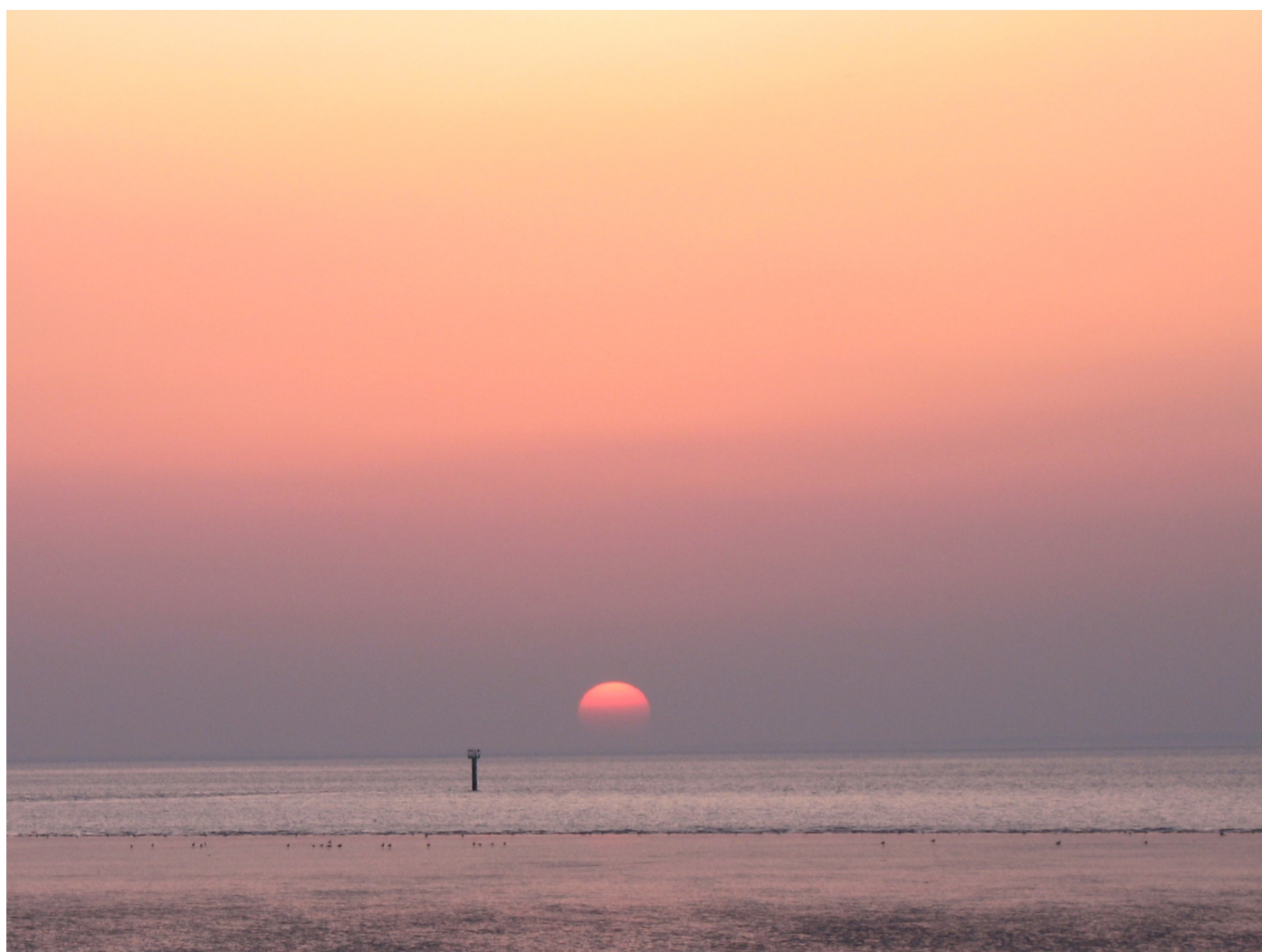


# **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14**



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# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has overall responsibility for the performance of all Scrutiny functions (under the Local Government Act 2000) on behalf of the Council.

The Committee has the power to scrutinise all of the City Council functions and decisions that are not within the Terms of Reference of the Budget and Performance Panel. It also has the power to call-in any decisions that Members feel have not been made in accordance with the Council's decision-making principles.

