



Annual Scrutiny Report 2023-24



Improving outcomes in Buckinghamshire

Foreword

As Chairmen of the Select Committees, we are delighted to present our Annual Report for 2023/24. We would like to thank all Buckinghamshire Council officers and staff working within our partner organisations for their continued dedication and hard work over the past year.

Our Select Committees are cross-party and non-political with the overall aim to improve services and outcomes for residents by holding decision-makers to account. This report summarises the main issues which have been reviewed and challenged throughout the year and highlights some of the key achievements. We have completed a number of in-depth pieces of work – a Review of Pathways for Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities and two Rapid Reviews into Streetworks and Statutory Undertakers and The Dementia Journey, which looked at services to support people with dementia and their carers, with recommendations being considered by both Cabinet and the Integrated Care Board (ICB). Scrutiny of the council's budget took place as usual in January and resulted in 5 recommendations being made to Cabinet before the final budget was agreed. This year we have also undertaken a Joint Review into Planning for Future Primary Healthcare in Buckinghamshire, which was undertaken by members of the Growth, Infrastructure and Housing and Health & Adult Social Care Select Committees. This will be presented to Cabinet in April.

We would like to thank all Councillors who have been involved in scrutiny over the year, Cabinet for their continued support of scrutiny and all officers, co-opted Members, partners and members of the public who have contributed their time and expertise to our meetings and in-depth reviews.



Cllr Julie Ward,
Chairman, Children's & Education
Select Committee



Cllr Steve Bowles,
Chairman, Communities &
Localism Select Committee



Cllr Ralph Bagge,
Chairman, Finance &
Resources Select
Committee



Cllr David Carroll, Chairman,
Growth, Infrastructure & Housing
Select Committee



Cllr Jane MacBean, Chairman,
Health & Adult Social Care Select
Committee



Cllr Bill Chapple OBE,
Chairman, Transport,
Environment &
Climate Change Select
Committee

What is Scrutiny?

Scrutiny is an important part of local democracy and provides the legal power for Councillors to look into issues of concern for residents, holding decision-makers to account for the decisions they are making. Scrutiny also acts as a check and balance to the executive or the Council’s Cabinet, which takes the majority of key decisions on behalf of the Council.

Although scrutiny cannot make decisions, it makes recommendations for improvement to decision-makers, which can be Cabinet, but also there are often recommendations for other partner organisations.

