Overview & Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES of the OPEN section of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee held on Monday 22 June 2026 at 6.30 pm at Ground Floor Meeting Room G01A - 160 Tooley Street, London SE1 2QH

PRESENT: Councillor Richard Macmillan (Chair)
Councillor Victoria Mills (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Evelyn Akoto
Councillor Ryan Cox
Councillor Stephanie Cryan
Councillor Callum Fowler
Councillor Sarah King
Councillor Graham Neale
Councillor Rachael Penny
Councillor Dean Peters
Councillor Bill Williams

OFFICER SUPPORT: Amit Alva, Scrutiny Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Clare Williams, co-opted member representative of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark, and Martin Brecknell, Church of England, Diocese of Southwark representative.

2. NOTIFICATION OF ANY ITEMS OF BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR DEEMS URGENT

The Chair informed the committee that supplemental agenda no.1 had been circulated, containing a correction to the committee membership document.

The Chair also informed the committee that there was one late item of business in relation to scrutiny arrangements for 2026-27, renaming of a scrutiny commission, which had been circulated in supplemental agenda no.2.

3. DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS AND DISPENSATIONS

There were no disclosures of interests or dispensations.

4. MINUTES

A member raised a question on whether the minutes should explicitly record the understanding at the OSC meeting on 28 May 2026 that scrutiny commission chairs were expected to be members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Officers advised that the matter would be checked and that the minutes would be amended as appropriate and come back to the next meeting for approval. The Chair noted that this did not affect the vote on a later item.

5. COMMITTEE / COMMISSION MEMBERSHIP

The committee noted the committee and commission memberships as of 16 June 2026, following membership changes that had taken place subsequent to the 28 May 2026 overview and scrutiny committee meeting.

6. CARE QUALITY COMMISSION (CQC) INSPECTION REPORTS - SOUTH LONDON AND MAUDSLEY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST

The committee received a presentation from representatives of South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust providing an update on activity following the outcome of its CQC inspection.

The committee then heard from Professor Derek Tracy, Chief Medical Officer, who explained that he would provide a strategic overview on organisational issues. The committee also heard from the Service Director for Southwark Services for adults aged 18 to 65.

The committee then heard from the CQC representatives on issues in areas including:

- patient safety, forensic services, community services for adults of working age.
- acute adult working age services.
- documentation, seclusion rooms, enhanced care and observations, care planning, emergency alarm systems
- privacy and dignity, risk assessments, mandatory training restraint

documentation, medication documentation

- physical health checks, waiting times, Mental Health Act assessment delays

- supervision and patient rights, the place of safety environment

The committee then heard that the trust had worked with the CQC to develop an improvement action plan, covering areas including:

- place of safety and home treatment services, construction of a garden for the place of safety

- mandatory training compliance, personal alarms for community staff, crisis services, including development of a mental health urgent treatment centre

- risk assessments and care plans, use of Dialogue and Dialogue Plus, zoning protocols for community patients, monitoring patients in the community, inpatient observation systems

- physical health monitoring, links with partner acute trusts

The committee then asked questions on the following themes:

- the three most significant findings from the inspection, timetable for implementing outcomes from the inspection.

- well-led concerns and management response, CEO and senior leadership portfolios, staff morale and staff feedback

- professional challenge and clinical leadership, day-to-day changes to leadership arrangements

- CAG standards and clinical academic groups, governance and board changes, non-executive director roles

- digital and clinical oversight, assurance to Southwark residents risk assessment and care planning

- identifying and monitoring high-risk individuals, working across organisational boundaries, links with the council and MARAC arrangements

- documentation and audit confidentiality and patient records, good practice identified by the CQC, risks to patients where services require improvement

The committee heard from the trust representatives that the three major concerns were waiting times in community services, Mental Health Act assessment delays for people who were unwell in the community, and the condition and capacity of

the place of safety.

The committee heard that some actions had been taken immediately, including work on waiting lists, changes to the place of safety and changes to the way care was approached. The committee also heard that other actions would require longer timeframes, including work with partner organisations such as the police.

Professor Derek informed the committee that the well-led issues reflected a cultural challenge. He explained that the trust was seeking to strengthen the role of clinicians, including nurses, doctors and psychologists, in leadership positions. He also explained that the trust was rebalancing operational and clinical leadership responsibilities through the executive triumvirate of the Chief Medical Officer, Chief Nurse and Chief Operating Officer.

The committee heard that the trust was seeking to give clinical academic groups more influence over standards of care. As an example, the committee heard about work to identify frequently readmitted patients and consider the use of long-acting injectable medication, and work in Southwark on clozapine prescribing by ethnicity.

The committee then asked questions on governance and board oversight.

The committee heard that there had not been direct changes to posts as a result of the CQC report, but that there had been a turnover, including a new chief executive due to start in July and a new chair who had started around six or seven months previously. The committee also learnt that two new non-executive director positions had been created, one with a digital focus and one with a clinical focus.

The committee was informed that there had been increased visibility of senior executives and non-executive directors in services.

The committee asked whether the trust could give assurance to Southwark residents that robust governance was in place.

