

**Redditch Borough Council
Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Annual Report 2020 – 2021**



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CHAIR'S FOREWORD

Over the last year it has been a pleasure to be the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It has been a good year as there has been a lot of cross-party working. This is significant in a number of different ways; the importance of cross-party decision-making when representing the community as a whole, in addition it shows that by working together in partnership we can move things forward as a Council. The majority of the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were cross-party recommendations.

It is noted that there have been two specific Task Groups established during the year the Dementia Task group and the Parking on Unicorn Hill Task Group. We have had in-depth group discussions at meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which have resulted in these task groups being set up. It is worth noting that the Parking on Unicorn Hill Task Group was set up as a result in closer working with the Leader of the Council. Frequently we discussed individual items put forward by the whole Committee and raised issues that mattered to the community.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee used its powers to scrutinise decisions made by the Executive Committee as well as to pre-scrutinise items before the Executive Committee made a decision. During the year, training was provided to reinforce Members' understanding and skills to undertake scrutiny effectively. Since that training was delivered, we've had some really constructive, apolitical meetings.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee who have contributed their time and energy to make this a successful year for Overview and Scrutiny. It has been a difficult year during lockdown with the meetings being online. However, we have got through this and continued with the job in hand. Thanks also go to Andy Fry, Jenny Wheeler as well as to Councillor Mike Chalk who has provide excellent written updates on the work of the West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny sub-Committees during the year. I am proud that I have been able to continue in my role as Chair.

I would also like to pay tribute to Councillor Pattie Hill and the work and dedication she put in during her time on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Councillor Joe Baker
Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee



INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Redditch Borough Council during 2020 – 2021.

THE ROLE OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The role of overview and scrutiny is an important one in the Council's governance structure, in providing challenge and driving improvement. It is often referred to as the "critical friend" of the Council and can review any issues of concern or real interest to local residents.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a number of roles within the Council. These include:

- Holding the Executive Committee to account by thoroughly scrutinising their decisions to ensure that the Council continues to provide the best services possible for Redditch residents. As part of this role, the Committee has the power to 'call-in' decisions made by the Executive Committee and to request that the Executive Committee review the original decisions, taking into account the issues raised by the Committee.
- Acting as a 'critical friend' to the Executive Committee by reviewing Council policies and strategies, making recommendations where appropriate.
- Performance and financial monitoring, to ensure the Council's services are sustainable and to the highest possible standard.
- Commissioning reviews of services/topics that impact on the Council or on the lives of Redditch residents.
- Pre-scrutiny of items prior to a decision being made by the Executive Committee.
- Setting up Task Groups to focus on specific subjects and recommend ways to improve existing practices within the Council and community as a whole. A flow chart on how to consider potential scrutiny reviews can be found at Appendix A and the Council's scoping form at Appendix B.

MEMBERSHIP

The Committee appoints individual Members to oversee the work of Overview and Scrutiny. Membership of the Committee for 2020/21 is as follows:



Cllr Joe Baker (Chair)



Cllr Jennifer Wheeler (Vice-Chair)



Cllr Salman Akbar



Cllr Michael Chalk



Cllr Peter Fleming



Cllr Andy Fry



Cllr Pattie Hill
(June 2020 – December 2020)



Cllr Ann Isherwood



Cllr Mark Shurmer



Cllr Yvonne Smith
(January 2021)

ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES DURING 2020-21

In most years, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would hold a scrutiny training and work programme planning session at Redditch Town Hall at the start of the municipal year. During the Covid-19 pandemic, this was not possible to arrange and therefore there was no specific work planning session. However, the Committee has a rolling work programme and items were identified for scrutiny by Members of the Committee throughout the year, including:

- Items for pre-scrutiny, identified from the Executive Committee's Work Programme.
- Subjects considered suitable for further scrutiny through a Task Group investigation.
- Overview items, or subjects for discussion at a single meeting of the Committee.

Training was provided in a virtual setting to members of the Committee in Autumn 2020. This training focused on the key powers of Overview and Scrutiny as well as best practice requirements and received positive feedback from members.

