Overview and Scrutiny
Annual Report 2012/13
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1. **Introduction**

Welcome to Warwickshire County Council’s Scrutiny Annual Report for 2012/13. The report outlines each Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s contribution to the Council’s corporate ambitions and goals by way of key achievements and improvements that have been delivered. The report has been designed to highlight the effectiveness of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) and provide a snapshot of the positive work that has been achieved.

Some of the key achievements I would like to highlight include:

- The development of the Health Partnership Group, which co-ordinates the roles of the County and District/Borough Councils in monitoring the delivery of health outcomes and priorities, to improve the health and wellbeing to Warwickshire residents.

- The work undertaken by the Academies Task and Finish Group to strengthen the County Council’s relationship with schools and its role as an effective “champion of the learner”.

- The in-depth scrutiny of the County Council’s switch to part-night street lighting, closer monitoring of the crime and road-safety impacts of part-night lighting and improvements to communication with the public.

- Significantly increasing the level of member input and involvement in the Council’s strategic commissioning reviews.

- Overall improvements to the overview and scrutiny function, which has delivered a consistent and robust monitoring procedures and encouraged a greater involvement of scrutiny members in the decision-making process.

Looking ahead, there is a commitment to improving engagement with the public and actively seeking opportunities to involve the public in the work across each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. We will be developing a strategy over the summer, to provide a structured and co-ordinated approach to successfully involving the public in both the suggestion of scrutiny topics and as a key contributor in the evidence-gathering process.

To conclude, I would like to sincerely thank the members, officers, partners and members of the public who have contributed to the scrutiny process during the past year, in particular those who have volunteered their time to participate in various Task and Finish Groups.

**Councillor J. Appleton**

*Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board*
2. Meet the Members

Overview and Scrutiny Board

The Overview and Scrutiny Board coordinates the Overview and Scrutiny Committees as well as scrutinising a range of corporate areas, such as the budget, financial plans, property, and workforce strategy.

Councillor John Appleton
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Board

Committee Members:
Councillor Les Caborn
Councillor Jeff Clarke
Councillor Julie Jackson
Councillor Bernard Kirton
Councillor Tim Naylor
Councillor Jerry Roodhouse
Councillor John Ross
Councillor David Shilton
Councillor John Whitehouse
Councillor Chris Williams
Councillor Sonja Wilson

Co-opted Members:
Councillor Claire Edwards
Councillor John Haynes
Councillor Stephen Gray
Councillor Bill Gifford
Councillor Derek Pickard
Janet Smith, NHS Warwickshire
Clive Parsons, Warwickshire Police Authority

Adult Social Care and Health OSC

This Committee reviews and scrutinises social care for older people and people with disabilities, policies and services for safeguarding adults, and health services for adults and children in Warwickshire.

Councillor Les Caborn
Chair of the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Committee Members:
Councillor Martyn Ashford
Councillor Jose Compton
Councillor Richard Dodd
Councillor Mike Gittus
Councillor Bob Hicks
Councillor Carolyn Robbins
Councillor Kate Rolfe
Councillor Dave Shilton
Councillor Sid Tooth

Co-opted Members:
Councillor Sally Bragg
Councillor John Haynes
Councillor George Mattheou
Councillor Derek Pickard
Councillor Michael Kinson
2. Meet the Members

Children and Young People OSC
This Committee reviews and scrutinises services relating to education and skills for children, young people, and families. This includes schools, 16-19 years education, Connexions, child protection, family support, social care, children with specific needs, and the Youth Service.

Councillor Julie Jackson
Chair of the Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Committee Members:
Councillor Peter Balaam
Councillor Jim Foster
Councillor Peter Fowler
Councillor Carol Fox
Councillor Mike Perry
Councillor Clive Rickhards
Councillor John Ross
Councillor Martin Shaw
Councillor June Tandy

Co-opted Members:
Dr. Rex Pogson, Church Representative
Joseph Cannon, Church Representative
Alison Livesey, Parent Governor

Communities OSC
This Committee reviews and scrutinises a wide-range of services to the general public including Fire and Rescue, community safety, flood risk, trading standards, transport and highways, economic development, the environment, libraries, heritage, and tourism.