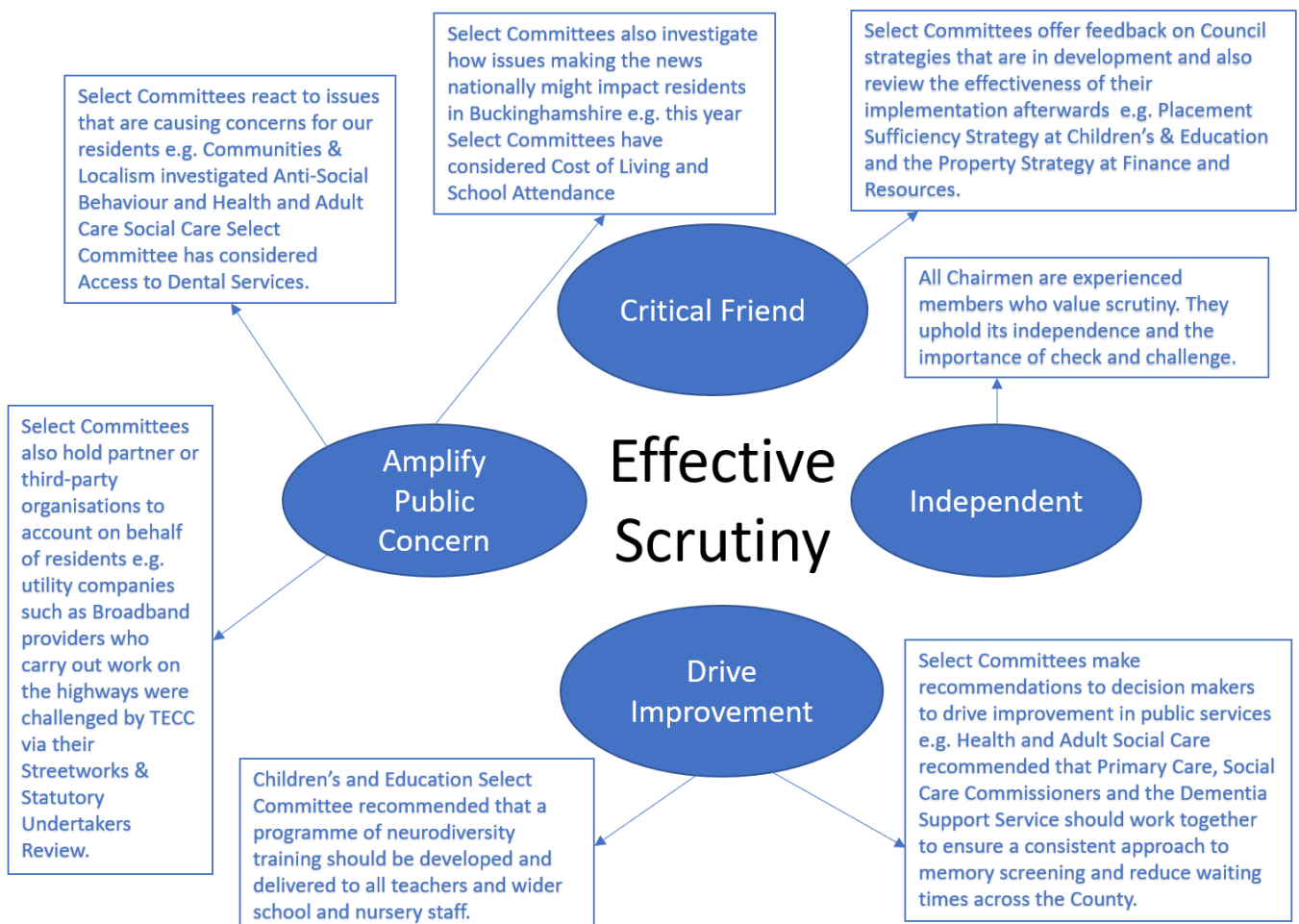
There are also specific powers for scrutiny to hold the NHS to account within health scrutiny.

Scrutiny at Buckinghamshire Council is carried out by six Select Committees. Each Select Committee has a different remit and each examines local services across the public sector. The Committees are made up of elected Councillors who are not part of the Council’s Cabinet, together with some co-opted representatives from relevant local organisations.

What do we need for Effective Scrutiny?

The Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS) has identified four factors that will contribute to effective scrutiny in local government. They are:

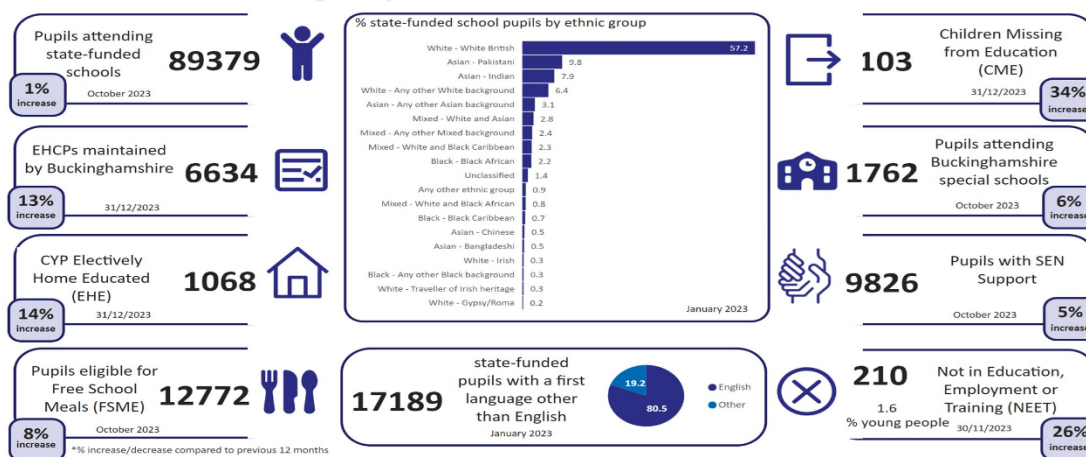
- Provide constructive ‘critical friend’ challenge
- Amplify the voices and concerns of the public
- Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role
- Drive improvement in public services



Children's & Education Select Committee

The Children's and Education Select Committee has an important role to play in scrutinizing social care and education provision for both young adults and children in Buckinghamshire. Many children who come into the council's care or who receive other support services have increasingly complex needs and it is vital that the council can respond with appropriate services in a timely way. Children's social care was greatly impacted during the Covid-19 pandemic and the significant increase in demand on services both in numbers and complexity has continued since then. These demands have created service pressures this year due in part to the increasing child population and the increases in the cost of living.

