinet. A copy of the full commission report is available to view [here](#).

District Heating and Heat Networks

38. The housing scrutiny commission investigated the council's approach to district heating systems for three primary reasons: 1) Because the council was already engaged in wide-ranging projects to upgrade existing systems and to expand district heating in the borough; 2) Because the number and regularity of outages of existing district heating systems cause significant inconvenience and discomfort to residents; 3) Southwark will need to respond to changes in government regulations regarding individual metering and the regulation of heat networks.
39. In carrying out the scrutiny review, the housing scrutiny commission held formal interviews with the cabinet member for housing management and officers leading on the response to district heating failures and the strategic investment and extension of SELCHP and the wider heat network. The commission also considered case studies on the Aylesbury and Brandon Estates (including hearing directly from residents and local ward councillors), notes from Tenant engagement meetings, formal evidence submitted by Southwark Group of Tenants Organisations (SGTO) and a further dossier from SGTO "Keeping the pressure on".
40. Following the evidence gathering sessions, the commission formulated its report (which is still in draft form) and is due to make 12 recommendations to cabinet. A copy of the full commission report (in draft form) is available to view [here](#).
41. In addition to the main areas of focus, the commission also looked at the council's relationship with housing associations. As part of this exercise, the commission heard from residents who were experiencing problems with their housing association provider. The commission also heard from a local ward councilor and the housing association provider. The commission agreed to make a number of recommendations to cabinet. A copy of the scrutiny commission report is available to view [here](#) (see item 8).

42. The commission met seven times - its first meeting held in July 2019 (up to September 2020).

[Link to agenda and minutes](#) (Housing Scrutiny Commission)

Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees (JHOSC)

43. There is provision in the constitution for the council to form a joint health overview and scrutiny committee (JHOSC) with other local authorities to consider a consultation on a proposal for substantial development of or variation to the health service affecting each council's area. Detailed below are the current JHOSCs that relate to Southwark.

Our Healthier South East London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC)

Membership: (Southwark) Councillors David Noakes, Victoria Olisa
Councillors Richard Diment, Mark James, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Chris Lloyd,
Nanda Manley-Browne, Marianna Masters, Robert Mcilveen, John Muldoon

44. Southwark is part of the 'Our Healthier South East London Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee', which consists of councillor representatives from Bexley, Bromley, Lambeth, Lewisham, Greenwich and Southwark. The JHOSC was established in 2016 to look at proposals for a five-year commissioning strategy developed by the 6 CCGs which aims to improve health, reduce health inequalities and ensure all health services in south east London meet safety and quality standards consistently and are sustainable in the longer term.

The JHOSC is currently administered by Bromley Council.

This Committee met three times during 2019/20 – its first meeting held in July 2019 (up to September 2020)

[Link to agenda and minutes](#) (Our Healthier South East London JHOSC)

Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) Lambeth and Southwark

Membership: (Southwark) Councillors Victoria Olisa (Vice-Chair),
Maria Linforth-Hall, Charlie Smith (Lambeth) Councillors Marianna Masters
(Chair), Joshua Lindsey, Nanda Manley-Browne

45. The overview and scrutiny committee established a joint health overview and scrutiny committee with Lambeth Council to scrutinise a proposal from Lambeth Clinical Commissioning Group and their provider South London and Maudsley Hospital NHS Foundation Trust (SLaM) to reconfigure mental health inpatient services for Lambeth, by transferring in-patient services currently located in Lambeth Hospital to a new facility on the Maudsley Hospital site, in Southwark.
46. The meetings are administered by Lambeth Council.

This committee has met three times – its first meeting held in February 2020 (up to June 2020)

[Link to agenda and minutes](#) (Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

Scrutiny activity for 2021 – Proposed areas of focus

47. The overview and scrutiny committee has given an indication of the areas the committee and its commissions should focus on in 2021 (as detailed below).
- Post Covid-19 – Ongoing impact (review across OSC & the Health Commission)
 - Continuing the work on climate/pollution and transport (Environment Scrutiny Commission)
 - Health inequalities (Health and Social Care scrutiny commission)
 - Opportunities for young people (Education and Business Scrutiny Commission)
 - Harnessing community liaison/mutual-aid groups (Housing Scrutiny Commission)
 - Regeneration/planning strategy (OSC)

Resource implications

Support to the scrutiny function

48. The scrutiny function is supported by the scrutiny team, which sits within the Finance and Governance Department under the direct responsibility of the Director of Law and Democracy. The team consists of the head of overview and scrutiny (acting), a scrutiny project manager and a scrutiny project support officer.
49. Recruitment to an additional scrutiny officer post is currently underway and it is anticipated that the position will be filled by the end of 2020.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
Overview and Scrutiny Committee Agenda and Minutes	Southwark Council Website	Everton Roberts 020 7525 7221
http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=308		
Education and Business Scrutiny Commission Agenda and Minutes	Southwark Council Website	Everton Roberts 020 7525 7221
http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=518		
Environment scrutiny Commission Agenda and Minutes	Southwark Council Website	Julie Timbrell 020 7525 0514
http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=517		
Health and Social Care Scrutiny Commission Agenda and Minutes	Southwark Council Website	Julie Timbrell 020 7525 0514
http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=519		
Housing Scrutiny Commission Agenda and Minutes	Southwark Council Website	Everton Roberts 020 7525 7221
http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=520		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Scrutiny Functions and Terms of Reference (Extract from council constitution)

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Member	Cllr Ian Wingfield, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Lead Officer	Doreen Forrester-Brown, Director of Law and Democracy	
Report Author	Everton Roberts, Head of Overview and Scrutiny (Acting)	
Version	Final	
Dated	7 September 2020	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Democracy	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team		7 September 2020