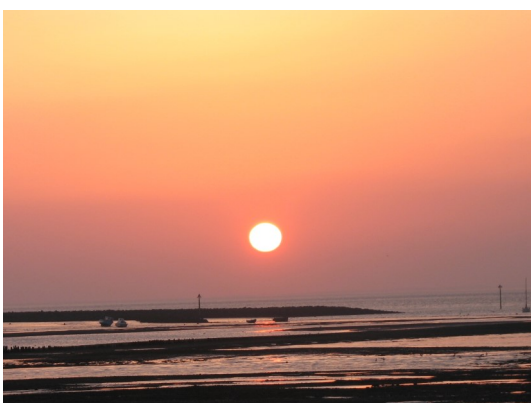


## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

This year has proven to be very challenging both for the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The current financial climate nationally has driven forward some really difficult issues and we must respect any Member in taking those decisions which are difficult.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Vice Chairman Cllr Dennison and all members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their hard work and commitment to this Council's Scrutiny Process. I also want to thank Cllr Tony Anderson, Chair of Budget & Performance Panel and all the members of the Panel. I find the Budget and Performance Panel to be a valuable asset to this Council's Scrutiny process.

I have enjoyed meeting with Cabinet Members as well as working alongside an excellent officer team, Stephen Metcalfe and Jenny Kay.



### Membership:

Councillors David Kerr, Roger Dennison, Mark Bevan, Caroline Jackson, Joan Jackson, Jane Parkinson, Ian Pattison, Pam Pickles and David Whitaker

# OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE



HERE ARE SOME OF THE MAIN ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE OVERVIEW  
AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE THIS YEAR.

## DEMENTIA FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES & SOCIAL ISOLATION

The Committee dedicates one meeting each year to look at issue affecting older people. This year Age UK and Help Direct gave the Committee details about the growing ageing population, social isolation and living with dementia.



The Committee decided to work with Age UK and Help Direct to set up a pilot Dementia Friendly Community in Bare and Torrisholme wards.

The pilot has begun in Bare with the Bare Village Business Association keen to progress the project and become the first Dementia Friendly Community in the area. Once complete, the project team will move on to Torrisholme.



## PUBLIC HEALTH

Lancashire County Council, since last year, is now responsible for Public Health. The Committee invited a representative to its March meeting to hear about the work being undertaken in the district. The statistics

highlighted where the district was significantly worse compared to the rest of the country, these were:

- Smoking in pregnancy
- Starting breast feeding
- Alcohol specific hospital stays for under 18s
- Drugs misuse
- Self harm hospital stays
- Acute sexually transmitted infection
- Life expectancy
- Smoking related deaths
- Heart disease
- Strokes
- Road injuries and deaths

The Committee asked for more detailed information to ascertain problem areas in the district to enable the City Council to work with Public Health to face these issues.



## OTHER ISSUES



### POLICE CRIME COMMISSIONER

Each year the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers Community Safety, this year, the Committee invited the Police Commissioner's Partnership Officer to the meeting.

Councillors were given an overview of the role of the Commissioner and the work he had undertaken in his first year.

The Commissioner's priorities are:

- ◆ Promoting targeted initiatives to contribute to tackle crime and reoffending
- ◆ Champion the rights of the victim
- ◆ Policing requirements for Lancashire
- ◆ Protect vulnerable people
- ◆ Defend frontline policing
- ◆ Partnership working

The Committee agreed to look at other district Council's CCTV provision.



### BETTER CARE TOGETHER

The Committee was approached by Lancashire North Clinical Commissioning Group last year to take part in the 'Better Care Together' consultation.

This was a review of local health services that was being undertaken by the Lancashire North and Cumbria Clinical Commissioning Groups and the University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust.

Health professionals in the area were considering how the different parts of the health service could work more effectively to ensure individual patients could receive the most appropriate and quality care.

It was important to make significant financial savings whilst ensuring high quality healthcare was maintained.

There is also the need to review services to ensure they were flexible enough to meet future challenges such as the increase in the ageing population.

Regular updates would be provided for the Committee. The Committee will feed into the City Council's consultation response.



# PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY

Pre-Scrutiny is the process mainly based on the study of the City Council's published 'Key Decisions' contained in the List of Forthcoming Key Decisions. It also includes information provided by Cabinet Liaison Councillors. With this information the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can select issues that it would like to consider before a decision is taken.

Each year the Committee appoint a Councillor to the role of Pre-Scrutiny Champion. This year that has been Councillor Roger Dennison. He meets regularly with the Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Budget and Performance Panel.

This process can help to add value to decisions at the pre-decision stage, can widen consultation to include Non-Executive Councillors and it can also help to minimise the use of Call-in.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee welcomes the opportunity to submit a response during the consultation phase of a decision, and would encourage this approach.