Our Children and Young People



Transformation Programme

This year the service launched its comprehensive transformation programme for service change which will be implemented to ensure that children and young people are at the centre of decision-making at every stage of service delivery.

The transformation process aims to rebalance the skills and knowledge of the workforce equitably to ensure children and young people receive the right support from appropriately located and qualified practitioners that meet their needs.

Over time the transformation process will create a locality-based model leading to the creation of a whole-system approach with multi-agency professionals who understand the localised needs and pressures within their communities and effectively influence how the resources are used to positively impact outcomes for children and families in a joined-up way.

In addition to the transformation programme, this year the Select Committee has continued to monitor and review the work underway on several important topics, including work on SEND.

Topics the committee has focussed on:

- Children's Services six monthly update
- Annual Report of the Buckinghamshire Safeguarding Children's Partnership Board
- SEND Improvement Programme follow up
- Education Standards Report 2023
- Youth Offending Service Update following an inspection
- Placement Strategy

Pathways for Children With SEND

A Select Committee review group investigated the pathways to finding information for children and young people with SEND when first trying to access services and support. This involved a) assessing views from different sources with regards to the availability and accessibility of information required by parents to gain support from services for their children and b) gaining understanding on information for services, specifically relating to getting help before a diagnosis for autism or ADHD and accessing support for anxiety and depression.

In September 2023 the Select Committee review group took their final report to Cabinet recommending various service improvements including revisions to the website “The Local Offer” and development of both a neurodiversity resource pack and a county wide communications plan for SEND. The report was very well-received and the recommendations made by the review group have now been incorporated into the wider SEND Improvement Programme.

New school Attendance Duties

The government guidance “Working Together to Improve School Attendance” published in May 2022 and applied from September 2022 gave details of the importance of high levels of school attendance, and the expectations now placed on both schools and local authorities to address the issue of low attendance. Research has shown that levels of attendance impact on levels of attainment at key stages 2 and 4 with the highest achievement levels found in the highest attendance groups. Dame Rachel De Souza, Children’s Commissioner for England has called for urgent action to address absenteeism.

In line with this, the committee received a report In March detailing the new duties required for schools and local authorities to monitor and provide information to central government on school non-attendance figures.

The Select Committee agreed to commission a review group to investigate the impact of school non-attendance in Buckinghamshire and what measures can be taken to improve this across all our schools. The evidence gathering phase commenced in March and the review group will develop a report detailing their key findings and recommendations to be presented to Cabinet in the summer.



Communities & Localism Select Committee

The Communities and Localism Select Committee holds decision makers to account for improving outcomes and services for Buckinghamshire. This Select Committee has responsibility for scrutinising the Communities and Culture and Leisure portfolios and the Regulatory aspects of the Homelessness and Regulatory portfolio, which makes for wide-ranging and varied agendas.

Issues the committee has focussed on

In the past year the Committee has considered and provided feedback on a number of significant issues including the following:

- Country Parks
- VCS Grant Overview
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- CCTV Strategy
- Opportunity Bucks Update
- Cost of Living
- Devolution

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Healthy Libraries

The Select Committee received a detailed and interesting presentation from Libraries and Public Health on the Healthy Libraries initiative that had been piloted in 7 libraries across Buckinghamshire.

This was a great example of joint working between the Council's teams and also wider partners such as Buckinghamshire Mind, Wycombe Wanderers, Alzheimer's Society and The Reading Agency and Members learned that 64 events had been held to raise awareness of different health issues including menopause workshops, baby sleep advice sessions and dementia action week talks. In addition, NHS Health Checks were offered in the libraries and blood pressure monitors were available to use in the libraries and to be taken out on loan.

Before the meeting Members were able to view touch sensitive projector mats and an example of a 'cosy corner' which have been set up in libraries to provide a friendly and welcoming space for people living with dementia and their carers.



Community Board Review – 12 month update

Members received a final update on the implementation of the recommendations that had been put forward to Cabinet in the Community Board review report in May 2022.