Covid-19 And Remote Meetings

During the municipal year 2020-2021 the Covid-19 pandemic had a significant impact on Council operations. In order to mitigate the impact on Council activities, the Government temporarily removed the legal requirement for local authorities to hold public meetings in person. This meant that Councils had powers to hold public meetings virtually by using video or telephone conferencing technology. The Regulations were made in Parliament on 2nd April 2020 and applied to meetings taking place before 7th May 2021.

Meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were therefore held initially on Skype for Business and later on Microsoft Teams, with the meetings streamed to the Council's YouTube channel. Meetings of scrutiny Task Groups and Working Groups were also held remotely, though as these meetings are private, they were not streamed.

At the time of writing, it is anticipated that in the 2021/22 municipal year, formal, public Committee meetings will need to take place "physically" once more. However, these rules do not apply to informal meetings of Task Groups and Working Groups and Members may wish to continue to hold remote or hybrid meetings of these groups to provide colleagues with greater flexibility to participate in the scrutiny process moving forward.

As agreed by Members in 2019/20, the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee met with the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive on a number of occasions to discuss the scrutiny process. A number of ideas for scrutiny were raised at these meetings, which helped to inform the Committee's work programme during the year.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitors the impact of all of its recommendations that have been endorsed by the Executive Committee. A tracking report is presented to the Committee during the year stating progress made to date.

During consideration of the Executive Committee's Work Programme, Members agreed to pre-scrutinise the following items:

- Restoration and Recovery Plan
- Housing Strategy Report
- Housing Revenue Account Strategic Improvement Plan Progress
- Church Green Draft Conservation Area and Management Plan Consultation
- Redditch Town Centre Redevelopment – Town Investment Plan

In addition to pre-scrutiny of Executive Committee Work Programme items the following items were included in the Committee's Work Programme and were considered at meetings throughout the municipal year:

- Civil Contingencies Annual Report
- Skills in The Local Workforce
- Redditch Community Lottery
- Redditch Partnership Annual Report
- E-Scooter Trial

Further information about the issues discussed by the Committee during the year and Members' findings are detailed below.

REDDITCH COMMUNITY LOTTERY – UPDATE – 2ND JULY 2020 AND 18TH JANUARY 2021

At the first meeting of the municipal year the Redditch Partnership Manager introduced the Redditch Community Lottery Update for Members' consideration, including the timeline of activity, the promotional channels and the percentage split of each lottery ticket purchased. This report had been prepared as requested by Members in the previous municipal year.

Members were advised that there had inevitably been an impact on sales due to Covid-19 and the associated lockdown, as organisations were not able to hold events and promote their fundraising.

The Committee did propose that the financial implications of the Community Lottery should be investigated further. The Executive Committee considered this proposal in August 2020 but concluded that it was too early to assess the financial implications of the lottery when it had only been in operation for approximately six months by that time.

The second update in respect of the Redditch Community Lottery Update was presented to Members on 18th January 2021.

It was reported during the update that the target number of participants during the year had not been met. However, Members were informed that the demographic of people purchasing the tickets was spread evenly across the Town and were advised that it was mainly women between the age of 36 and 40 that had purchased tickets throughout the year.

Members expressed the hope that next year would provide a clearer picture of its performance. Officers undertook to provide a further update to the Committee in six months' time.

E-SCOOTER TRIAL - REPORT TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 26 AUGUST 2020 (EXTRA MEETING)

The Committee was asked to consider a report outlining the Council's proposals for a bid to take part in a national e-scooter trial.

Members were informed that the deadline for applications to be submitted to the Department for Transport to participate in the e-scooter trial was 31st August 2020. The Committee was consulted to provide an opportunity for the Council's bid to be

scrutinised in detail before it was submitted. It was reported that if the bid was successful, the location for the trial in Redditch would range throughout parts of the town centre and that the Council would need to ensure that appropriate Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) were in place before the trial could be launched.

A bid was subsequently successfully submitted, and e-scooters have been introduced in the town. Members agreed that an update should be provided on the trial six months after the launch of the scheme in Redditch and the item was added to the Work Programme.

NEW CEMETERY - UPDATE REPORT - 3RD SEPTEMBER 2020

During the year, a request was made for an update to be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress with respect to the new cemetery space required for Redditch. This request was made in a context in which many members of the public were keen to obtain further information about the plans for a new cemetery.