Councillor John Whitehouse
Chair of the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Committee Members:
Councillor Sarah Boad
Councillor Richard Chattaway
Councillor Michael Doody
Councillor Clare Hopkinson
Councillor Barry Lobbett
Councillor Chris Saint
Councillor Ray Sweet B.E.M.
Councillor Claire Watson
Councillor Chris Williams
3. Overview and Scrutiny Board Achievements

The Overview and Scrutiny Board provides a strategic overview and steer for the work of all the Committees, in addition to monitoring the key internal functions of the Council such as the budget and finance, performance, information technology, customer services and communications.

Scrutiny Improvement Plan

Last year, a review of the scrutiny structure and performance was undertaken by Democratic Services and the Centre for Public Scrutiny. The review identified a number of areas where improvements were required, particularly focusing on enhancing the role of scrutiny members to achieve a greater influence in the decision-making process and an earlier involvement in policy development.

Some of the key outcomes that have been, and will continue to be delivered, are:

**Closer working between the Chair of a Task and Finish Group and the relevant Portfolio Holder** – meetings are now undertaken before recommendations are considered by Cabinet, to allow an opportunity for informal discussions and clarification on the rationale behind the recommendations to take place. This ensures that the Portfolio Holder has a greater understanding about the Task and Finish Group report and recommendations, prior to the meeting of Cabinet.

**Recommendations more consistently monitored** – those that were approved previously by Cabinet are now followed up more consistently and outcomes reported back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee so that members can track progress. A Scrutiny Action Plan system is now in place to ensure that happens and the use of Outcomes Reports is being developed.

**More effective use of Task and Finish Groups** – there have been some recent good examples of Task and Finish Groups which have helped to draw Cabinet’s attention to a specific problem, while offering recommendations for how the situation can be improved, for example the recent review of the Street Lighting Energy Saving Plan.

**Social Media** – this is now being used more frequently and consistently to increase the external focus of scrutiny and encourage more external input:

- The Warwickshire Blog has been developed significantly over the past six months, and is now used to promote meetings and scrutiny work that is in the public interest;
- Since May, the OSC Chairs began to use the WCC YouTube channel to give a short overview of outcomes, following each meeting; and
- Press releases have been positively responded to by the public (e.g. Bus Service Reduction Task and Finish Group) and the feedback has been used to inform the review.
**Finance and Performance Working Group**

In May 2012, the Board appointed the Finance and Performance Working Group with the responsibility to undertake a detailed review of each quarterly finance and performance report, prior to its final sign-off by Cabinet.

**The key outcomes that have been delivered as a result of this achievement include:**

- Allowing members additional and valuable time to interrogate the data and understand complex performance information.

- Undertaking a crucial monitoring role, holding Portfolio Holders to account for performance within their areas and providing a ‘critical friend’ challenge to any issues of underperformance.

- The Working Group has identified key areas that require a more detailed consideration, which have been referred to the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Committee for closer scrutiny.

**Transformation through Strategic Commissioning**

The Board has had a key role in monitoring the delivery of the Council’s overall programme to achieve its strategic commissioning aims by 2015. The Board has received regular updates on the programme, focusing particularly on the overall timing and delivery of the three tranches and communication with Elected Members.

**Key outcomes that have been, and will continue to be delivered, include:**

- Improving information-sharing to members and transparency on slippage within the overall programme

- Engagement in the Human Resources (Strategic and Transactional) service review at the draft scoping stage, allowing greater influence over the scope for the review and for members to champion the views and concerns of their communities regarding service delivery.

- Consideration of the Final Business Cases, following the completion of the IT (Infrastructure and Support) and Equality and Diversity service reviews, allowing members to submit comments and feedback.

Furthermore, the Board has made a number of recommendations to the Programme Office regarding the engagement and involvement of all Elected Members. **As a result, the following improvements have been achieved:**

- All service review documents, such as the Scope and Initial Options Appraisal, now clearly outline the role of the Portfolio Holders in the service review process.

- A copy of the Programme’s Governance Chart is presented to every meeting of the Board, enabling members to monitoring the timing and any slippage in respect of the individual service reviews.
Task and Finish Groups

As part of the Board’s role to manage the overall scrutiny workload, during 2012/13 it commissioned six Task and Finish Groups that resulted in 28 recommendations being submitted to Cabinet, with an approval rate of 64 per cent.