The Select Committee was very pleased to hear that following the appointment of a new Highways contractor in April 2023, a new six step process has been introduced to identify local traffic schemes that would be deliverable and affordable for Community Boards.

This was an area that had caused a lot of frustration for Community Boards in the past. A robust system of evaluating Community Board projects had also been introduced.

Members were also encouraged by the news that a Communications Strategy introduced in January 2023 alongside social media training for all Community Board Managers had already led to an increase in social media followers. Members also acknowledged that face to face events had been well-attended and appreciated by local people.



Community Boards are due to be reviewed again this year, in light of the electoral boundary changes which will come in at the May 2025 Buckinghamshire Council elections. The Select Committee welcomed the Cabinet Members' continued commitment to Community Boards as the local face of the Council and will be keen to discuss the outcomes of the review.

Digital Exclusion Review

By 'digital exclusion' we're referring to situations in which people are at a material disadvantage through some lack of access to digital technologies, whether that's down to a lack of motivation, awareness of the benefits, skills, trust or confidence, an inability to afford devices or services, or the quality of the available connectivity.

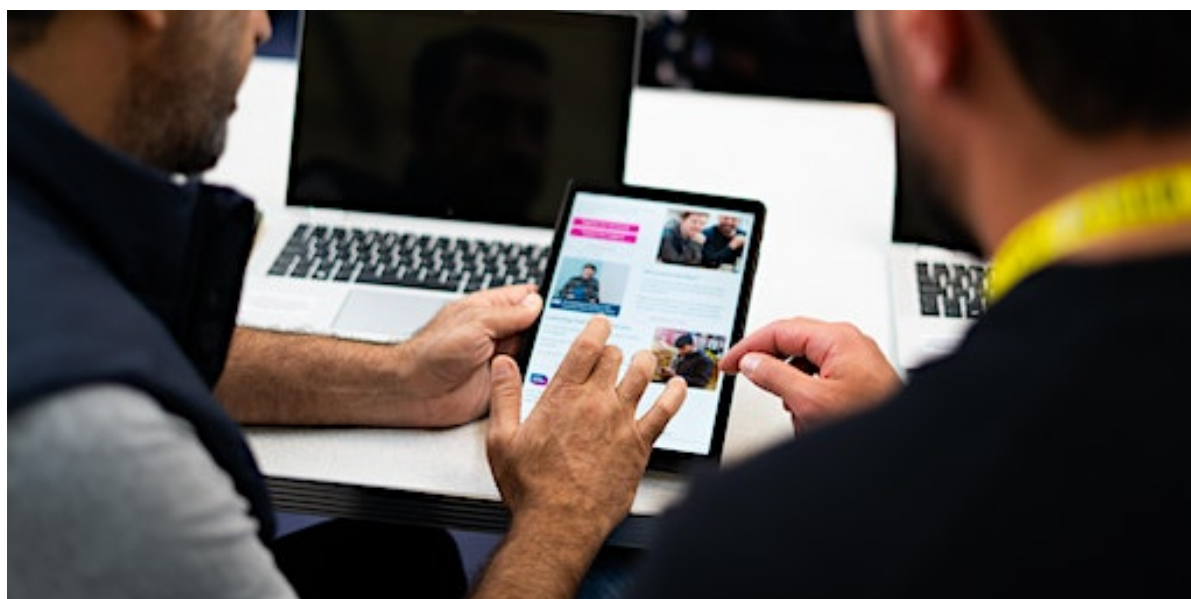
From the LGA report 'The role of Councils in tackling Digital Exclusion', Jan 2023

The Select Committee agreed to undertake a review into Digital Exclusion in Buckinghamshire with a view to understanding the barriers that some people experience in trying to get online and to investigate how the Council and other partners can support people in this area. The review group, led by Cllr Ashley Waite, has carried out a number of evidence gathering sessions and have spoken to officers from across the Council and also to Community Groups to explore three key themes:

- ACCESS – quality of digital infrastructure available
- ABILITY – digital skills and confidence/motivation
- AFFORDABILITY – impact of device or data poverty

As part of the review, Councillors have also visited some Adult Learning classes and a Digital Drop-in Café which is hosted by Buckinghamshire Libraries but staffed by NHS partners.

During the final stage of the evidence gathering, the review group will speak to other local authorities about the initiatives that have been effective in supporting digital inclusion in their areas, in order to gain insight into valuable best practice ideas. Once this has been completed, a report with recommendations will be developed and presented to Cabinet later this year.




Finance & Resources Select Committee

This Committee considers the Council's overall financial strategy, as well as the Resources portfolio which includes property and assets, the Better Buckinghamshire programme and customer services. The work programme is often driven by the findings of the annual Budget Scrutiny process.

Key areas of work during 2023/24

- Quarterly Budget Monitoring
- Estates Programme
- External Property Companies
- Customer First – the customer experience framework for the Council
- Agency Spend
- Absence in the Workplace and Absence Management
- Energy from Waste Income
- IT One Programme
- Treasury Management Investments

 **Buckinghamshire Council**
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? Don't miss out on the chance to have your questions answered in our budget scrutiny meetings! ✉ Email them to budget.scrutiny@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Find and watch the meetings at: orlo.uk/jE26L

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Budget Scrutiny Inquiry

This year's Inquiry was undertaken in January and is a major focus of the Select Committee's annual Work Programme. Meetings were held on 8th, 9th and 11th January 2024 and the Leader of the Council, each Cabinet Member, Corporate Directors and senior finance staff were questioned on their draft budget proposals. This year the Inquiry Group was presented with the task of challenging a budget that had little room for manoeuvre due to increased service demands, and complexities. Questions from the public were received via email and put to the Cabinet Members.

Following the Inquiry, the Committee met to discuss, consider, and develop their key findings and recommendations.

The Inquiry report contained **5 recommendations** of which 3 were agreed and 1 agreed in part. The recommendations included:

- Proactive intervention in the Home to School Transport market through capital investment.
- Reports to future F&R Select Committee meetings regarding:
 - Home to School Transport costs and modelling
 - The Dedicated Schools Grant deficit

"I would like to thank the cross-party Budget Scrutiny Committee who not only scrutinized the budget but put forward many proposals and recommendations on how the budget could be improved."

Cllr Martin Tett (Full Council on 21 February 2024)
Leader of Buckinghamshire Council

It has been nearly four years since the formation of Buckinghamshire Council in which the Cabinet has had to set a number of challenging budgets due to factors such as the pandemic, high inflation and global conflict. National Government uncertainty is also starting to feature in the budget. The Inquiry Group recognise how difficult a task it has been to put a balanced budget together and believe in the value that Budget Scrutiny week offers to residents and backbench Members.

Cllr Ralph Bagge (Forward in Scrutiny Inquiry Report)
Chairman of the Finances & Resources Select Committee

Growth, Infrastructure & Housing Select Committee

The Growth, Infrastructure and Housing Select Committee scrutinises a number of portfolios that have a crucial role in 'place shaping' for Buckinghamshire now and in the future, namely Planning and Regeneration, Homelessness and Regulatory Services, Accessible Housing and the Leaders' portfolio, which has responsibility for economic development and national infrastructure projects.

Key Areas of Work during 2023/24

The Select Committee has considered the following important topics during the past 12 months:

- Buckinghamshire Local Plan
- Visitor Economy
- Planning Performance
- Regeneration Framework & Strategies
- Community Infrastructure Levy & Section 106
- Housing Standards – Damp & Mould
- National Planning Policy Framework Changes



The Legacy of 'Everyone in' and Homelessness in Buckinghamshire

The Select Committee decided to look into the success of 'Everyone In' and what lessons could be learnt from it. A cross-party review group examined the work that went into making 'Everyone In' a success in Buckinghamshire and also the issues that have arisen more recently as the country has returned to 'business as usual' after the Covid-19 pandemic. Evidence gathering sessions were held in Autumn 2023, with the last one concluding in December. Council officers, partners and charities were invited to give evidence to enable members to gain valuable insight into the support that is available for homeless people.

The review group spoke to the Council teams, as well as partners including Thames Valley Police, Aylesbury Homeless Action Group and Connection Support. A report on the review groups findings and their recommendations will be presented to Cabinet shortly.

Joint Review into Planning for Primary Healthcare

In a joint review with the Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee, the Select Committee has investigated how the Council's Planning staff work collaboratively with Health partners in order to deliver additional capacity in existing surgeries or new surgery buildings, often via Section 106 or CIL funding associated with new housing developments.