The focus of the discussions on this item were on the process for the introduction of a new cemetery and the stage that had been reached by the Council. The Committee was very clear that Overview and Scrutiny could not scrutinise any planning applications connected to the introduction of a new cemetery, which would need to be dealt with separately by the Planning committee.

The Bereavement Services Manager explained that there had been delays in the process for several reasons including the ecology and archaeology of certain sites and the appropriateness of surveying these areas. This was in addition to the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has asked to pre-scrutinise a report in respect of the new cemetery provision, currently scheduled on the Executive Work Programme for consideration in August 2021, though the date may change.

PRE-SCRUTINY - RESTORATION AND RECOVERY PLAN - 3RD SEPTEMBER 2020

During the year Members considered the Restoration and Recovery Plan, which outlined the Council's response to the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown.

The key areas of the plan that were highlighted were as follows:

- Delivery of essential services had continued during the pandemic.
- Economic recovery plans were being established across both Redditch and the Worcestershire area and the Restoration and Recovery Plan would sit alongside these two documents.

- Learning from the 'first wave' of Covid-19 had been recognised and had resulted in major changes to how the Council operated.
- The Restoration and Recovery Plan had been formulated around the authority's five Strategic Purposes and included priorities from the Council Plan. As the Council Plan was drafted prior to Covid-19 and, due to changes in priorities during the pandemic, a Council Plan review was scheduled to take place in early 2021 to ensure priorities were refreshed and remained relevant.

PRE-SCRUTINY - HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROGRESS - 3RD SEPTEMBER 2020

This year, the Committee continued to monitor action taken in respect of the Housing Revenue Account Strategic Improvement Plan Progress report. Members were advised that there had been successes since the previous update in the key compliance areas including gas servicing, asbestos and fire safety. However, due to the Covid-19 pandemic and associated lockdown there had been impacts on the provision of Housing Services which had forced a change in priorities so that major compliance issues and emergency and essential repairs were only carried out after risk assessments were carried out and ensuring that staff were provided with adequate Personal Protective Equipment.

It was also confirmed that rent collection had been impacted due to the increase in Universal Credit applicants and residents who had been placed on furlough or had lost jobs. However, measures had been put in place to mitigate the deficit in rent arrears. Members welcomed news that the Housing Revenue Account was in a sustainable position.

As part of this discussion there was interest from Members regarding the numbers of rough sleepers and homeless people in the Borough. Members were encouraged that there were no homeless people in the Borough and that rough sleepers were provided with temporary accommodation during lockdown.

PRESENTATION FROM PUBLIC HEALTH CONSULTANT, WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL - OVERVIEW ITEMS – 22ND OCTOBER 2020

As requested in the previous municipal year at a meeting between the Leader of the Redditch Brough Council, the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Chief Executive of the Council, a presentation was received on the subject of the following public health issues:

- Flu Vaccinations
- Fruit and Vegetable Consumption
- Alcohol Admissions
- Dementia Diagnosis

- Childhood Obesity

A Public Health Consultant from Worcestershire County Council attended a meeting of the Committee in October 2020. In her presentation she outlined key information, which included statistics for the flu vaccination programme and childhood obesity in Reception age to Year 6 children. It was highlighted that Redditch was performing well in some of these areas however the number of alcohol admissions was higher, and the number of Dementia diagnoses was lower than the national average.

PRE-SCRUTINY - HOUSING STRATEGY - 22ND OCTOBER 2020

The Committee pre-scrutinised the Housing Strategy at a meeting of 22nd October 2020. This report was identified for pre-scrutiny due to the implications for Council tenants, particularly those living in the private rented sector.

Members were informed that the Housing Strategy had previously been a County-wide strategy that was complex and a decision had been made to adopt a more localised approach to the strategy where tangible outcomes could be measured more easily. Consideration was also given to the Stock Condition Survey and the work that would be undertaken over the following 20 years to improve the Council's housing stock.

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES ANNUAL REPORT - 3RD DECEMBER 2020

The Civil Contingencies Annual Report was presented by the Civil Contingencies and Resilience Manager in December 2020. The key area that was presented for Members information was the debrief exercise that was carried out in respect the Council's response to Covid-19 after the first lockdown. Eighteen recommendations had been made as a result of the debrief and accepted by the Chief Executive. It was reported to the Committee that all actions, except for one, were undertaken within four weeks. The outstanding recommendation was concerning data sharing which would be an ongoing action and monitored closely.

