

Select Committee Report

The following provides a brief overview of the work currently being undertaken by Select Committees.

Children Social Care and Learning:

The Select Committee has continued to monitor the social care improvement work by observing meetings of the improvement workstreams and by the Chairman securing a place on the Improvement Board. This allows there to be better informed scrutiny of the service when the Select Committee meets to question the Cabinet Members and Directors.

In addition to this, the Select Committee has just started an inquiry into the prevention of child sexual exploitation in the county, and hopes to make its final report in the late autumn.

Transport, Environment and Communities

The Committee has considered some varied and interesting topics over the past few months including Legal Highs, Country Parks, Archaeological and Historical Environment duties and Highways Development Management. The Committee has welcomed a new Chairman, David Carroll and a number of new members – Tricia Birchley, Lesley Clarke OBE and Avril Davies. An Inquiry is about to begin into Flooding in Bucks 2013-14: Lessons Learned, where evidence will be taken from BCC officers, residents who were impacted by flooding and partner agencies. Members will also undertake site visits.

Finance, Performance and Resources:

The Committee has looked at a wide variety of subjects over the past two months including leadership training, capital expenditure for hot school meals and looking at the Future Shape Programme and commissioning. At its July meeting there will be a value for money discussion around prudential borrowing. The Select Committee continues to have an overview of the balanced performance scorecard and Joint Budget Monitoring Reports for each quarter.

Finance, Performance and Resources : Rent In Advance Inquiry

The Crisis Support Inquiry which took place in 2014 found that some Buckinghamshire residents are unable to access rented accommodation owing to their inability to raise the deposit required to secure the property. This Inquiry is looking specifically at the issue around accessing funds to cover rent-in-advance for vulnerable people and those on low income. The report is due to be presented to the FPR Select Committee in September, following a number of evidence gathering sessions with key stakeholders, including the district council housing officers, housing providers and other partner agencies.

Health and Adult Social Care:

With the increasing financial pressures and growing demand on adult social services the HASC agreed to have a greater focus on examining adult social care services delivered by, or on behalf of the Council within its work programme this year alongside maintaining oversight over the wider health remit. The committees activity includes a mix of both detailed and short inquiries as well as focussed committee items on topics including; the Local Area Trading Company for Adult Social Care, Mental Health Services, Day Care Provision across the county, Quality of Care in Care Homes and the Better Care Fund. The committee's next inquiry will commence in the autumn and will be examining service provision for Adults with Learning Disabilities. The committee are informing both their

committee and inquiry work through undertaking more site visits, shadow visits with those who deliver services, speaking directly to service users and visiting the facilities available to help shape members understanding of how the services are being delivered and experienced on the ground, and enhancing their scrutiny of the services delivered on behalf of residents.

Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee: 15 min domiciliary care visits Inquiry

Following controversial debate, concern and press coverage at a national level over the use of 15 min visits for domiciliary care the committee agreed to consider the topic in more detail through a focussed inquiry to examine the use of 15 min visits in Buckinghamshire. The purpose of the inquiry was to gather further evidence to assure members that the care needs, dignity and wellbeing of service users are being appropriately met within the time allocated for 15 min visits and identify areas of recommendation to share with the Cabinet Member. The evidence gathering methodology has focussed on observing first-hand the care given in 15 min visits, speaking directly to care workers who deliver the care, and to the people receiving the care to ensure that policy and approaches are working effectively in practice as well as taking evidence from Council officers and providers. Members have completed shadow days with care workers and visited service users and are now considering the evidence. The inquiry group will be drafting their final report with a view to reporting their findings to Cabinet in September.

**CHAIRMEN
VAL LETHEREN
DAVID CARROLL
BRIAN ROBERTS
ANGELA MACPHERSON**