Over two days of evidence gathering, members gained valuable insight into the complexities of NHS funding for estates and a clear disconnect between the Council's Local Plan cycles and the ICB's forward planning. With limited resources an issue for both the Council and the ICB, there are no simple answers but a report with the review groups key findings and recommendations to both the Council and the ICB will be considered at Cabinet in April.



Health & Adult Social Care Select Committee

The Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee holds health and social care decision-makers to account and acts as a critical friend to the health and social care sector. Part of the Select Committee's work is around challenging proposals for health and social care service change to ensure the best possible outcomes for Buckinghamshire residents. This has continued to be an incredibly challenging year for the council's adult social care services and health partners with increased demand for services and budgetary pressures. The Committee comprises 15 councillors and a representative from Healthwatch Bucks, who sits on the committee as a non-voting Member.

“The Buckinghamshire GP Provider Alliance (GPPA) values the vital role played by the Buckinghamshire Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC) in holding health partners accountable and improving services for our community. We have appreciated the opportunity to contribute to important pieces of work including the ‘Development of Primary Care Networks Inquiry’ and the ‘Planning for Future Primary Healthcare in Buckinghamshire Rapid Review’. We value the constructive relationship between HASC and the GPPA, recognising the importance of scrutiny in driving positive change and the shared commitment of both bodies to enhancing services and advocating for the needs of our residents.”

Dr George Gavriel, Director, Bucks GP Provider Alliance

Key issues looked at during 2023-24

The Committee has reviewed and challenged key areas including:

- Health and Social Care Winter Plan – representatives from across the health and social care system attended a meeting in October to present the plan and focus on areas of improvement for this year
- Performance of the South Central Ambulance Service following the latest CQC inspection
- Improvement plans for Hospital Discharge and Intermediate Care, including the introduction of Care Hubs
- Director of Public Health's annual report which focussed on mental health
- Adult Social Care Transformation Plans
- Maternity Services
- Dentistry services across Buckinghamshire
- Six month monitoring of the recommendations from the Dementia Review report
- Twelve month monitoring of the recommendations from the Primary Care Network Development Inquiry report

Key achievements in 2023-24

Joint Review into Future Planning for Primary Care Healthcare

In July, the Committee agreed to undertake a joint review with the Growth, Infrastructure and Housing Select Committee. Two days of evidence gathering took place in September and October and a report was produced which made 12 recommendations, aimed at the Council and the Integrated Care Board.

The report highlighted the significant challenges faced by health partners in planning for future provision, including short planning cycles, regular changes in NHS services and structures, lack of funding for GP estates and a complex property valuation mechanism. The report will be discussed at Cabinet in April.

“Primary Care in Buckinghamshire is one of the most important pathways for our residents when accessing services to help them remain healthy, happy and prosperous. With significant housing growth expected within Buckinghamshire over the coming years, there is a real need to have a robust delivery plan for primary care estates which aligns with the predicted housing growth to ensure the population’s health needs are met.”

Cllr Isobel Darby and Cllr Chris Poll, Joint Chairmen of the Review Group

Rapid Review into Dementia Services Pathways

In February 2023, the Committee agreed to undertake a rapid review into dementia services and the pathways for those living with dementia and the support available for carers. The Review Group held 3 full days of evidence gathering in March to hear from key stakeholders and the report was presented to Cabinet and health partners in July.



“We support the NHS, in recognising dementia as a key priority in its Long-Term Plan and hope the findings and recommendations in this report will help to raise awareness of dementia and lead to an integrated health and social care dementia support service to meet the individual needs of all those living with dementia and their carers on their dementia journey.”

Cllr Carol Heap, Review Chairman

The evidence shows that Buckinghamshire is currently under-funded in its dementia support service and there is significant unmet need across the existing dementia pathways which needs to be addressed. There needs to be a renewed focus on raising awareness of dementia, reducing the stigma, increasing diagnosis rates in care homes and the community, as well as providing an integrated dementia support service.

The report highlights the importance of partnership working to support the person with dementia, their families and carers within local communities. There are many examples of outstanding services in Buckinghamshire but we need to do more, particularly in supporting the voluntary sector to deliver the necessary support services within local communities.

The report put forward 18 recommendations which were grouped together under the NHS England Dementia Well Pathway which has been adopted by Buckinghamshire – Preventing, Diagnosing, Supporting, Living and Dying Well. The recommendations were aimed at the council, health partners, voluntary and community groups.



