

Item No. 5.6	Classification: Open	Date: 24 May 2021	Meeting Name: Council Assembly
Report title:		Overview and Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2020/21	
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. A truncated year produced its own challenges in both time and aspiration. Across OSC and the Scrutiny Commissions both Members and Officers have worked tirelessly and efficiently since September. A shortened year has not shortened public hope and expectation. The demands and requests placed on Council services as we ease towards the lifting of the COVID-19 lockdown are greater than ever before. The Scrutiny function has risen to those challenges in both responding to public concerns and in being inclusive of Members' opinions. This is demonstrated in no short measure by the outstanding quality of the scrutiny reports that have been completed or are near completion. The previous obstacles of effective scrutiny under lockdown in reviewing the Council's performance and its financial budget together with technical glitches, have all added to our rich learning experience. Yet Scrutiny has travelled and prevailed.

Important interviews were held with the new Leader of the Council, the Cabinet Member for Finance, Business and Jobs, the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Environment and Roads and the Deputy Cabinet Member for Low Traffic Southwark. An innovation this year was the agreement with the Cabinet to receive quarterly monitoring reports on the Council's performance against its Plan and targets, instead of just the consideration of the Annual Performance Report. Members had been requesting this information for some time and I am pleased we have been able to finally deliver on it. A key item of work was the Scrutiny Review of Regeneration in the borough. This Review progressed throughout the year with resident and community groups, developers, and other partners contributing to our better understanding of the regeneration process. At all times recommendations from OSC and the Scrutiny Commissions have been on a cross-party basis and I both applaud and welcome that unity of purpose. I cannot praise highly enough the co-operation we have received from all Cabinet Members and the due respect that they pay the Scrutiny function in guaranteeing our residents' confidence in that service oversight.

Looking forward to the next Municipal year, how the Council's services emerge from a long period of lockdown will continue to be a priority for Scrutiny, as well as

customer access issues, including digital strategy, information technology and communications, and the Council's overall equalities and diversity programmes with particular reference to young people and the local economy. As always with these and other issues it is those of our residents who are most disadvantaged and most in need that will be at the heart of our work. I recommend the report to the Annual Council meeting.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That council assembly note the scrutiny activity for the 2020/21 municipal year as detailed in the report.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. 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.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. 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 councilors on the previous year's scrutiny activity. This report sets out the activity of the overview and scrutiny committee and its commissions for the 2020/21 year.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

Activity of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its commissions

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Membership: Councillors Ian Wingfield (Chair), Victor Chamberlain (Vice-Chair), Humaira Ali, Peter Babudu, Jack Buck, Gavin Edwards, Sarah King, Jason Ochere, Victoria Olisa, Jane Salmon, Leanne Werner

Co-opted Members: Martin Brecknell, Lynette Murphy-O'Dwyer

(Reserves: Councillors Anood Al-Samerai, Tom Flynn, Eleanor Kerslake, Sunny Lambe, Richard Livingstone, Margy Newens, David Noakes, Sandra Rhule, Michael Situ, Cleo Soanes)

6. The overview and scrutiny committee established four scrutiny commissions for the 2020/21 municipal year:
 - Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission
 - Environment Scrutiny Commission
 - Health and Social Care Scrutiny Commission
 - Housing and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission
7. Both the Education and Local Economy 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

8. The overview and scrutiny committee's main topic of focus this year was *Regeneration in the Borough*. The committee is still to conclude its scrutiny review. So far the committee has received evidence from the cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Planning and Transport, the Chair of the Planning Committee, Community representatives from different areas of the borough and a number of developers involved with regeneration in the borough.
9. The committee is due to hear further evidence in connection with the scrutiny review at the next meeting and will also consider its initial draft report on the review.
10. In addition to the main area of focus the committee also scrutinised the proposed management arrangements for the leisure management contract post Covid, received an update on the Council's response to Covid-19, received the Refresh of the Council Plan 2018-2022 and performance monitoring information in connection with the delivery of the

Borough Plan. The committee also received the 2019/20 annual workforce report.

11. Throughout the year, the committee held interviews / heard from Cabinet Members Councillor Kieron Williams, Leader of the Council, Councillor Rebecca Lury, Cabinet Member for Finance, Businesses and Jobs, Councillor Johnson Situ, cabinet member for Climate Emergency, Planning and Transport, Councillor Catherine Rose, cabinet member for Leisure, Environment and Roads and Councillor Radha Burgess, Deputy Cabinet Member for Low Traffic Southwark.
12. 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 2021/22.
13. There were no call-ins during 2020/21.
14. The overview and scrutiny committee met nine times – its first meeting of the new municipal year held in September 2020.

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

Scrutiny Commissions

Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission

Membership: Councillors Peter Babudu (Chair), Anood Al-Samerai, (Vice-Chair), Karl Eastham, Eleanor Kerlake, Richard Leeming, Eliza Mann, Michael Situ

Co-opted members (Education)

Martin Brecknell, Lynette Murphy-O'Dwyer

Co-opted members (Business)

Nicole Gordon

(Reserves: Councillors Humaira Ali, Maggie Browning, Radha Burgess, Paul Fleming, James McAsh, Jason Ochere)

15. The education and local economy scrutiny commission's main areas of focus for 2020/21 were *Education: Children's Experiences and Education during the Covid 19 Pandemic*, and *Local Economy: Revitalisation of High Streets and Town Centres*.

Children's Experiences and Education during the Covid-19 pandemic

16. The commission investigated the impact of Covid 19 on children in respect of education and mental wellbeing. The scrutiny review captured

the views and experiences of headteachers, young people and also input from the cabinet member responsible for children and officers from within the Education Department and community engagement. The commission's recommendations focus around mental health, wellbeing and provision for catching up on education.

17. Following the evidence gathering sessions that were held through the course of the year, the commission formulated its report and made four overall recommendations for consideration by cabinet. The online version of the report is currently in draft form and is available to view [here](#). The final version of the report will be published in the agenda of the next commission meeting.

Revitalising Southwark's High Streets and Town Centres

18. The commission investigated the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on businesses and the future of Southwark's High Streets and Town Centres. The information gathered through the evidence sessions and other sources highlighted that the council have a pivotal role to play in the future success of Southwark's high streets, a need to move towards increased community ownership, and a greater focus of health and wellbeing on the high street.
19. The commission co-opted a business spokesperson for the 2020/21 year to better inform the scrutiny review, received a number of briefings from the cabinet member(s) responsible for local economy, heard from expert witnesses concerned with revitalising high streets and representatives connected with Southwark Chamber of Commerce in relation to the impact on businesses.
20. The commission will be receiving the council's action plan on high streets and town centres in the next municipal year.
21. Following the evidence gathering sessions, the commission formulated its report and made seven recommendations for submission to cabinet. The online version of the report is currently in draft form and is available to view [here](#). The final version of the report will be published in the agenda of the next commission meeting.
22. In addition to the main areas of focus, the Education and Local Economy Scrutiny Commission interviewed the cabinet member for Communities, Equalities and Neighbourhoods on the review of approach to equality and adoption of the council's equality framework (following delegation by overview and scrutiny committee). The commission has drafted a number of recommendations for consideration by cabinet, the draft recommendations are available to a view [here](#). The final draft of the recommendations are due to be submitted to the next meeting of cabinet.
23. The commission also held interviews with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education in relation to

Southwark's refreshed plans for youth provision in Southwark, exclusions and alternative provision, the council's work to support care leavers, and Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) strategy.

24. The commission met five times - its first meeting held in October 2020.

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

Environment Scrutiny Commission

Membership: Councillors Jason Ochere (Chair), Graham Neale (Vice-Chair), Tom Flynn, Renata Hamvas, Adele Morris, Margy Newens, Leanne Werner

Co-opted members

Jeremy Leach

(Reserves: Councillors Peter Babudu, Jack Buck, Sirajul Islam, Richard Leeming, Victoria Mills)

25. The environment scrutiny commission's main areas of focus for 2020/21 were *Air Quality (Part Two)* / *Planning and Environment Review*

Air Quality (Part Two)

26. The environment scrutiny commission's second review of Air Quality focused on the implementation of the commission's recommendations from the previous year's Air Quality report, in particular the implementation of Low Traffic Neighbourhoods by the council and partners, the tracking of additional council and Transport for London measures to reduce and mitigate transport emissions in Southwark, and to make recommendations in relation to reducing sources of air pollutions, not covered in the previous scrutiny review.

27. In conducting the review, the commission heard from various senior council officers, interviewed the cabinet member for Leisure, Environment and Roads and the Deputy Cabinet Member for Low Traffic Southwark. The commission also heard from GLA Transport policy officers and the emergency services.

28. Following the evidence gathering sessions, the commission formulated its report and made 8 recommendations. A copy of the draft commission report is available to view [here](#).

Planning and Environment Scrutiny Review

29. The aim of the scrutiny review was to influence Southwark's planning service in relation to environmental policies in development, performance

against current planning policy objectives, and delivery of the planning service and to positively impact on Southwark's built environment and address the Climate Emergency, with specific reference to reducing carbon, pollutants, safeguarding scarce resources and improving biodiversity.

30. The commission received evidence from planning officers, a member of Southwark's Design Review Panel, the group lead for the Cross-Industry Action Group who instigated the Climate Framework, and the Southwark Planning Network.
31. The commission made eight recommendations. A copy of the draft commission report is available to view [here](#).
32. The commission also held interviews with the Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency, Planning & Transport, and the Cabinet Member for Leisure, Environment and Roads and Deputy Cabinet member for Low Traffic Southwark on various aspects of their portfolio.
33. The commission met five times – its first meeting held in November 2020.

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

Health and Social Care Scrutiny Commission

Membership: Councillors Victoria Olisa (Chair), David Noakes (Vice-Chair), Sunny Lambe, Maria Linforth-Hall, Sandra Rhule, Charlie Smith, Bill Williams

(Reserves: Councillors Nick Dolezal, Sunil Chopra, Renata Hamvas, Jane Salmon, Martin Seaton, Kath Whittam)

34. The health and social care scrutiny commission's main area of focus for 2020/21 was *Health Inequalities for Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) Children and Young People*.

Health Inequalities for BAME Children and Young People

35. The commission is due to agree its draft report on 20 May 2021. The commission has so far received evidence from various officers in social care, public health, domestic abuse services and education, Southwark NHS Clinical Commissioning Group, SLaM CAMHS and People Empowering People.

Other areas

36. The commission has received briefings/updates on impact of Covid 19 on care homes, infection rates and NHS capacity, proposed merger between Royal Brompton & Harefield NHS Foundation Trust and Guy's and St

Thomas NHS Foundation Trust, Vaccine and testing roll out,

37. The commission held interviews with the Cabinet Member for Social Support and Homelessness and Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools on various aspects of their portfolios.
38. The commission will have met five times - its first meeting held in November 2020 (up to May 2021).

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

Housing and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission

Membership: Councillors Gavin Edwards (Chair), Damien O'Brien (Vice-Chair), Hamish McCallum, Radha Burgess, Dora Dixon-Fyle MBE, Paul Fleming, Jon Hartley

Co-opted members

Bassey Bassey – Southwark TMO Committee
(Tenant and Homeowner representative positions – vacant)

(Reserves: Councillors Anood Al-Samerai, Sarah King, Sunny Lambe, Victoria Olisa, Jane Salmon)

39. The housing and community engagement scrutiny commission's main areas of focus for 2020/21 were Estate cleaning services and anti-social behaviour on Southwark Estates / Community Hubs.

Estate cleaning services and anti-social behavior on Southwark Estates

40. The housing and community engagement scrutiny commission reviewed the provision of Estate cleaning services and anti-social behavior on Southwark Estates. The commission received detailed reports and evidence from officers and the cabinet members for Leisure, Environment and Roads, and Public Health and Community Safety.
41. The commission has drafted a number of recommendations for consideration by cabinet. The draft recommendations are available to view [here](#). The final draft of the recommendations are due to be submitted to the next meeting of cabinet.

Community Hubs

42. The commission received a detailed report and evidence from officers and the cabinet member for Social Support and Homelessness on the development work taking place around community hubs.

43. The commission has drafted a number of recommendations for consideration by cabinet. The draft recommendations are available to a view [here](#). The final draft of the recommendations are due to be submitted to the next meeting of cabinet.

Other areas

44. The commission received a number of one off reports/briefings from the cabinet member for Housing in relation to Affordable Housing Delivery and Retention, Southwark Resident Participation Framework, Empty Homes Action Plan, and Building Safety and Cladding.
45. The commission met five times - its first meeting held in October 2020.

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

Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees (JHOSC)

46. 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
Other local authority members, Councillors, Judi Ellis, Mark James, Marianna Masters, Gareth Allatt, Richard Diment, Liz Johnston-Franklin, Chris Lloyd, Nanda Manley-Browne, John Muldoon

47. 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, Royal Borough of Greenwich and Southwark. The JHOSC role is to scrutinise health services across South East London, in particular the proposals and consultation processes of the NHS Our Healthier South East London programme to ensure that improved, safe and sustainable health services are delivered across the region.

The JHOSC is currently administered by Bromley Council.

This Committee met twice during 2020/21 – its first meeting held in 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

48. 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.
49. The meetings are administered by Lambeth Council.

This committee has met once since the last annual report.

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

Scrutiny activity for 2021/22 – Proposed areas of focus

50. The overview and scrutiny committee members have given an indication of the areas the committee and its commissions should focus on in 2021/22 municipal year (as detailed below). It will be for the overview and scrutiny committee to agree the 2021/22 work programmes for the committee and commissions at their first meeting scheduled to meet on 24 May 2021.
 - Customer access issues, including digital strategy, information technology and communications (OSC)
 - The council's equalities and diversity programmes (OSC)
 - Expenditure of Public Bid Funds (OSC)
 - Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision (Education and Local Economy)
 - Future of the High Streets (Education and Local Economy)
 - Climate emergency – Decarbonising the Council (Environment Scrutiny Commission)
 - Transport Movement Plan (Environment Scrutiny Commission)
 - Health inequalities (Health and Social Care scrutiny commission)
 - Opportunities for young people and Tackling Child Poverty
 - Major Works Programme – Leaseholder Charges

Resource implications

Support to the scrutiny function

51. 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 Governance. The team consists of the head of scrutiny, a scrutiny project manager and a scrutiny project support officer.
52. Recruitment to an additional scrutiny officer post is underway and it is anticipated that the position will be filled by July 2021.

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 Local Economy Scrutiny Commission Agenda and Minutes	Southwark Council Website	Everton Roberts 020 7525 7221
https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=550		
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 and Community Engagement Scrutiny Commission Agenda and Minutes	Southwark Council Website	Everton Roberts 020 7525 7221
https://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=551		

APPENDICES

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

AUDIT TRAIL

Lead Member	Cllr Ian Wingfield, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee	
Lead Officer	Doreen Forrester-Brown, Director of Law and Governance	
Report Author	Everton Roberts, Head of Scrutiny	
Version	Final	
Dated	14 May 2021	
Key Decision?	No	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Law and Governance	No	No
Strategic Director of Finance and Governance	No	No
Cabinet Member	No	No
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	14 May 2021	