## PRE-SCRUTINY CHAMPION ROGER DENNISON

Regular Pre-Scrutiny meetings are held monthly with myself and the Chairmen of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Budget & Performance Panel. These meetings have proved to be very useful and effective in ensuring Cabinet decisions are subject to proper scrutiny.

As forthcoming key decisions are considered at these meetings, we ensure any matters of concern are referred to the relevant Committee for further information and scrutiny.

I would like to thank the officers concerned— Tom Silvani and Jenny Kay who efficiently collate this information and ensure the process is both effective and thorough.

# APPOINTMENTS

At the request of Council, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee made the following appointments to outside bodies.

## OUTSIDE BODY

Homelessness Forum

Lancaster and Morecambe Fairtrade District  
Steering Group

Museums Advisory Panel

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEMBERSHIP

Jane Parkinson

Mark Bevan

Roger Dennison

Representatives are asked to report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the work of these bodies.



**COUNCILLOR  
JANE  
PARKINSON**



**COUNCILLOR  
MARK BEVAN**



**COUNCILLOR  
ROGER  
DENNISON**

# CABINET LIAISON MEMBERS

**CABINET MEMBERS WITH CORRESPONDING CABINET LIAISON MEMBERS FOR  
2013/14 ARE SET OUT BELOW: -**

## **CABINET LIAISON MEMBERS**

### **COUNCILLORS**

David Kerr  
Roger Dennison  
Joan Jackson  
Caroline Jackson  
Jane Parkinson  
Mark Bevan  
Ian Pattison  
David Whitaker

## **CABINET MEMBERS**

### **COUNCILLORS**

Eileen Blamire  
Janice Hanson  
Abbott Bryning  
Ron Sands  
Karen Leytham  
David Smith  
Jon Barry  
Tim Hamilton-Cox

At the first meeting of every municipal year Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agree who will undertake the role of Cabinet Liaison Member for each member of Cabinet. This appointment helps keep the Committee informed of issues within individual Cabinet portfolios.

The Committee values the opportunity to discuss portfolio issues with Cabinet Members and, in developing the work programme, every attempt is made to ensure that Cabinet Members are invited

to meetings where the agenda items are relevant to their portfolio areas.

It is hoped that each Cabinet Member will attend at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the end of the municipal year.

Cabinet Members, particularly Councillors Eileen Blamire and Abbott Bryning, have been invited and have attended Budget and Performance Panel meetings throughout the year.



# CALL-IN AND HOLDING CABINET TO ACCOUNT

## CALL-IN

Call-in is only one of a number of ways in which Overview and Scrutiny can hold the Executive to account.

The choice to 'Call-in' a Cabinet decision is used sparingly at the City Council, and with care.

The procedure ensures that, if necessary, decisions or proposals made by the Cabinet, a Cabinet Member, a Cabinet Committee, an Officer with delegated authority, or under joint arrangements can be thoroughly examined, amendments proposed, and full debate entered into by all Members.

It is the view of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that Call-ins are only used in exceptional circumstances. 'Exceptional circumstances' are where Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have evidence which suggests that the decision in question has not been made in accordance with the principles set out in Article 13 'Decision Making' of the Council's Constitution.

There have been no call-ins in this municipal year at the time of writing this report.

## HOLDING CABINET MEMBERS TO ACCOUNT

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has continued to hold Cabinet members to account. This has taken place through the Call-in process and considering items of business at Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Budget and Performance Panel and Task Groups, but also through arranging for Cabinet members to come to a meeting to discuss issues and developments within their cabinet portfolios.

At the first meeting of every municipal year members of Overview and Scrutiny agree who will take the role of Cabinet Liaison Member for each member of cabinet. Committee members are not permitted to 'shadow' a cabinet member of the same political group. The appointment is to help keep the Committee informed of issues within individual Cabinet portfolios. Cabinet Liaison Members have provided regular feedback at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings.

Cabinet Liaison Members provide a dedicated link between Overview and Scrutiny and Cabinet Members. The role is intended to provide an ongoing dialogue between meetings to ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee remains informed regarding developments within cabinet portfolios, potential areas for pre-decision scrutiny and where Cabinet members feel there is a role for scrutiny to assist with policy development.

# BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE PANEL

The Budget and Performance Panel has specific responsibility for providing overview and scrutiny to issues regarding the City Council's performance, budget and financial issues.



## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

It has been a privilege to have been elected to the position of chairman of Budget and Performance Panel for 2013/14. Budget and Performance Panel plays a very important role in ensuring that council spending provides value for money for residents of the district. I have found the role of chairman to be a fascinating, exciting and stimulating experience and an enjoyable

In my role as chairman of Budget and Performance Panel I have worked with officers in order to simplify the information presented in performance monitoring reports, to enable all councillors to understand the complicated financial and performance data as comprehensively as possible. I believe that information should be presented in a way that is accessible to members of the public, which will provide assurances that the panel has adequately monitored the council's budget.

In March 2014 the city council's treasury advisor, Richard Dunlop, provided a presentation to members regarding Treasury Management. I believe it is important that councillors have

a full understanding of treasury management and would encourage all councillors to attend training regarding the Treasury Management Strategy in future.

I would like to thank Councillors David Kerr and Roger Dennison for their support and guidance throughout my first year in the role of chairman. I am grateful to all non-scrutiny members who have attended panel meetings and training in order to improve their understanding of the issues considered by the panel, and to assist in the scrutiny process. As always I would like to thank Councillors Eileen Blamire, and Abbott Bryning for their

attendance at meetings of the panel.

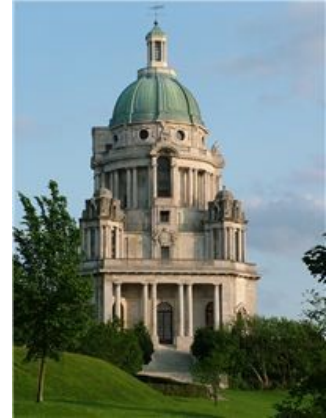
I would also like to thank officers for their help and support, particularly Bob Bailey and Andrew Clarke, whose attendance at chairman's briefings has been invaluable, and all staff in Democratic Services.

Going forward, I hope to be given the opportunity to build on the knowledge which I have developed this year in order to improve the scrutiny function at Lancaster City Council.

### Membership:

Councillors Tony Anderson, Alycia James, Dave Brookes, Janet Hall, Roger Mace, Richard Newman-Thompson, Liz Scott, Keith Sowden and Susan Sykes

# MAIN ISSUES CONSIDERED BY THE PANEL



## CORPORATE PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The panel receives regular reports on performance comprising strategic summaries of how the city council is performing in delivering its corporate plan targets. The panel scrutinises these reports in order to identify any areas of concern. This year the panel has asked for further information regarding the following areas:

- Solar Panels at Salt Ayre Sports Centre
- Performance Management information regarding The Platform
- Information regarding diversionary activities for young people in the district.

Other areas of concern

identified by the panel were reported to Cabinet portfolio holders, and chief officers were asked to respond regarding targets.

## EMPTY HOMES, VOIDS, AND WHY PROPERTIES ARE IN NEED OF REPAIR

At its meeting in September 2013 the panel received a report regarding 'empty homes, voids, and why properties were in need of repair', from the Chief Officer (Environment). The relevant Cabinet member was also invited to the meeting and answered questions from the panel. Members were concerned about the length of time that it took to re-let vacated properties and requested comparative re-let figures from housing associations to inform its

consideration of this issue.

The panel received assurances that action already being undertaken by officers would produce the desired results, and that further intervention would be unnecessary.

## BUDGET CONSULTATION

At its meeting in January 2014 the panel received presentations regarding Lancashire County Councils budget proposals, and Lancaster City Council's Budget and Policy Framework Proposals for 2014/15. Members also considered the Lancashire Police and Crime Commissioner's budget proposals for 2014/15. The panel considered each set of proposals in detail and comments made were fed back to the relevant authorities.



## OTHER ISSUES

The panel considered an update regarding Salt Ayre Sports Centre Review, building on work carried out by the panel in 2012/13. The panel was advised of the scope of the review and asked questions regarding both the long term and short term proposals which were emerging.

The panel was also provided with specific information which it had requested relating to the marketing of the centre, with a specific emphasis on the use of social media.



## SALT AYRE SPORTS CENTRE



In March 2014 the panel considered a report regarding the City Council's key partnerships, and the work which had been carried out by the city council to improve operational and financial effectiveness in this area. The panel considered each of the key partnerships and was provided with a breakdown of key partnership costs and contributions, as well as intended outcomes.

## COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS

Following the introduction of a revised Customer Comments, Compliments and Complaints Policy the panel agreed to undertake regular half yearly monitoring of the procedure. In November 2013 the panel received the first such report which set out key data on the level and nature of complaints received. In 2014/15 the panel will receive further reports which will allow for a more detailed analysis to be presented.

## PARTNERSHIPS



## MORECAMBE BAY PARTNERSHIP

# TASK GROUPS

In 2013/14 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to create an informal Task Group. Details are provided below.

## PUBLIC REALM COMPLAINTS INFORMAL TASK GROUP

The Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Clean and Green asked if the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would investigate complaints over untidy land from Councillors and members of the public when the land wasn't in the Council's ownership.

Information was gathered from Councillors and the Customer Service Centre as to the most common complaints that they came across. From this information, a list of contacts and references to the Council's relevant services will be produced.



Rubbish in the wrong place costs us all more than it should—our informal Task Group aims to make sure the our Councillors and the public knows who should be responsible for cleaning it up.

We've got together to work out better ways to make sure people know who is responsible for keeping our environment clean and safe.

Membership:

Councillors Caroline Jackson,  
Roger Dennison, Paul Gardner,  
Margaret Pattison and David  
Whitaker





# HEALTH SCRUTINY

## REPRESENTATIVE ON LANCASHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL'S HEALTH SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor Paul Gardner is the City Council's representative on the County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee. He gives regular updates to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.



I joined the Lancashire County Council Health Scrutiny Committee in July 2013. This is an exciting opportunity to scrutinise the work of the NHS at a time of great uncertainty of the future of the organisations in Lancashire. Financial considerations and constraints seem to be the prime concerns as well as the shape and configurations of future NHS organisations and of course, the role of the Independent non-NHS providers.

Presentations to the Committee have been made by University Hospitals of Morecambe Bay NHS Foundation Trust; Lancashire Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust; Public Health responsibilities of Lancashire County Council, NHS East Lancashire, NHS North Lancashire, NHS Greater Preston, NHS Chorley, South Ribble Clinical Commissioning Group's and North West Ambulance Service.

I have also had the opportunity to attend 2 informative workshops in Warrington as part of the Regional Health Scrutiny Group with Councillor Roger Dennison.

This is a valuable role for Lancaster City Council to have and one of benefit in democratising the NHS. It is one which the City Council should also consider in the relationship with North Lancashire CCG and the Health & Wellbeing Board.

Thanks to Suzanne Lodge and Jenny Kay for their assistance.



## FUTURE DIRECTION

There are a number of issues that have been unable to be considered or finalised this year in view of the amount of work that has been included on the Committee's Work Programme.

There are also a number of issues that will remain on the Work Programme.

These include: -

- Updates on the future of the Castle and on the Beyond the Castle project;
- Community Safety;
- CCTV;
- Reports on Shared Services developments;
- Local health services;
- Issues affecting older people.
- Performance monitoring;
- Budget and financial issues.

As in previous years, update reports will be requested on the agreed recommendations of recent former Task Groups.

Both the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Budget and Performance Panel will commence considering items for their Work Programmes for 2014/15 early in the new municipal year.

Members of the public are encouraged to suggest issues that they feel should be reviewed. This can be done by completing the suggestion form attached to this report and sending to either Lancaster or Morecambe Town Halls, or by emailing [scrutiny@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@lancaster.gov.uk).

Details on how the public can suggest issues has also been published in the latest edition of Your District Council Matters.

### Scrutinising the decision makers

IS there an issue affecting you and your community that you would like to see Lancaster City Council to look into?

Scrutiny is important to local democracy and exists to hold decision-makers to account and ensure that issues of concern to local residents and visitors are addressed.

It could be a problem in a local area, a council service or an issue which you feel the council, using its community leadership role, should take a lead on improving.

If there is a particular issue that you think should be scrutinised, let us know by writing to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, c/o Democratic Services at Lancaster City Council, Town Hall, Lancaster LA1 1PJ.

Alternatively, email [scrutiny@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@lancaster.gov.uk) or telephone 01524 582065.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Overview and Scrutiny Councillors and Officers would like to thank the following for their contribution to the Scrutiny process during 2013/14:

- Cabinet Members who have appeared before Overview and Scrutiny bodies;
- Representatives from the organisations which have delivered presentations to the Committee/Panel this year;
- Officers who have attended meetings and participated in Overview and Scrutiny reviews;
- Members of the public who have attended meetings or submitted evidence as part of the ongoing work of Scrutiny;
- Councillors and Officers from other local authorities involved in joint working;

# SUGGESTIONS FORM

If you would like to suggest an issue which you believe needs to be review by scrutiny at Lancaster City Council you can:

- Complete the form below and return it to Lancaster or Morecambe Town Hall, or
- Email the Scrutiny team at [scrutiny@lancaster.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@lancaster.gov.uk)

**Please tell us about the issue which you would like to be scrutinised by Lancaster City Council:**

Suggested topic:

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Why do you feel this topic should be reviewed:

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