Development of Primary Care Networks Inquiry

During 2022, the Committee held an inquiry into the development of Primary Care Networks (PCNs) in Buckinghamshire. A small group of Members held evidence gathering sessions with key stakeholders between January and June. The report was agreed by Committee Members and then presented to Cabinet and the Integrated Care Board in November.



The aim of the inquiry was to identify areas to help PCNs in their development and to bring together the collective challenges and barriers facing the PCNs and to highlight the role of the Patient Participation Groups. Seventeen recommendations were made and centred around the following key areas: governance and oversight, PCN development, PPGs, partnership working, digital, data and information sharing and communications.

The 6 month and 12 month recommendation monitoring has been to the Committee with a further presentation of the PCN Annual Report at the April Committee meeting, detailing specific evidence of improvements in developing PCNs in Buckinghamshire.

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust's Annual Quality Account

In May, a working group of HASC Members prepared a statement for inclusion in the Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust's annual quality account.

Whilst the HASC statement acknowledged the key achievements and highlights for the Hospital Trust, it also focussed on areas of concern and areas of improvement, including falls, Emergency Department waiting times and pressures on Hospital Discharge as well as ongoing concerns around pressures ulcers.

Below is a link to Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust's Quality Account 2022-23.

[Quality-Account-2022-23.pdf \(buckshealthcare.nhs.uk\)](#)



Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board (BOB ICB) Primary Care Strategy

The BOB ICB prepared a draft primary care strategy which was part of a public engagement exercise to gain feedback on the key priorities outlined in the strategy. HASC Select Committee Members reviewed the draft strategy and a response was submitted by the Chairman, on behalf of the HASC, to the ICB at the end of February.

Members welcome the primary care strategy but remain concerned about the ambitions detailed in the strategy. The challenges in bringing together health and social care partners on this transformation journey are significant and the risks in being unable to deliver the priorities are a key concern for Members.

Official opening of the Waddesdon Wing, Stoke Mandeville Hospital

A small group of Committee Members visited the new Waddesdon Wing at Stoke Mandeville Hospital which had been built to provide a new Children's department and a new Maternity and Gynaecology department. The Children's department provides inpatient services for children as well as outpatient appointments and day surgery. Members were shown around by a consultant paediatrician, who explained that clinicians, working with the architects, had been greatly involved with the design of the facilities, and the whole team were delighted with the outcome.



There was a special area dedicated to the needs of children with mental health issues.

The Committee also had a tour of the new Maternity and Gynaecology department, where staff had also been involved in the design. Both the Maternity facilities and the Children's department were very impressive. Staff and patients were very appreciative of the new building and facilities and spoke highly of the associated benefits for patients.

Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (BOB JHOSC)

Buckinghamshire is part of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care System (BOB ICS). Representatives from the 5 local authorities within the ICS footprint have set-up a Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (JHOSC) to review and challenge the strategies and projects being delivered by the Integrated Care Board (ICB) - a statutory NHS body to manage the finances and delivery of health services across the ICS.



The JHOSC has held two formal Committee meetings during this council year – June and January. In the June meeting, Members reviewed the Integrated Care Strategy, the 5 year forward plan and the ICB's engagement strategy. At its January meeting, Members heard from the Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the BOB ICB, discussed the draft primary care strategy, received a presentation from the 5 Healthwatch's on how they are working across the ICS and an update on the ICB's communications and engagement strategy.

Following the Committee meeting, Members of the JHOSC submitted a formal response to the ICB's draft primary care strategy. A small group of JHOSC Members set-up a working group to review the ICB's Digital and Data strategy and prepared a response for ICB colleagues to consider as part of the strategy's implementation plan.



Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (BLMK JHOSC)

Buckinghamshire Council has a seat on the BLMK JHOSC, a joint health scrutiny committee to challenge the Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes Integrated Care System. The first formal Committee meeting took place in November and Members reviewed the ICB's 5 year forward plan at this meeting.

Transport, Environment & Climate Change Select Committee


The Select Committee has a wide remit covering transport, environment and climate change topics. Some of these issues cut across a variety of council portfolios but the Select Committees can undertake joint pieces of work to ensure that the Council takes a co-ordinated approach. Climate change and environmental concerns are high on the agenda for residents and the Select Committee regularly features questions from members of the public.