Details regarding each of the individual Task and Finish Groups are outlined in each Overview and Scrutiny Committee section.

The Future

It is acknowledged that many of the improvements made to the Overview and Scrutiny function this year have been as a result of internal and operational modifications that have helped to deliver a consistent and thorough approach to undertaking scrutiny. Now the Board must focus its efforts externally and seek to improve the level of public engagement in the work of scrutiny.

Public engagement in Overview and Scrutiny should be a key element of the scrutiny process, both in the suggestion of scrutiny topics and as a key contributor in the evidence-gathering process. Public engagement helps to increase the validity and relevance of scrutiny topics by reflecting issues which matter to residents.

It strengthens the public’s voice by helping scrutiny members to be a champion of their constituents. Furthermore, the views of the public should be an important part of the evidence that members consider when forming recommendations, to ensure that the recommendations have the intended positive effect.

In February, the Board agreed that a Public Engagement in Overview and Scrutiny Strategy be developed, to ensure that there is a structured and co-ordinated approach to undertaking communication with the public (i.e. blogs, consultations) and responding to key issues, with the involvement and assistance of the appropriate Council services.

The Strategy will be launched in the new municipal year, to underpin the 2013/14 overall theme of Public Engagement. During the year, the Board will actively seek opportunities to involve the public in the work across each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Scrutiny Stats

During 2012/13 we can report that:

- 28 recommendations were formed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees
- 64 per cent of the recommendations were approved by Cabinet
- There was 1 call-in
4. **Adult Social Care and Health OSC Achievements**

**Introduction**

The challenge for the Adult Social Care and Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee over the past year has been to continue to provide a valuable role and to maintain a ‘check and balance’ both in terms of social care and for health providers and commissioners, all of which impact the lives and health and wellbeing of local residents.

The Committee has taken on the challenges and opportunities that have arisen over the past year, helping both the new and existing organisations in Warwickshire to understand the significant changes that came into force on 1 April 2013 through the Health and Social Care Act, and to ensure that accountability remained high within these processes.

**Health**

One of the Committee’s key roles has been ensuring that patient and public needs have been prioritised throughout the changes and that positive relationships have been developed alongside these changes to the health environment. While there is still work to be done in developing a protocol for working with the Health and Wellbeing Board, the areas that the Committee has monitored have included:

- The demise of Local Involvement Networks and ensuring a legacy for the new Healthwatch;
- The shadow Health and Wellbeing Board; and
- The development of and role locally for the NHS Commissioning Board.

Some examples of scrutiny of local health bodies this past year include:

- Building relationships and understanding between both new and established health and social care providers and commissioners
- Ongoing monitoring of the Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services of the Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust in light of concerns around waiting times and access to services.
- Regular scrutiny of George Eliot NHS Hospital Trust in response to the ongoing high mortality rates at the hospital.
- Scrutiny of and input into the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
Adult Social Care

The national drive towards greater integration of health and social care and the successful work done locally by the Integrated Health Teams has reinforced the decision to combine adult social care and health under one scrutiny committee.

The Committee has received quarterly updates on the performance of the Adult Social Care Services looking specifically at areas for improvement and giving a good overview of these services. Examples of scrutiny of Adult Social Care over the past year include:

- The Adult Social Care Local Account.
- A report on the Gemma Heyter Serious Case Review and updates on the implementation of recommendations regarding adult safeguarding to come from that review.
- Community Meals, including a joint tasting session with the Transformation Assembly (made up of customers).
- The scrutiny of and input into the development of a number of strategies including the Carers Strategy and the Physical Disability & Sensory Impairment Strategy.

Making the Most of Opportunities

The Chair and Ann Mawdsley, Senior Democratic Services Officer, have continued their roles as the West Midlands Regional Health Chairs and Officers Group representatives on the Health Accountability Forum led by Centre for Public Scrutiny in London. This has resulted in a number of opportunities, including being involved in national learning sets on scrutiny working with the Care Quality Commission and with District/Borough Councils.

Ann Mawdsley has also worked with the Department of Health regarding the development of the Health Scrutiny Guidance, which will be published in late April 2013.