SKILLS IN THE LOCAL WORKFORCE - VERBAL PRESENTATION - 3RD DECEMBER 2020

The Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWEDR) presented a verbal update in respect of Skills in the Local Workforce which had been highlighted as an area for scrutiny at an Overview and Scrutiny training session attended by Non-Executive Members in May 2019.

The presentation detailed the support programmes and courses for 16–21-year-olds including CV preparation, communications and working in teams. There was also information provided regarding Worcestershire County Council Skills Hub service which had recently been launched and was available to employers and individuals.

The Committee was informed that a number of apprenticeship grants were available to young people and initiatives were in place to enable young people to be matched with suitable placements and vacancies within the Borough.

Members agreed that initiatives and support measures should be clearly communicated to local businesses and individuals through various business networks and channels and encouraged local businesses to do more to engage with young people in order to close the skills gap in the Borough.

CHURCH GREEN DRAFT CONSERVATION AREA AND MANAGEMENT PLAN CONSULTATION - PRE-SCRUTINY - 3RD DECEMBER 2020

A detailed report was presented to the Committee for pre-scrutiny in respect of the Church Green Draft Conservation Area and Management Plan consultation.

A summary was provided of the Church Green Conservation Area and areas of special interest and Members were informed that there were a high number of buildings within the area that were Designated Heritage Assets. It was considered that the Conservation Area would act as a focus for the future regeneration of the Redditch Town Centre.

It was noted during consideration of this item that there were areas for concern which included the poor state of shop fronts, parking around St Stephens' Church and vacant units. In addition to this it was discussed that there may be a need to consider the current parking on Unicorn Hill and the impact it had on the businesses that were situated there.

At the end of the debate on this item the Committee endorsed the recommendations detailed in the report.

REDDITCH TOWN DEAL INVESTMENT PLAN – PRE-SCRUTINY – 18TH JANUARY 2021

The Head of Economic Development & Regeneration from North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWEDR) presented a report in respect of the Redditch Town Deal Investment Plan in January 2021. Consideration of this subject followed pre-scrutiny of previous reports in respect of regeneration and redevelopment of the town centre in recent years.

The Committee was informed that there were three key themes included in the scope of the Town's Fund including urban regeneration, enterprise and connectivity (including digital and transport) and that unlocking Redditch was the vision in order to move Redditch from a traditional New Town to a New Town that was fit for the 21st Century.

Members were advised that Government guidance regarding public consultation was followed during the process. An external consultant specialising in consultation had co-ordinated public engagement measures for this process. Some concerns were raised about the number of people who had responded in this consultation process, though the Committee was advised that there had been a high rate of responses and feedback had been taken into account from previous consultation exercises too.

During consideration of this item Members raised some concerns in respect of the Redditch Town Deal Investment Plan website and transparency for residents. The situation of the current Police Station future library provision were also discussed in detail.

It was agreed at the meeting that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would receive regular, six monthly updates in respect of the Redditch Town Deal Investment Plan, should this be approved by the Government.

REDDITCH PARTNERSHIP REPORT 2021 - 18TH JANUARY 2021

The Redditch Partnership Manager presented the Redditch Partnership Annual Report 2021. It was noted that changes had inevitably occurred over the previous year as a result of Covid-19. Members were informed that it had proven more difficult to meet in lockdown however it was confirmed that some meetings had taken place virtually. The Business Leaders Group had continued to meet regularly and had undertaken a project, mentoring young people in schools.

It was reported to the Committee that the Redditch Partnership structure had been really effective during the response to the pandemic and the Partnership was able to consolidate support and create links between the Council and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) groups. There were hopes that this kind of work would continue in the future and that links would continue to flourish after the lockdown.

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2021/22 TO 2024/25 (INCLUDING THE CAPITAL PROGRAMME AND HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT) – 11TH FEBRUARY 2021

The Medium-Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2023/24 (including the Capital Programme and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)) was pre-scrutinised at a meeting of the Committee held in February 2021.