Topics considered this year

- Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Climate Change and Air Quality Strategy: Annual Review
- Tree Planting Programme
- Local Transport Plan 5
- School Transport
- New Highways Model
- East West Rail
- HS2 Ltd
- School and SEND Transport
- Active Travel and Buckinghamshire Local Cycling, Walking and Infrastructure Plan
- Inquiry recommendation updates regarding water pollution in rivers and chalk streams.

Achievements

- Frequent engagement by members of the public with questions on agenda items.
- Held HS2 Ltd to account in March 2024 regarding latest works and concerns on the Highways, lorry movements, EWR interface and collaborative working, tree planting and maintenance, water resource and flood risk. Members took the opportunity to robustly question HS2 representatives. The Chairman will be sending a follow up letter to HS2 Ltd with a request for further information.
- East West Rail were questioned in February 2024 when they attended Select Committee to discuss work in Buckinghamshire. Members took the opportunity to question issues such as road repairs, biodiversity net gain and proposed plans for diesel rolling stock. The Chairman followed up with a letter to the Cabinet Member for Transport regarding the Aylesbury Spur.



Climate Resilience  EWR Alliance

- 8 Compensatory Flood Storage Areas created (CFSA)
- Climate change allowances of 40% for rainfall increase and 65-70% for river flow increase on 1:100 year event
- All railway drainage has been renewed throughout the route and is sized to maintain existing outfall rates.
- Electrical equipment located outside flood zones and specified to operate at higher temperatures

Drainage Attenuation

CFSA

Renewed Drainage

Extract from EWR presentation in February 2024

Streetworks and Statutory Undertakers in Buckinghamshire

The Select Committee had concerns that the amount of streetworks had been increasing in Buckinghamshire and this was negatively impacting residents travelling on or living alongside the Highways network. With this in mind, the overarching aim of the rapid review was to understand the extent of the current situation in Buckinghamshire and explore possibilities for improvement. In October 2023, the Chairman, Councillor Bill Chapple OBE, presented the inquiry group report to Cabinet.

The report made 10 recommendations, 9 agreed and 1 agreed in-part, across four key themes:

- Streetworks Team
- Statutory Undertakers
- Communication
- Lobbying

An important part of the evidence-gathering process was an in-person meeting with representatives from different statutory undertakers across a range of industries that operate across Buckinghamshire's Highways network. Questioning was robust and the companies were held to account whilst maintaining a constructive tone.



Looking Ahead: Flooding

The TECC Select Committee intends to commence a working group on the topic of flooding in Summer 2024.



Example of overland flow from fields:

Thornborough Section 19 Flood Investigation Final Technical Report - July 2022

Promoting Scrutiny

The Select Committees are supported by a dedicated Scrutiny Team. The team work closely with their Chairmen, Business Managers and Service Directors in each of the Council's directorates to identify priority areas of work to be scrutinised by the Select Committees and to promote the benefits of engaging with Scrutiny. The Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee also works closely with health partners to ensure key pieces of work are identified and included in the work programme.

The team continue to raise awareness of scrutiny across the Council and with partner agencies and look to provide a voice for Buckinghamshire residents.

Public Engagement

The Council welcomes the public's involvement in scrutiny because public services are provided to help improve local lives. There are a number of ways in which anyone who lives, works or studies in Buckinghamshire can get involved in the work of scrutiny at the Council.

Get informed

Watch a webcast

The Select Committees are webcast and can be watched live or up to six months after the meeting on the Council's website. Between 15 June 2023 and 29 February 2024, the Select Committees have had a total of 3157 webcast views (including Budget Scrutiny Inquiry meetings). This is an increase from a total of 2717 in the previous Council year. In addition, the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and West Berkshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (BOB JHOSC) has had a total of 176 views across the two meetings that have been held to date.

Get involved

Contribute to an inquiry

Scrutiny work is improved by the involvement of local people. To have your say on any current scrutiny inquiry, please email democracy@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

Ask a public question

Public questions are an opportunity for the public to ask questions on agenda items that have an impact on their local community or the county as a whole. Between 15 June 2023 and 29 February 2024, 22 public questions have been asked at Select Committees and we would encourage anyone who has an interest in items on the agenda to submit a question. For more information, visit the [Council's website](#).