Professor Derek stated that he could give that assurance and referred to changes over the previous six months and movement in the National Oversight Framework.

The committee then asked questions on risk assessment, care planning and cross-organisational working.

The committee learned that the trust had introduced a new zoning framework for community patients and daily meetings, Monday to Friday, to discuss patients who were becoming unwell, their risks and the support needed. The committee heard that the trust was prioritising those at greatest risk when working with the police and was providing more robust support for patients waiting in the community, including through home treatment teams and multi-agency arrangements.

The committee heard that since the CQC inspection there had been monthly executive oversight of patients waiting, reasons for waiting, the length of wait and

support in place and also heard that the trust was undertaking community transformation, with fewer teams, fewer handovers, alignment with integrated neighbourhood teams and closer working with primary care, voluntary sector organisations and community groups.

The committee then asked questions on working with the council and MARAC.

The committee was informed that South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust had faced challenges in multi-agency working but had changed its arrangements so that every MARAC meeting would have a representative from the trust. The committee heard that issues would be escalated to the Service Director and Deputy Director, with an agreement with the local authority director to address attendance and other issues.

The committee then asked questions on documentation.

The committee learnt that documentation was important to support risk assessment, planning and communication with partner agencies. The committee heard that CQC had found examples of documentation not being sufficiently detailed. The committee also heard that the trust had introduced training, clearer points of reference in its systems and regular audits of records.
The committee heard that the trust was changing its electronic patient record system and that the new system was expected to make recording and finding information more efficient.

The committee asked about confidentiality and patient records.

The committee heard that records were held in a closed system and that any information leaving the system would go through information governance processes. The committee also heard that the trust wanted to ensure patients had access to their records as much as possible where required.

The committee asked about good practice identified by the CQC and risk to patients.

The committee heard that the CQC report identified good practice, including compassionate care from staff. Professor Derek Tracy told the committee that staff had been found to be caring, kind and thoughtful to patients. He also explained that the trust wanted to make better use of its relationship with the Institute of Psychiatry, Psychology and Neuroscience to set clinically relevant standards of care.

The committee then discussed possible recommendations.

The Chair asked whether the trust would be willing to share a quarterly progress report with the Health Scrutiny Commission on progress against the CQC action plan. The trust agreed.

The Chair also asked whether the trust would be willing to consider a working group between Southwark Council and the trust, including the patient voice. The trust agreed.

Members suggested that Health Scrutiny Commission should receive written updates and that, where concerns were raised, the trust should be willing to attend a future meeting or answer focused questions.

A member suggested that there should be a recommendation on giving confidence directly to patients, residents and families, noting that some of the language discussed was technical.

The committee thanked the trust representatives for attending.

7. SCRUTINY ARRANGEMENTS FOR 2026-27 - APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR, HOUSING SCRUTINY COMMISSION

The committee considered the report on scrutiny arrangements for 2026-27 and the reconsideration of the appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Commission following changes to the Housing Scrutiny Commission membership.

Members discussed:

- the interpretation of Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rule 2.2, whether scrutiny commission chairs should sit on Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- the purpose of linking scrutiny commissions to Overview and Scrutiny Committee, whether legal advice had been taken and shared
- the role of the monitoring officer, proportionality, whether the matter should be deferred
- whether written advice and background materials should be circulated.

The following motion was moved by Councillor Victoria Mills and seconded by Councillor Stephanie Cryan.

“We note that the report of the head of Scrutiny and the subsequent correspondence between members and officers regarding the interpretation of overview and scrutiny procedure rule 2.2. Noting that officers have confirmed the current drafting of the Constitution requires clarification and that proposed amendments will be brought forward to Constitutional Steering Panel in due course. Noting that appointments made on the 28th of May 2026 were conducted on the basis of the interpretation then applied by officers and members, namely that Scrutiny Commission chairs should be drawn from the membership of Overview and Scrutiny Commission.

Furthermore, members have raised concerns regarding the constitutional basis for departing from the interpretation applied on the 28th of May, the intended purpose and constitutional history of procedure rule 2.2, the absence of any published constitutional analysis supporting the revised interpretation, the absence of the material underpinning the review referred to in paragraph 6 of the report, considers that it would be inappropriate to alter the basis on which Scrutiny Commission appointments were made on the 28th of May before the Constitutional Steering Panel has considered the constitutional position.

Any necessary constitutional amendments have been considered by Council Assembly and members have been provided with information and documentation requested in relation to the review, which led to the revised interpretation. Requests that officers circulate to all members of the committee, any written, legal, constitutional or governance advice obtained in relation to the review.

Any officer briefing notes, reports, memoranda, or background papers prepared as part of that review. Any Constitutional analysis relied upon in the relied interpretation, revised interpretation. The reports, minutes, and subsequent, sorry, supporting documentation associated with the introduction of Procedure Rule 2.2 and any other material relied upon by officers, including that the Scrutiny Commission chairs need not be members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

That pending consideration of the matter by the Constitutional Theory Panel and any consequential constitutional amendments, the committee will continue to apply the interpretation made, which the appointment of the 28th of May was made, namely that Scrutiny Commission chairs should be drawn from the membership of Overview and Scrutiny Commission, and accordingly declines to approve the recommendations contained within the report and request that a further report be submitted following completion of the actions set out above."