The Committee was informed about the particular challenges involved in balancing the budget during the Covid-19 pandemic. There remained some uncertainty about future plans for local government funding and this, together with uncertainty about the potential impact of Brexit on local businesses and therefore business rate collections, made it difficult to plan ahead. However, opportunities to achieve savings and secure further income had been highlighted in the report as well as the balanced position for 2021/22.

CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY PANEL – 30TH SEPTEMBER 2020

Local authorities are required to have a Committee designated with responsibility to review the work of the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and this Committee must meet at least once a year to discuss the work of the partnership. In Redditch this role is undertaken by the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel, which is a permanent sub-committee of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Panel holds the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership to account for its work in Redditch.

A meeting of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel took place on 30th September 2020. During the meeting Members received an update on the work of the partnership in the Borough in the preceding 12 months, this included an update on the action that was being taken to tackle Anti-Social Behaviour. There was also a discussion regarding Hate Crime Awareness Week 2020 and projects that related to and focussed on diverting young people from crime and Anti-Social Behaviour and their delivery in schools.

TASK GROUPS AND SHORT SHARP REVIEWS

Task Groups are established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to conduct an in-depth review of any service, policy or issue that affects the Borough. The work carried out by Task Groups in 2020-2021 is summarised below.

SUICIDE PREVENTION TASK GROUP

The Suicide Prevention Task Group completed their review in the summer in 2020. The group comprised six Members including Councillor Debbie Chance (Chair) and Councillors Baker, Isherwood, Lovell, Nazir (until May 2021) and Shurmer.

The Committee was informed that in total the group had held 11 meetings and spoken to eight witnesses between June 2019 and June 2020. It was clarified that there had been a slight delay in bringing the report before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The group had gathered data on the economic cost of death by suicide, the higher incidence of suicide amongst young men compared to other sections of the population and the evidence of the long-term effects on bereaved relatives.

At the end of the review the group proposed three recommendations, all of which were endorsed by the Executive Committee. Progress with the implementation of these recommendations will be monitored in the Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker.

DEMENTIA TASK GROUP

At the start of the municipal year Members decided to launch a review into Dementia in the Borough. This subject had been raised as an area of concern given the ageing population. The scope of the task group was agreed at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 2nd July 2020. The scope included a requirement to investigate the provision of Dementia services in the Borough and to clarify the different types of dementia.

Councillor Michael Chalk was elected as Chair for the Task Group. Councillors Joanne Beecham, John Fisher and Jenny Wheeler were also appointed to the group.

The meetings have included interviews and consideration of evidence submitted by the following officers and representatives from partnership organisations:

- Representative from Age UK
- Redditch Partnership Manager (Redditch Borough Council)

There were delays in the investigation as a result of Covid-19 and time constraints on Members' and officers' time. However, the group has made some suggestions in respect of their recommendations and will report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on their findings in the new municipal year.

PARKING ON UNICORN HILL – SHORT, SHARP REVIEW – 18TH JANUARY 2021

At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 18th January 2021 it was agreed that a Short, Sharp Review of Parking on Unicorn Hill would be undertaken.

Members were informed that the scoping document had been proposed as a result of discussions that had taken place in respect of the available parking on Unicorn Hill during the meeting of the Committee held on 3rd December 2020.

The objectives for the Short, Sharp Review were proposed and included analysis of the need for car-parking on Unicorn Hill, confirmation of what parking already existed.

Councillor Peter Fleming was elected as Chair of the Short, Sharp Review. Councillors Joe Baker, Joanne Beecham and Yvonne Smith were also appointed to the review. This exercise will be completed in the new municipal year.

WORKING GROUPS

The Council has two permanent scrutiny working groups, the Budget Scrutiny Working Group and the Performance Scrutiny Working Group.

BUDGET SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP – CHAIR, COUNCILLOR JENNY WHEELER

The Budget Scrutiny Working Group held a number of meetings in 2020-2021. The model of the working group had been considered successful in the previous year and therefore a similar approach was adopted in 2020-2021. Members concluded that this was a challenging time financially for the Council in light of the Covid-19 pandemic and that the Budget Scrutiny Working Group had an important role to play in terms of providing assurance to the Executive Committee and scrutinising any plans that might have significant financial implications for the Council.