The Committee’s work with the Centre for Public Scrutiny as a Health Scrutiny Development Area is now complete and this work has contributed to the document published in March 2013, “Spanning the system – Broader horizons for council scrutiny”.

The key outcome of this work has been:

- Closer working relationships between the County and District/Borough Councils on the Health Scrutiny Partnership Group to deliver improved health and wellbeing to Warwickshire residents.
- Closer working with Warwickshire LINk (Healthwatch from 1 April 2013) and Coventry City Council.
Quality Accounts

The Committee used Quality Accounts as a focus within its development work and appointed five Task and Finish Groups (TFGs) to work with the five Trusts (Coventry and Warwickshire Partnership Trust, George Eliot NHS Hospital, South Warwickshire Foundation Trust, University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire and West Midlands Ambulance Trust) on their Quality Accounts for this year.

For the two Trusts that cover Coventry as well, Coventry City Council and Coventry LINk have been included. While there have been a number of challenges to overcome, the value of this process has been widely acknowledged and the TFGs will be re-appointed for the 2013 Quality Accounts, and be expanded to include a TFG to consider the Social Care Local Account.

Paediatric and Maternity Services

A Task and Finish Group was set up to respond to the proposals by the NHS following a review of Children’s Services at the George Eliot Hospital in Nuneaton. County Councillors were concerned about the implications of some of the options which could impact other services such as the maternity unit. There was a concern that the special care baby unit may also be moved, as well as other issues regarding transport and patient experience.

A formal response was lodged following a number of meetings with senior NHS staff, that resulted in complex paediatric cases and out-of-hours services being delivered at University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire, while routine day cases continue to be seen at George Eliot. In addition to this, all maternity services will stay where they were. This means that people in North Warwickshire still have local services at George Eliot, with more specialist services on hand if needed at University Hospital.

The Future

Looking to the future, Adult Social Care and Health Scrutiny will remain focused on ensuring that:

- The recommendations from the Robert Francis Inquiry into Mid-Staffordshire NHS Foundation Trust regarding robust scrutiny are delivered, wherever possible;
- Patients’ needs are met in the most effective way;
- Quality and patient experience remain a priority;
- Health inequalities are reduced;
- Adult social care (particularly around adult safeguarding) is delivered at a high quality despite resource pressures;
- All health and wellbeing determinants are considered and improved; and
- Scrutiny, together with Healthwatch, listens to and provides a voice for the public and patient.

A key challenge will continue to be redefining the relationship with commissioners and local providers of health care and supporting the continuation of joint working across health and social care.
5. Children and Young People Achievements

Introduction

At the start of every new municipal year, each Committee elects a Chairperson to manage its meetings and steer its work programme. While the other scrutiny committees all re-elected their existing Chairs this year, Cllr Tandy stepped down from her role at the head of the Children and Young People O&S. As a result, the Committee duly elected Cllr Julie Jackson to take over, and Julie has overseen a busy year of scrutiny activity, focusing mainly on the Council’s role within learning and education.

Relationships with schools

Ever since the government introduced its education reforms in 2010, which enabled schools to gain greater independence from local authorities by converting to ‘academy’ status, the Committee has been asking questions about the implications. Does the Council still have a role to play in academies? Will academies provide sufficient support to vulnerable young people? How can we ensure all children in Warwickshire have access to quality education provision?

In an effort to get some real answers, and develop some ideas for how the Council will work with academies in the future, the Committee set up a Task & Finish Group that met regularly during the second half of 2012.

Assisted by officers in the service, and with valuable input from two local head teachers, the Group focused on the following topics:

- **School-place planning** – how can the Council ensure sufficient school places for children in Warwickshire, when it has no control over academy admissions?
- **School improvement** – how can the Council ensure academies are doing all they can to improve and offer the best education for our children?
- **Vulnerable children** – how will the Council continue to carry out its duties towards vulnerable children when they are within an academy school?

In its final report, the Task & Finish Group proposed a series of recommendations. The main theme of these was about building strong relationships – not only between the Council and academies, but also between schools themselves (so they can support each other to improve) and between schools and elected members and other service providers.

**Key Outcomes and Achievements:**

- Recommendations approved by Cabinet to strengthen the Council’s relationship with academies.
- Clearer understanding of the challenges the LA has in being an effective ‘champion of the learner’.
Another Task & Finish Group reporting to the Committee in 2012/13 was on Post-16 Transport. Members wanted to look at whether increased costs and network changes would affect the educational opportunities or attainment of young people.

Given the huge number of other factors to consider, there was no definitive answer. But the Group did put forward six recommendations aimed at improving joint-working between agencies, guidance for young people, and financial support.

The Committee also discovered that, while the government is raising the participation age for education or training this year (making it compulsory for young people up to the age of 17) there will not be any help with transport costs for those affected.

This raises the question of how young people – especially those living in deprivation or rural isolation – will be able to get to their place of study or training.

The Committee therefore asked the Portfolio Holder to raise this with local MPs and local government bodies, as it could have a major impact on those groups of young people.

**Key Outcomes and Achievements:**

- Six clear recommendations for improvement noted by Cabinet; and

- Challenge issued to the Portfolio Holder regarding the local impact of national legislation

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One of the key roles of the Committee is to monitor levels of educational attainment across the county. The Council receives and analyses annual exam results and presents them to the Committee with a report of the key findings.

Members are consistently interested in the attainment levels of vulnerable children, such as Looked After Children, as well as the disparity between those who receive and do not receive Free School Meals i.e., the relative attainment of those living in deprivation.

This year, the Committee wanted to go one level further and drill down into a geographical analysis. In addition to the key findings report, a seminar was organised (open to all elected members) that looked at attainment levels at ward level.

This allowed members to see which areas of the county were performing well and not so well, and how attainment in their patch compared with the county and national averages.

With this information, members are better equipped to carry out their local community leadership role, challenging their schools to improve education standards.

**Key Outcomes and Achievements:**

- Members are well informed of attainment levels in their local area; and

- Members are better equipped to challenge local schools to improve
NEETs

Often mentioned in the national media, the term NEETs refers to young people “not in education, employment or training”. In other words, they have left school and not moved on to a positive destination – and will likely be long-term unemployed.

Members have received two reports this year on the level of NEETs in Warwickshire. They have scrutinised how we compare with our statistical neighbours, as well as what strategies we are employing as a Council to reduce the number. In addition, they have looked at the number of apprenticeships in the county and how businesses are being encouraged to make more available.

Key Outcomes and Achievements:

• Members have a greater awareness of the need for positive destinations; and
• Members are now encouraging apprenticeships at every opportunity

Safeguarding

Back in 2011, Ofsted inspected our Safeguarding and Looked After Children services. The verdict was “good”, although it was felt there was "capacity to improve". Following the inspection, officers drew up an action plan to address those areas where improvements could be made.

The Committee was keen to ensure this work was being undertaken effectively, and a Task & Finish Group was established to monitor the implementation of the Action Plan. Happily, after a series of meetings in May and a follow-up meeting in December, the Group concluded that everything was on track. A simple piece of scrutiny, but certainly worthwhile.

Key Outcomes and Achievements:

• Assurance over the continual improvement of one of the Council’s most important services

Public Engagement

A regular issue arising during 2012/13 was the removal of Passenger Transport Assistants from certain school bus routes. Various schools, parents and local members called on the Committee to investigate this, worried about the risks to children travelling unaccompanied to and from school – and unconvinced about the level of savings it would generate. The Committee openly shared some of these concerns and agreed to monitor the policy as further evidence became available. While this policy has now been reversed, and there is no need for continued monitoring, this is a good example of how scrutiny can work positively with the public to address their concerns.

The Committee welcomed public speakers on other matters too, such as school admissions, which not only provided those individuals with an avenue to discuss their particular circumstances, but has raised the Committee’s attention to potential wider policy issues that it will keep under review.

Key Outcomes and Achievements:

• Concerns of residents taken seriously within an open discussion forum; and
• Public are more aware of the democratic process and how to engage with it
The Future

The Committee operates a rolling and evolving work programme, and there is plenty on it for the year ahead already.

Having looked at the transformation of the youth services early last year, members will now be asking for evidence and data to assess how the new targeted service is achieving positive outcomes for young people.

A new commissioning strategy is in development for the county’s children’s centres; and with the government consulting on the role of local authorities in early education and childcare, this will be high on the Committee’s agenda for the new year.

A key element of the review into academies will be explored further when members receive the Council’s strategy for school improvement. Members will also be monitoring the implementation of those Task & Finish Group recommendations on an on-going basis.

In terms of national legislation, members will want to understand the impact for Warwickshire of various reforms:

- Professor Munro’s review of child protection will see changes that place greater trust in frontline professionals and a reduction in government bureaucracy. Warwickshire is already a “Munro Demonstrator” site, so it will be interesting to review the outcomes from that.

- Changes are due around special educational needs as part of the Children and Families Bill, with families being offered personal budgets so they can choose their own support. Members will want to understand how the LA is preparing for that change and ensuring families are supported to best use their personal budgets.

“The Committee has continued to explore the role of the Local Authority as Champion of the Learner in a climate of on-going change. It has paid particular attention to the needs of vulnerable children and seeking assurances that Warwickshire is striving to excel for all its young people.”

Councillor Julie Jackson
Chair of the Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee
6. **Communities Achievements**

**Introduction**

The Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee is responsible for scrutinising a very broad range of service areas: from Bus Services and Street Lighting to the Fire & Rescue Service and Flood Risk Management. With only six meetings scheduled per year the Committee has been working hard to keep focussed on topics that matter the most to the residents of Warwickshire.

Over the next few pages we have highlighted some of the key areas of work that the Committee has undertaken during the past twelve months.

**Part-Night Street Lighting**

Following concerns from both Councillors and members of the public, a Task and Finish Group was set up to look at the impact that part-night lighting would have on Warwickshire.

The Group, chaired by Councillor Jim Foster, looked at the impact on crime and road safety, the technology behind the switch-off, best practice from other authorities, and the views of residents.

While the majority of the Task and Finish Group members believed that there were good reasons for moving to part-night lighting, they put forward a strong series of recommendations to ensure that residents felt safe and that lessons of other Local Authorities were taken on board.

At the beginning of 2013 the Committee also hosted a question and answer session that gave members of the public, local Councillors, and representatives from community groups, the opportunity to put their thoughts and concerns to the Portfolio Holder for Transport & Highways.

**Outcomes of the review**

- Cabinet approved all of the recommendations from the review.
- There will be close monitoring of the crime and road-safety impacts of part-night lighting.
- Improvements were made to the way WCC communicated with the public.
- The scheme will be reviewed again by the Committee after one year to ensure there has not been an adverse impact on residents.
Addressing the Community Impact of Bus Service Cuts

In 2011 the bus subsidy budget was significantly reduced and the subsidy for evening bus services was removed entirely. In response to a number of representations from members of the public and Councillors, the Committee set up a Task and Finish Group to look at the impact of the resulting service changes on users and propose solutions that could be considered as part of the budget setting process.

The Task and Finish Group, Chaired by Councillor Martyn Ashford, worked closely with Transport officers and presented three recommendations which aimed to maintain the current level of bus services across the County and reinstate a reduced level of evening bus subsidy to provide brand new rural and inter-urban bus routes on Friday and Saturday evenings.

The Group believed that the additional bus routes and stops would increase access to services and amenities for thousands of people and would help to improve the night time economy in Warwickshire.

Outcome of the review

Cabinet agreed to consider the proposals for four new evening bus services as part of the budget setting process for 2013/14.

Ultimately the new routes were not funded in the current budget but the review succeeded in presenting an innovative, low cost way to increase the number of bus routes in Warwickshire and provided a clear blueprint for members and officers to consider when setting the next budget.

Transport and Highways

Transport Regulation Orders

Early this year, following a question from a member of the public, the Committee worked with the Portfolio Holder for Transport & Highways to make it easier for members of the public to have their say on Traffic Regulation Orders.

Reviewing the Highways Maintenance Contract

The Committee scrutinised the performance of the new highways maintenance contract that was awarded to Balfour Beatty. The new contract, worth around £20m per year, presented some big challenges, such as the transfer of staff and a major change to the style of contract which aimed to deliver more value for money, and encourage new and better ways of working.

Members will continue to review the performance of the contract in September 2013.
Economic Development

The Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership

Towards the end of 2012 the Committee hosted a question and answer session with Martin Yardley, the Managing Director of the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP). He talked to members about how the CWLEP planned to support new businesses, and remove barriers to growth.

