

COUNCIL MEETING ON 4 JULY 2014 – ITEM 11 (b)

Annual Report from the Scrutiny Committee

The following report highlights the main areas of work the Scrutiny Committee has undertaken in 2013/14.

The Committee's work falls broadly into two categories. We have studied and challenged the work of external bodies whose services impact the residents of this district and also looked at services provided by Uttlesford District Council itself.

External Bodies

During 2013/14 the Scrutiny Committee received reports and presentations from a number of outside bodies. I would like to pass on the Committee's thanks for the way these organisations have engaged with us and ensured representatives have been available to attend our meetings.

Bodies that we have looked at over the course of the year included the Manchester Airport Group (MAG), East of England Ambulance Service, Essex Police, Essex County Council's Highways department and West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group and NHS England. The subjects we have covered include:

- Passenger transport services including air, rail and taxi, enforcement of fly parking and illegal traders and the new airport drop off arrangements
- Ambulance cover, emergency response times in rural areas and station closures
- GP provision, future of primary care, primary care hubs and S106 contributions
- Police station closures, staffing cuts and the impact on crime figures and response times
- The impact of Highways reorganisation, the programme of road repairs for the Uttlesford District and the departments' interaction with our Highways Panel

Internal services

In addition to the above, the Committee also scrutinised a number of internal services and service change proposals. Part of its annual work programme involves examining the Council's proposed budget before its submission to Cabinet.

As well as budget scrutiny, the Scrutiny Committee established a task group to look at council owned car parks. The review included public consultation with residents and businesses as well as analysing data on car park usage and income levels. The findings of this review were reported to Cabinet. Some of the recommendations have already been implemented such as additional signage, pay by phone, and promotion of the airport parking. The work on this is continuing and the remaining findings will be included in further work surrounding car parking capacity within the district centres. I would like to give my thanks to Cllr Evans, Cllr Watson, Jeremy Pine and Victoria Taylor for their invaluable commitment to a very thorough and complex review.

The following internal services were also discussed:

- Tenants scrutiny panel
- Rural broadband and BuzCom
- The Local Plan
- Sewage works
- Septic tanks
- Dog fouling
- Airport related parking enforcement

Ongoing work

The Committee will build on the work it has already started around Primary Care, Day Centres and continue to work with the housing tenant scrutiny panel in 2014/15.

I would like to give my thanks to the way that all members of the Committee have engaged with the scrutiny function in 2013/14 and also to Adrian Webb, Richard Auty and especially Victoria Taylor for the invaluable officer support they give the Committee. Mr Chairman, I present this report for acceptance by the Council.

Cllr Elizabeth Godwin
Chairman, Scrutiny Committee