The motion was put to the vote and declared lost. In accordance with committee procedure rule 1.9 (4), Councillors Victoria Mills, Councillor Stephanie Cryan, Councillor Sarah King, Councillor Bill Williams and Councillor Evelyn Akoto requested that their vote in favour of the motion be recorded in the minutes.

The committee then moved to nominations for Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Commission.

The committee already had a nomination for Councillor Hellen Benavides prior to the meeting.

Councillor Stephanie Cryan was nominated by Councillor Victoria Mills and seconded by Councillor Bill Williams.

The committee then voted on the nominations for Chair.

It was agreed by way of majority votes that Councillor Benavides be appointed Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Commission.

The committee then moved to nominations for Vice-Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Commission. The committee already had a nomination for Councillor Pascale Mitchell prior to the meeting.

Councillor Stephanie Cryan was nominated by Councillor Victoria Mills and seconded by Councillor Sarah King.

The committee then voted on the nominations for Vice-Chair.

It was agreed by way of majority votes that Councillor Pascale Mitchell be appointed Vice-Chair of the Housing Scrutiny Commission.

RESOLVED:

That Councillors Hellen Benavides and Pascale Mitchell be appointed chair and vice-chair of the Housing Scrutiny Commission respectively.

The committee considered the late item **7A, Scrutiny Arrangements for 2026-27 - renaming of the Health and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission**.

Councillor Dean Peters introduced the item and explained that the commission also included adult social care. He proposed that the commission should be renamed Health, Adult Social Care and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission to reflect the importance of adult social care.

The committee agreed to rename the Health and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission as the Health, Adult Social Care and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission.

The Chair invited members to raise whether any other commission names required amendment. No other amendments were proposed.

RESOLVED:

That the Health and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission be renamed to the Health, Adult Social Care and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission.

8. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AND COMMISSION WORK PROGRAMMES 2026-27

The committee considered potential scrutiny topics for inclusion in the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and scrutiny commission work programmes for the 2026-27 municipal year.

The Chair explained that the formal work programme would be agreed at the October meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Chair said that the discussion was intended as a gathering and pooling of ideas to develop over the summer, including meetings with scrutiny chairs.

Members raised concerns about delaying the agreement of a work programme until October and suggested that the committee should agree at least a draft plan, noting that the work programme could be flexible.

The committee then discussed possible work programme topics, including:

- the council plan and pre-scrutiny of the council plan
- community councils
- fair funding review
- medium term financial strategy
- projected budget gaps
- temporary accommodation
- adult social care
- Special Needs and Disabilities (SEND)
- housing revenue account and recovery plan
- refurbishment versus demolition in housing
- estate regeneration, including Aylesbury and Marie Curie
- major estate regeneration schemes, including Ledbury and Tustin
- resident voice and engagement with tenants and residents' associations
- CIL redistribution
- SEND safety valve agreement
- government proposals for SEND
- children's early intervention
- transition from CAMHS to adult mental health services
- drug use and vulnerable populations
- integrated neighbourhood working
- secondary school place planning and impact of primary school closures
- use of the closed primary school estates
- Cleaner Southwark pilots
- waste contract pre-scrutiny
- repairs improvement plan
- voids turnaround
- procurement and contract management
- high street regeneration, including Renew the Blue in Bermondsey

The Chair said that the suggested topics would be taken away and that further discussions would take place with groups and scrutiny commission chairs over the summer.

Officers explained that there would be a shortlisting and prioritisation process,

including consideration of whether topics were strategic, timely and areas where scrutiny could add value. Officers also explained that they would consult senior officers and executive members to understand whether and when particular topics should be reviewed.

The committee then considered the proposed Overview and Scrutiny Committee and commission remits.

Members discussed whether the remits aligned with executive member responsibilities, the location of community safety within the committee structure, and how the statutory crime and disorder function should be managed.

Officers explained that the remits were based on executive portfolios and were intended as a guide to help identify which matters should sit with which commission. Officers also advised that Overview and Scrutiny Committee had a specific responsibility for crime and disorder and could either consider matters itself or delegate them to a commission.

Members discussed whether community safety should sit with the Health and Community Safety Scrutiny Commission and whether equalities considerations should be reflected.

The committee agreed the remits as set out.

A member raised the scrutiny protocol and the importance of meetings between scrutiny chairs, commission members and executive members to support pre-scrutiny and effective work planning.

Officers explained that meetings between scrutiny chairs and executive members had been piloted in the previous municipal year, with the intention of helping scrutiny chairs understand executive priorities and later providing feedback on scrutiny work. Officers stated that the intention was for meetings to take place before the end of July and that the Scrutiny Team would seek to arrange them with executive members and scrutiny chairs.

The committee agreed a recommendation welcoming those meetings and encouraging executive members to participate in line with the scrutiny protocol.

Meeting ended at 8.50 pm

CHAIR:

DATED: