

Scrutiny

Newsletter

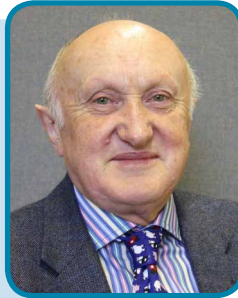
Scrutiny is now bedding down after the elections, and a lot of good focussed task and finish groups have been established. The Growth Strategy Task and Finish Group has just presented its recommendations to Cabinet and the others will be reporting early in the new year.

Scrutiny Management Board (SMB) itself has been concentrating on coordinating Scrutiny's response to the Budget Consultation put out by Cabinet. We held very well attended sessions on the budget, spread over one and a half days to which all non-executive Members were invited. This provided an excellent opportunity to review and discuss both the wider budget context and the specific proposals that are being put forward, and help to develop Scrutiny's official response to Cabinet.

Also my thanks to the Corporate Directors and their staff for all of their co-operation and help in explaining to Members the propositions put forward in the budget. This work could not have happened without the dedication and excellent work of our Scrutiny Team led by Tracey with the added support of Democratic Services. I will be presenting these findings to Cabinet at their meeting on 19 December.

Looking forward to next year, SMB have asked the Chairman and Scrutiny Manager develop a scope for consideration at our next meeting in January. The plan is to set up a Task and Finish Group to look at other comparator local authorities and how they are tackling this environment of reshaping and delivering high quality services in the context of an ever reducing budget, and to bring the findings and good practice back to Cumbria for consideration. The Scrutiny team will be contacting all non-executive Members in the new year seeking expressions of interest in joining this task group, and I would encourage Members to put themselves forward for this interesting and valuable piece of work.

Councillor Bill Wearing
Scrutiny Management Board Chairman



Strategic planning

One of the key pieces of work that Scrutiny carries out on an annual basis is engaging with the Council's Strategic Planning Process and reviewing and scrutinising the budget proposals that are being put forward, and also suggesting alternative or additional proposals.

This year Scrutiny revised the way it had previously undertaken this work, and whilst carrying out a development session in September focussing on local government finance (as has happened in previous years), rather than holding a number of directorate specific meetings an all-day event was scheduled for early November. After careful consideration, the Scrutiny Chairs identified ten key budget proposals that they wished to examine in detail on the day, and all Corporate Directors, the Chief Executive and a number of Assistant Directors came along to ensure that Members had the information they needed to scrutinise both these proposals and the wider financial issues facing the authority.

A second session was held the following week, again open to all Non-Executive Members the outputs of the earlier session were reviewed and feedback to Cabinet Agreed. This feedback was later confirmed by Scrutiny Management Board and will be fed back to Cabinet officially at their meeting on 19 December 2013.

Health development day

On Tuesday 15 October 2013 Scrutiny held a half day development session focussing health and wellbeing. The three main themes for the session were:

- Changes to NHS Structures and what this means for Cumbria
- What is Public Health all about?
- Workshops exploring how councillors can support and improve health and community wellbeing.

This event was open to all County Councillors and District Councillors who are members or named substitutes of the Cumbria Health Scrutiny Committee. The morning was well attended with 33 Members taking part, four of whom were from District authorities.

Feedback from this session was very good and it is proposed that a further health focussed development session is held in the new year.



Contact us

E: scrutiny@cumbria.gov.uk

Your thoughts on Scrutiny Development days

Feedback from Scrutiny development sessions is largely very positive, and increasing numbers of members are attending these. However the Scrutiny team will be exploring how to continue to support and expand Member attendance at these events, and the barriers that prevent some Members being able to participate, for example the time of the sessions or the location. If you have any views on this issue please contact Tracey Ingham in the scrutiny team to let her know so that they can be included in this review.



Scrutiny Work Programme

As was reported in the last edition of the Scrutiny Newsletter, part of the way in which we are working to increase the effectiveness and transparency of Scrutiny, is to consult with various stakeholders to seek suggestions for potential topics / issues to inform the Scrutiny work programme.

Over the summer all councillors were emailed seeking their views for possible items for consideration, and other stakeholders including District and Borough Councils, Parish Councils the health Service and the Police were also asked for their suggestions.

A significant number of proposals were put forward, and in early September all Non Executive Councillors were invited to an event to begin to look at prioritising those topics that should be taken forward for scrutiny review over the coming twelve to eighteen months.

The results of this event have since been fed back to each of the Scrutiny Panels and the new work programme has now been developed. Topics that we will be focussing on over the coming months include:

- The integration of health and social care
- The modernisation of services for older people
- Exploring practice across services in other authorities
- Suitable accommodation for 16-17 year olds
- Mental Health Services in Cumbria

If you would like more information about any of these topics or to see the full list of reviews that will take place please contact the Scrutiny Team.

Case Study - Transitions in Care for Young People with Complex Needs Task Group Review



A small task and finish group of county councillors have been looking at the journey for young people with complex needs from the care and support of Children's Services to Adult and Local Services in Cumbria. The task group's focus is to determine whether the appropriate protocol and procedures are in place to create a smooth transition for young people, their families and carers that, at the same time, places the young person's best interests at the heart of the process.

The task group have been looking at how the various services involved support young people through the process of transition and whether there are possibilities for improving this process in Cumbria.

This review is in progress and to date the task group have met witnesses from Adult and Local Services, Children's Services, the Clinical Commissioning Group and the Cumbria Partnership to consider the process from the viewpoints of involved partners. The task group are scheduled to meet representatives from housing, mental health services, along with service users and transition workers at a later date.

Task group members have been impressed by the work going on across services to promote the best outcomes possible for young people going through transition and have brought their own personal and professional experience to bear on their discussions with witnesses.

Councillor Elizabeth Mallinson

Case Study - Cumbria Local Enterprise Partnership Growth Deal Task Group



Economic Development is not a statutory duty of the County Council, so you might ask why Scrutiny held a one day task and finish group to consider the emerging priorities for the LEP Strategic Economic Plan on 28 October 2013.

In England, local enterprise partnerships (LEP) are voluntary partnerships between local authorities and the private business sector. They were formed to help determine local economic priorities, lead economic growth and stimulate job creation within the local area. They carry out some of the functions previously carried out by the regional development agencies after they were abolished in March 2012.

Cumbria LEP covers the whole geographic area of Cumbria. It provides a strategic lead in all activities contributing to the growth and vibrancy of the county's economy and where appropriate takes positive action, using the skills, capabilities and networks of the LEP partners. In Cumbria we have to develop Cumbria's economy while maintaining its uniqueness in terms of landscape, culture and quality of life. The LEP is about much more than allocation of funding and supporting applications for the Regional Growth Fund. They want to create new working practices and make the most of opportunities to support private sector led investment and initiatives.

This means that the County Council has a real stake in the future of the Cumbrian economy and our role as members of the LEP is the route by which we can demonstrate our involvement.

So, when we wrote our report for Cabinet we made some very clear recommendations. We felt that a simple message with a reduced number of Priorities was easy to remember, and didn't tie the hands too firmly of the LEP.

In the end Cabinet agreed with our recommendations, but with a change to the wording of the strategic priorities. They have ended up as:

- a.) Advanced Manufacturing Growth
- b.) Nuclear and Energy Excellence
- c.) Sustainable Rural Economy (including tourism)
- d.) M6 Corridor.

So now Cabinet, and officers have a mandate to participate in the negotiations with the LEP and Government about securing investment in the Council's economic priorities.

We also recommended that the map of Cumbria, superimposed on the home counties and London made a clear statement about our geography and helped to emphasise both the opportunities and issues that we have in a rural County.

Government has advised that they like the Growth Hub as a model for the delivery of business support services. In Cumbria, the Growth Hub is currently provided by the Chamber of Commerce. The task group recommended that the LEP should give further consideration to 'ownership' of the Growth Hub.

We also felt that showing examples of partnership working would demonstrate that Cumbria can speak with one voice and how this approach can bring real benefits for the County. Cabinet accepted our case. Detailed business plans will be required to support the economic priority projects and programmes that are put forward for investment by the LEP. These projects and programmes will need to build upon the joint working between partners in order to enable delivery of priorities.

Councillor Tony Markley



Scrutiny Developments

The first six months of the Council have been a busy time for Scrutiny with a number of developments taking place. These include:

Call-In

Following an early Call-In SMB began to discuss the best way to make this valuable process as effective and efficient as possible. Following a broad discussion with all non executive members, it was felt that in order to add clarity, consistency, and ensure that Members who were hearing the Call-Ins were fully comfortable with the process, the best way to undertake this work would be for one Advisory Board to hear all Call-Ins regardless of the issue under consideration. As SMB is the overarching Scrutiny Body on which all Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs sit it was felt that this would be the most appropriate place for Call-Ins to be received in future. Full Council subsequently agreed this approach, and from November 2013 any valid Call-Ins will go to SMB for consideration.

Joint Health Scrutiny

Of the three Health Service Trusts in Cumbria, the University Hospital of Morecambe Bay Trust (UHMBT) is unique in that it is located across two county areas – Lancashire and Cumbria. The Cumbria Health Scrutiny Committee has carried out a great deal of work reviewing UHMBT and its services, and similarly the Lancashire Health Scrutiny Committee has undertaken work regarding this Trust.

The Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013 and accompanying guidance make it clear that where an NHS body or relevant health service provider consults more than one local authority on proposals to make substantial variations or developments to services, a joint committee of these authorities will need to be formed to consider the proposals. Only the joint committee may require the organisation proposing the change to provide information or to attend meetings to answer questions. Similarly it is the joint committee who would have the authority to make a report and recommendations back to the organisation proposing the changes.

As such both Cumbria and Lancashire County Councils have agreed to establish an ad hoc joint scrutiny committee to scrutinise substantial variations to services across the Trust area.

Membership of the Committee from a Cumbria perspective has been agreed as being:

- Two County Councillors drawn from the Cumbria Health Scrutiny Committee
- The South Lakeland District Council member of the Cumbria Health Scrutiny Committee
- The Barrow Borough Council member of the Cumbria Health Scrutiny Committee

The ad hoc joint committee will meet for the first time in early 2014 to begin to look at the Better Care Together programme and consultation.

Participation in Scrutiny

Over the last six months since May 2013 Scrutiny has established three task and finish groups with more to come on line shortly. Interest in taking part in these reviews has been extremely high, and I am pleased to note that so far 18 separate Members have taken part in task and finish group work - that's 24% of non-exec getting involved with scrutiny reviews in just six months. We are keen that as many members as possible engage with Scrutiny and will be circulating details of forthcoming reviews over the coming months, and would strongly encourage all Members who are interested in taking part to let the Scrutiny Team know.

SMB Scrutiny of the Health and Wellbeing Board

At their most recent Meeting SMB agreed that given the overarching remit of the Health and Wellbeing Board, which includes all aspects of the Council, not solely health services, the role of scrutinising this body should fall to SMB rather than an individual Panel. Work will be undertaken over coming weeks to explore how this can best be undertaken and will be reported back to SMB at their next meeting in January 2014.

Member Champions

Following the successful implementation of the member champion arrangements during the last council a new group of champions has now been agreed by the Communities and Place Scrutiny Board as follows:



- Economic Development - Keith Hitchen and Neil Hughes
- Trading Standards – Marjorie Rae and John Murphy



- Resilience - Mark Wilson
- Fire and Rescue Mike Hawkins (west Cumbria) and Dave Roberts (south Cumbria)

In the Police and Crime Panel it has also been decided to pilot a member champion approach in the areas of

- Domestic abuse and sexual violence – Linda Vance
- Crime levels) David Wilson
- Rural crime)
- Youth Justice/Youth Offending – Stephen Bowditch

The Scrutiny Team is currently working on bringing the individual members together with the relevant officer contacts to enable their interests in the particular areas of work to be progressed.

Meet the team

Tracey Ingham

Tracey is the Scrutiny Manager and has worked in Local Government for a number of years, both at a District and county level. Whilst supporting all aspects of Scrutiny at the Council Tracey is primarily responsible for supporting Scrutiny management Board, the Police and Crime Panel and the Health Scrutiny Committee and their work programmes. Tracey Ingham on **01228 226259** or tracey.ingham@cumbria.gov.uk



Vic Milbourne

Vic is the longest standing Member of the Scrutiny team, having worked in Scrutiny at the Council since 2006. Over that time she has supported a number of Scrutiny Boards including a two year secondment running the Countywide Joint Scrutiny Committee. Vic Currently supports the Children & Young People and Adults Scrutiny Advisory Boards Vic Milbourne on **01228 226564** or vic.milbourne@cumbria.gov.uk



Linda Graham

Linda is the newest member of the scrutiny team but has worked for the Council for a number of years, many of which were as a Senior Democratic Services Officer working closely with both Executive and Non-Executive Members. Linda is primarily responsible for supporting the Communities & Place Scrutiny Advisory Board and the Police and Crime Panel. Linda Graham on **01228 226362** or linda.graham@cumbria.gov.uk



Please email us at: scrutiny@cumbria.gov.uk