Later in the year the Committee also reviewed and endorsed new constitutional and governance arrangements for the CWLEP that would give it greater financial powers.

Community Safety

Anti-Social Behaviour

The Committee scrutinised recent changes to Anti-Social Behaviour legislation, and looked at what action the Council was taking to address the issue. The Committee endorsed the development of a new multi-agency ‘Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour’ implementation plan.

Youth Justice

Members reviewed Warwickshire’s Youth Justice Plan for 2012/13. The report showed the service to have been performing well against national indicators, with Warwickshire labelled one of the top performing local authorities in the Country.

The Committee also saw the results of a multi-disciplinary inspection that included inspectors from the probation service, the constabulary, the Care Quality Commission and Ofsted.

The Library Service

Library Transformation

The Committee has monitored the ongoing transformation of the Library Service. Members. A key part of the transformation was the reduction of the mobile library fleet from five vehicles to three.

The Committee requested that rural isolation and lack of access to services were made top priorities when reviewing routes and stops and strongly endorsed a full public consultation.

The Fire and Rescue Service

The Integrated Risk Management Plan

This year the Committee reviewed the new Integrated Risk Management Plan (IRMP), which is a statutory document that sets out the priorities and challenges for the service for a three year period.

Members supported the new document and commended its focus on better training and development for Fire Fighters.

Leamington Fire HQ and Training Centre

This year the Committee requested an update on the development of a new Fire Station and training facility in Leamington Spa. Despite a number of delays to the project, the service had made a successful bid into the WCC Capital Programme for 2013/14 and the project will be going ahead. Members will continue to review progress on the development over the next 12 months.
Sustainable Communities

Long Term Waste Disposal

Following the termination of Project Transform in 2010, officers investigated the business case to become a partner in the Coventry and Solihull Waste Disposal Company.

The Committee had previously established a Task and Finish Group to carry out a review of the long term solution for waste.

While the Council decided to go in a different direction than the one anticipated by the review but the recommendations, and market testing day, helped to inform the final contract, which included a number of key safeguards that will protect the Council in the future.

Flood Risk Management

This year members were updated on the progress of Warwickshire’s new Flood Risk Management Strategy. In April 2014 Warwickshire County Council will take over as the approval body responsible for sustainable drainage on all new developments across the County.

Many of the members of the Committee have a lot of experience with flooding in their localities and provided ‘on the ground’ suggestions to improve flood risk management in the future.

Flood Risk Management is a new responsibility for the Local Authority and it will continue to be a key priority for scrutiny over the next 12 months.

Looking Ahead to 2013/14

Civil Parking Enforcement

As soon as the dust has settled after the May election, the Committee will be asking for members to join a Task and Finish Group that will be reviewing a proposal to tender Civil Parking Enforcement in Warwickshire.

The proposal was one of the key outcomes of the Strategic Commissioning review of the Transport & Highways service, and will deliver an estimated cost savings to the County of £300,000 per year. The Committee have a number of concerns including: the quality of independent parking enforcement providers; a lack of consultation with town centre partnerships and the wider business community; and the impact to members of the public.

The Committee also has the following key items on the work programme for the 2013/14:

• Economic development
• The Flood Risk Management Plan
• A review of part-night street lighting one year on from implementation

“With such a broad remit, we’ve had to keep the work of the Committee tightly focussed on important subjects where we felt we could make a difference. I believe that we achieved this again during 2012/13, and that the Committee’s recommendations have helped shape the policies and actions of the Council.”

Councillor John Whitehouse
Chair of the Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee
7. **Getting Involved**

You can keep up to date with the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees and Task and Finish Groups by visiting our blog at [www.warksdemocracy.wordpress.com](http://www.warksdemocracy.wordpress.com) and following us on Twitter @WarksDemocracy.

Listening to the views of local residents is an important part of the work of Overview and Scrutiny. If you have any questions about scrutiny or if you want to bring an issue to the attention of Councillors you can contact the Warwickshire scrutiny team:

**Overview and Scrutiny Team**  
Warwickshire County Council  
PO Box 9, Shire Hall  
Warwick, CV34 4RR

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