During the year the Budget Scrutiny Working Group considered the following matters:

- Medium Term Financial Plan 2021/22 to 2024/25 (including the capital programme and Housing Revenue Account)
- Flexible Homelessness Support Grant and Homelessness Reduction Grant 2021/22
- Section 24 Notice and the implications of this for the Council's financial position moving forward.
- Commercialism Programme Board including the progress within the Authority with delivering commercial services and the role of Black Radley. An interview was held with a representative of Black Radley as part of this process.
- Brexit
- Impact of Covid-19
- Fees and Charges 2021/22
- Financial Monitoring reports
- Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rate Collection
- Housing Revenue Account

A recommendation was made to the Executive Committee in respect of the future structure of Fees and Charges reports. This was agreed with only a minor amendment by the Executive Committee at their meeting held on 8th December 2020.

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP – CHAIR, COUNCILLOR ANDREW FRY

The group has an important role in scrutinising the delivery of the Council's priorities. The group agreed at the end of 2019/20 that Members would continue to focus on scrutinising the performance of services in accordance with the strategic purposes. However, this would be conducted collectively, rather than through one Member monitoring a particular strategic purpose.

The Group met twice times in 2020/21. This represented a significant decline in the number of meetings compared to the previous year. However, the frequency of meetings was impacted by Covid-19. Members intend to hold more frequent meetings in 2021/22. Every meeting of the group was quorate.

During these meetings the following items were discussed:

- Voids – Process and Timescales – Interview with the Head of Environmental Services and Housing Property.
- Anti-Social Behaviour - Interview with the Head of Community and Housing Services
- Update on How Covid-19 Has Affected Council Services - Interview with the Head of Business Transformation, Organisational Development and Digital Strategy

EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES

West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Council representative, Councillor Michael Chalk

The Committee received regular updates from Councillor Chalk, the Council's representative on the West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

During the year Councillor Chalk frequently provided written updates about the work of the Committee and highlighted the following points:

- The Battery Gigafactory
- The Comprehensive Spending Review
- Questions of the Mayor – Andy Street

Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) – Council Representative, Councillor Michael Chalk.

The Committee received regular updates from Councillor Chalk about the work of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC). Some of the issues highlighted during the year included:

- The impact of Covid-19 and vaccination programme
- End of Life Care and ReSPECT

Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) Joint Scrutiny Committee - Council Representative, Councillor Michael Chalk.

For the first time, this year the Committee received verbal updates on the work of the GBSLEP's Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The following points were highlighted during the year:

- Skills and Apprenticeship Hub
- Low Carbon and Environmental Technologies
- Route to Recovery

The written updates from Councillor Chalk provide useful information of scrutiny work being undertaken by other authorities across the local area and the Committee are grateful of the time taken by Councillor Chalk in providing these updates.

CONCLUSION

This has been a very different year for Overview and Scrutiny in Redditch. The Covid-19 pandemic meant a whole new way of working was introduced when undertaking public meetings. Despite this, a significant amount of pre-scrutiny work has been carried out by the Committee. In addition to this, items of interest for overview were carefully considered, providing greater clarification on those subjects to the benefit of Members and the public.

Many recommendations have been made during the year and these have often been accepted by the Executive Committee, either in totality or in an amended form. It is hoped that, regardless of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, Overview and Scrutiny can continue to make a constructive contribution to the Borough in 2021/22.

The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee express his thanks to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, recognising in particular the valuable contribution made by Members through Task Group investigations and on the Budget and Performance Scrutiny Working Groups.

For any background information on the work of Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Redditch, please visit <https://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/council/the-council.aspx>

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Scrutiny Proposal Form

(This form should be completed by sponsoring Member(s), Officers and / or members of the public when proposing an item for Scrutiny).

Note: The matters detailed below have not yet received any detailed consideration. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reserves the right to reject suggestions for scrutiny that fall outside the Borough Council’s remit.

Proposer’s name and designation		Date of referral	
Proposed topic title			
Link to local priorities including the strategic purposes			
Background to the issue			
Key Objectives Please keep to SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)			
How long do you think is needed to complete this exercise? (Where possible please estimate the number of weeks, months and meetings required)			

Please return this form to: Jo Gresham, Democratic Services Officer, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH

Email: joanne.gresham@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk