

# Scrutiny Annual Report

Scrutiny in the spotlight



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COUNCIL

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## Introduction

*“Scrutiny in its widest sense is an essential component of Cabinet government... It is important that councillors test proposals by reference to their broad experience and their knowledge of the Borough and their own constituents. There should be nothing threatening about this; good officers should welcome challenge as a central part of local democracy.”*

**Communities and Local Government Select Committee Report: November 2014**

### Scrutiny in the spotlight

In 2013 the Francis report, written after the public inquiry into the failings at the Mid Staffordshire Trust, included criticisms of local scrutiny arrangements. It stressed the clear responsibility to scrutinise the provider trusts in its local area and the responsibility of elected members to identify and act on matters of concern. Last year the Louise Casey report into Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Rotherham highlighted shortfalls in scrutiny as one element of the wider failings of the authority.

Scrutiny is more important than ever, this year the panels have been aligned to the new corporate structure, enabling focus on corporate priorities and on key issues of public concern. We recognised that it was important to focus on, and prioritise, what we look at in the work programme within available resources and taking capacity of employees and scrutiny councillors into account. To do this we reduced the number of meetings per annum and focused on one or two main items per meeting. Scrutinising issues in more depth enabled colleagues and partner organisations to fully engage within the process.

Scrutiny in Wolverhampton is open and transparent; meetings are open to the public and we invite specialist evidence from

business, partner organisations and academia to look at issues in depth. Scrutiny provides challenge, can shape policy through pre-decision scrutiny and can influence services to adopt best practice but has no specific decision making powers. Scrutiny can think outside the box exploring a range of options using tools such as site visits, external witness evidence and best practice elsewhere. Scrutiny can challenge and hold to account partners and decision makers.

This report summarises the type of scrutiny the service specific panels and cross cutting scrutiny reviews and inquiries on high profile issues that impact on local people such as CSE, volunteering, child obesity and the importance of registering to vote and/or voting in elections.

Thanks to the Chairs of the 2015-16 reviews, the Chairs, Vice Chair and members of our thematic Panels many of the items considered have made a difference to the corporate priorities and to the public. The whole City approach has resulted in a really productive year, in which everyone contributed. We are looking forward to next year's challenges and work programme planning.

# Review of the Year

## Scrutiny Function

The Council appoints a Scrutiny Board and Scrutiny Panels to discharge the functions conferred by section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and subsequent legislation.

Scrutiny of public services in Wolverhampton creates a culture where transparency, involvement and accountability are welcomed and where challenge is seen as essential and a positive part of improving outcomes.

Scrutiny focused on issues that impact the public and on delivery of the corporate plan set out below. Working with Council services, partner organisations and the Executive, Scrutiny seeks to challenge, shape and develop proposals through effective and timely scrutiny of issues.

## Our Corporate Plan

Working as one to serve our city

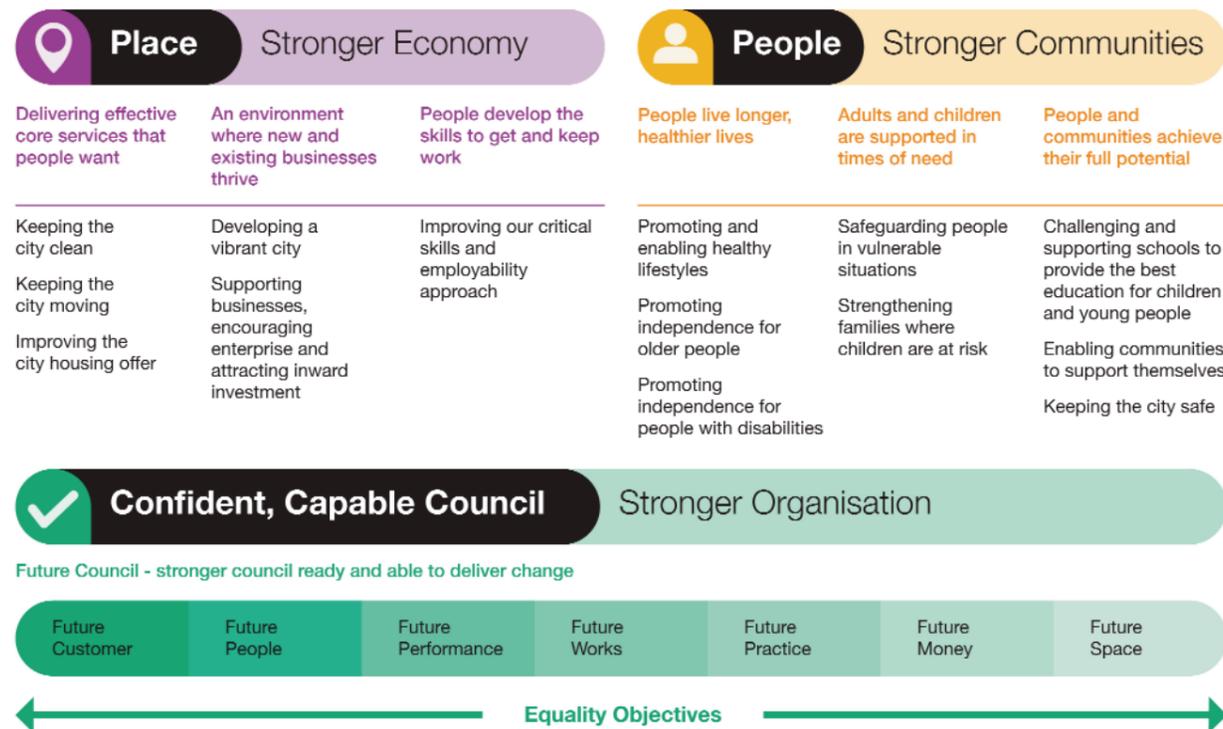


Figure 1 - Corporate Plan

## Annual Work Programme

The annual scrutiny work programme planning is initiated by a web based survey and annual scrutiny stakeholder meeting. Scrutiny is a councillor-led function, and key to its success involves consulting with the public, partners, councillors and employees, to ask what issues they would like scrutiny to consider.

The Scrutiny Board and six thematic scrutiny panels formed the base for the scrutiny function. In addition, three in-depth reviews were highlighted as issues of public concern and for policy development and two Inquiry sessions were added to the work programme.

Inquiry sessions or task and finish groups can be initiated by Scrutiny Board or the Scrutiny Panels. An Inquiry is a "lighter touch" investigation focusing on a specific issue within a broad topic area, this may be a cross cutting issues and is undertaken in one in depth session. A Task and Finish Group explores a specific piece of work carried out to clarify issues identified by a panel.

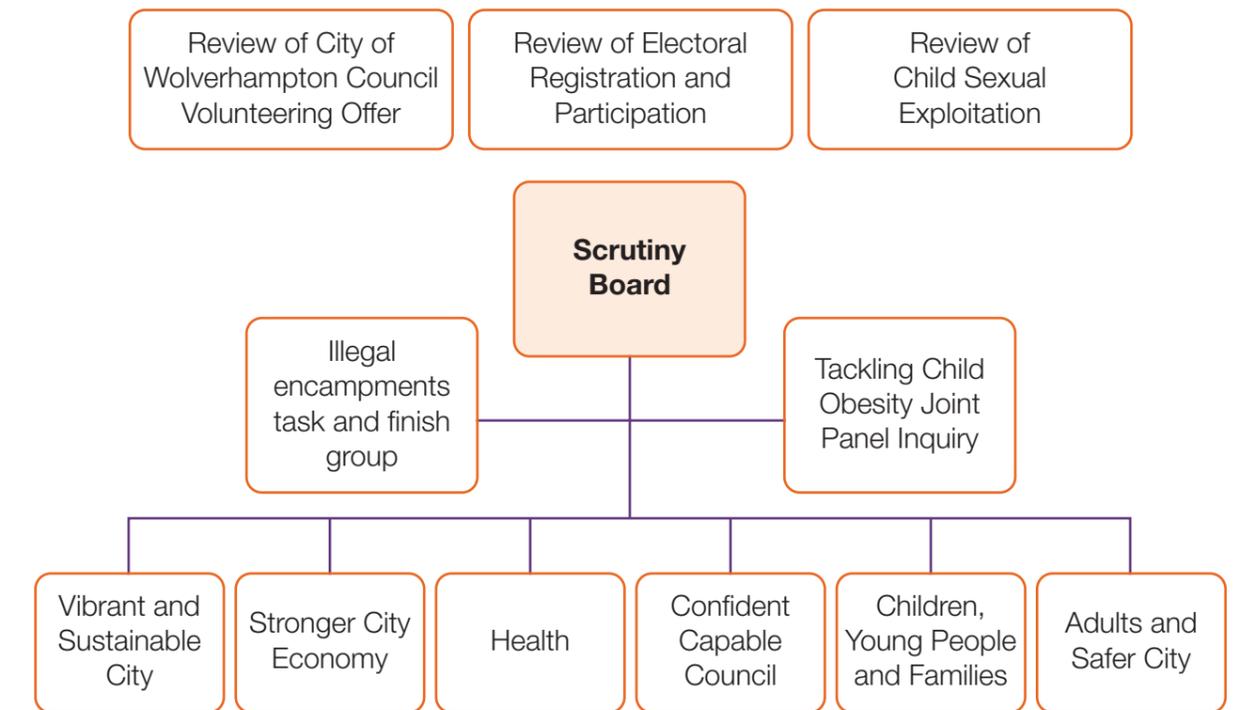


Figure 2 - Scrutiny Structure Chart 2015-16

## More about our Scrutiny Year

For the 2015-16 scrutiny year there were 67 (total number) meetings, broken down by:  
Board met eight times

- Health 7 times
- All other panel and review groups met 6 times
- Inquiry groups met once

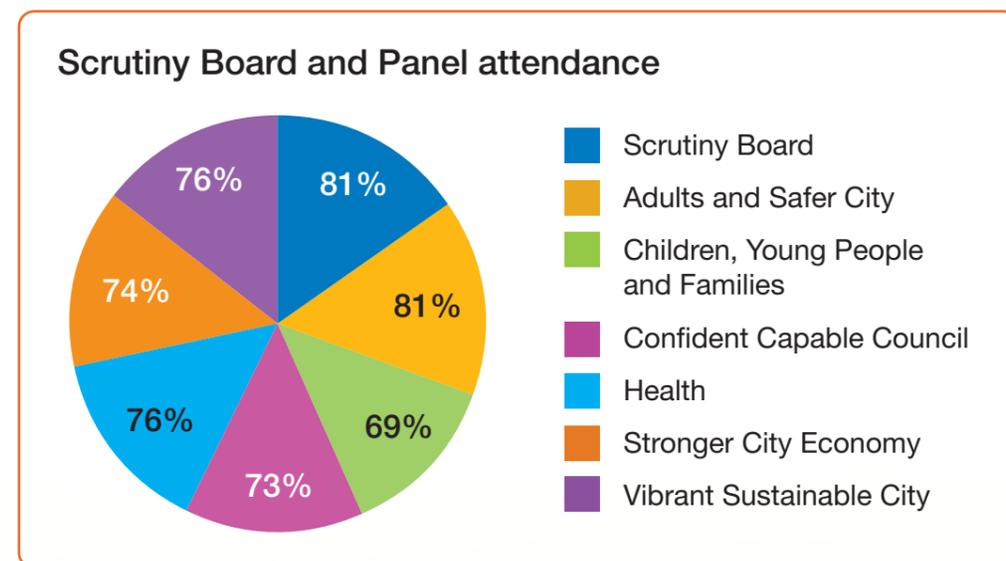


Figure 3 - Councillor attendances at meetings

Good scrutiny oils the cogs of local decision making and accountability.

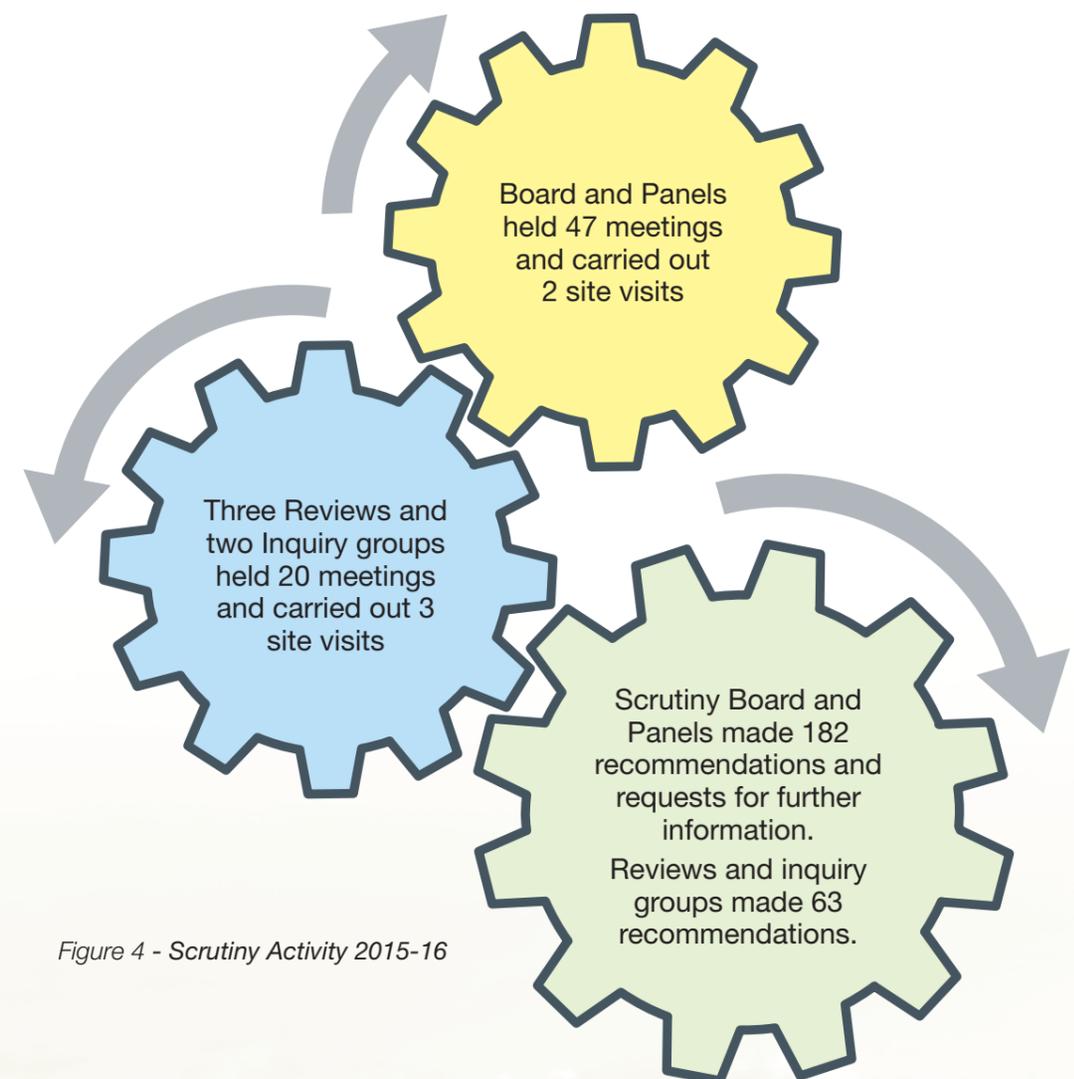


Figure 4 - Scrutiny Activity 2015-16

## Scrutiny Board

### Scrutiny Board Chair



Cllr Stephen Simkins

### Scrutiny Board Vice-Chair



Cllr Barry Findlay

Cllr Stephen Simkins  
 Cllr Barry Findlay  
 Cllr Ian Angus  
 Cllr Philip Bateman  
 Cllr Alan Bolshaw  
 Cllr Paula Brookfield  
 Cllr Craig Collingswood  
 Cllr Dr Michael Hardacre  
 Cllr Lorna McGregor  
 Cllr Peter O'Neill  
 Cllr Arun Photay  
 Cllr Rita Potter  
 Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman

Find out more about our work here:

<http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CIId=144&Year=0>

### Remit

- The co-ordination of the work of the Scrutiny Panels, Scrutiny Review Groups, Member Champion and Scrutiny Inquiries.
- Scrutiny of the work of the Cabinet.
- To consider any call-ins received under the Council's call-in procedures.

### Activities and Outcomes

The Scrutiny Board contributes to, help develop, and influence a range of cross-cutting issues. One such example where the contribution of Scrutiny Board tangibly informed decision-making relates to the draft budget. Following the scrutiny of the draft budget by Councillors on the Board, several recommendations were made about the below, acknowledged by Cabinet, and subsequently acted on:

- The proposal to cease annual bedding outside the City Centre.
- The development proposals for city sites such as West Park.
- A review of stray dog procedures.

### Chair and Vice-Chair Group

The Scrutiny Board chair established regular meetings for the Chairs and Vice-Chairs of Scrutiny to review and develop the scrutiny function, processes and support mechanisms.

The groups identified that the quality and transparency of reports and discussions at scrutiny meetings have acted as a catalyst for change and improvement in policy, services and the way the Council carries out business. Scrutiny reviewed each report to assess value for money and equity of services provided,

and to ensure services are working to support successful delivery of the current and future corporate priorities. Scrutiny helped decision makers shape proposals through pre-decision scrutiny; it highlighted good practice, held decisions makers to account and monitored implementation through the overview and scrutiny process.

### Scrutiny Inquiry to tackle Childhood Obesity

The Health and Children Young People and Families Scrutiny panels jointly considered a motion relating to the 'Daily Mile' initiative. The Inquiry group reported its findings and draft recommendations to Scrutiny Board. Scrutiny Board endorsed the five recommendations to Cabinet to develop and strengthen mechanisms to tackle childhood obesity working with schools, parents and partners.

The report identified that a lot of good work is happening across the City in relation to food



nutrition and activities to tackle childhood obesity. The Beat the Street initiative being highlighted as a particular success to raise walking activity for all the family.

The report highlighted the importance of communicating information about activities and the range of support and services available to School Governors and Leadership teams.

It highlighted the need to have discussions about the feasibility of increasing physical activity knowledge and skills in teaching degrees, the need to investigate developing cooking skills and to review take up of school meals and the nutritional value of food provided from home in packed lunches and snacks.

### Managing Unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller Encampments

Scrutiny Board established a task and finish group to consider the issue of unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller encampments. Working closely with West Midlands Police the outcomes of the task and finish group helped to develop and shape a Joint Protocol to manage unauthorised encampments. The protocol had been considered by the wider Black Country working group alongside regulatory services officers from Walsall, Dudley and Sandwell to consider issues that all Local Authorities had in relation to looking for a solution to a Transit Site or a temporary stopping place.

When reviewing the draft protocol the Scrutiny Board made further suggestions to strengthen and develop communication with residents using social media, to recognise the need for the Combined Authority to consider the protocol and give recognition to the successful joint working between police and Local Authorities across the Black Country.

# Adults and Safer City Scrutiny Panel

<p><b>City Chair</b></p>  <p>Cllr Paula Brookfield</p>	<p><b>City Vice-Chair</b></p>  <p>Cllr Patricia Patten</p>	<p>Cllr Paula Brookfield            Cllr Patricia Patten            Cllr Ian Claymore            Cllr Bishan Dass            Cllr Jasbinder Dehar            Cllr Barry Findlay            Cllr Malcolm Gwinnett            Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur            Cllr Linda Leach            Cllr Lynne Moran            Cllr Rita Potter            Cllr Daniel Warren</p>
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*Find out more about our work here:*  
<http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId>

## Remit

The scrutiny of:

- Services for older and vulnerable adults
- Local safeguarding arrangements for adults
- Crime and disorder in the city

## Corporate Priorities

### People – Stronger Communities

- People live longer, healthier lives
- Adults and children are supported in times of need
- People and communities achieve their full potential

## Activities and Outcomes



### Bettercare technology and Strengthening Support at Home

The expansion of the Better Care Technology offer across Wolverhampton is an integral part of the city's 'Promoting Independence policy' and the 'Home First Approach' to support people to remain independent within their own home and community. The Panel looked in depth at the consultation process and carried out pre-decision scrutiny. The Panel recognised the need for change to address the pressure on current and future resource due to an increasing older demographic in the City and the personalisation of services. Scrutiny informed Cabinet and helped to meet the Medium Term Financial Strategy requirements whilst shaping an integral part of the transformation of older people's services, from 'care home to care at home'. The transformation of services which provides increased choice and control for service users and carers.

The Scrutiny Panel invited all Councillors to visit the Assistive Technology Centre at Billbrook and the Stowlawn Concierge Centre to experience the offer of technology and service available and as a result a similar facility is being considered for Wolverhampton residents. The feedback from the visit gave reassurance that technology was beneficial to older people and their carers and by raising several new lines of enquiry. The Panel requested an update report to a future meeting to consider :

- capacity to support people in their own homes
- the fire service responder service
- to show the added social value, value for money and potential savings to partner organisations such as the police and health organisations.

Further Scrutiny will be scheduled in the 2016-17 municipal year.



## Children Young People and Families Scrutiny Panel

### Chair



Cllr Peter O'Neill

### Vice-Chair



Cllr Arun Photay

- Cllr Peter O'Neill
- Cllr Arun Photay
- Cllr Paula Brookfield
- Cllr Jasbinder Dehar
- Cllr Dr Mike Hardacre
- Cllr Chris Haynes
- Cllr Julie Hodgkiss
- Cllr Rupinderjit Kaur
- Cllr Welcome Koussoukama
- Cllr Peter O'Neill
- Cllr Arun Photay
- Cllr Martin Waite

### Co-opted Members

- Parent Governor Representatives
- Leanne Dack
- Portia Tsvangirai
- PopoWeuMambo

- Mrs R Watkins  
Representing the Roman Catholic Church
- Mr C Randles  
Representing the Church of England
- Kashmire Hawker  
Wolverhampton Youth Council

### Remit

The scrutiny of:

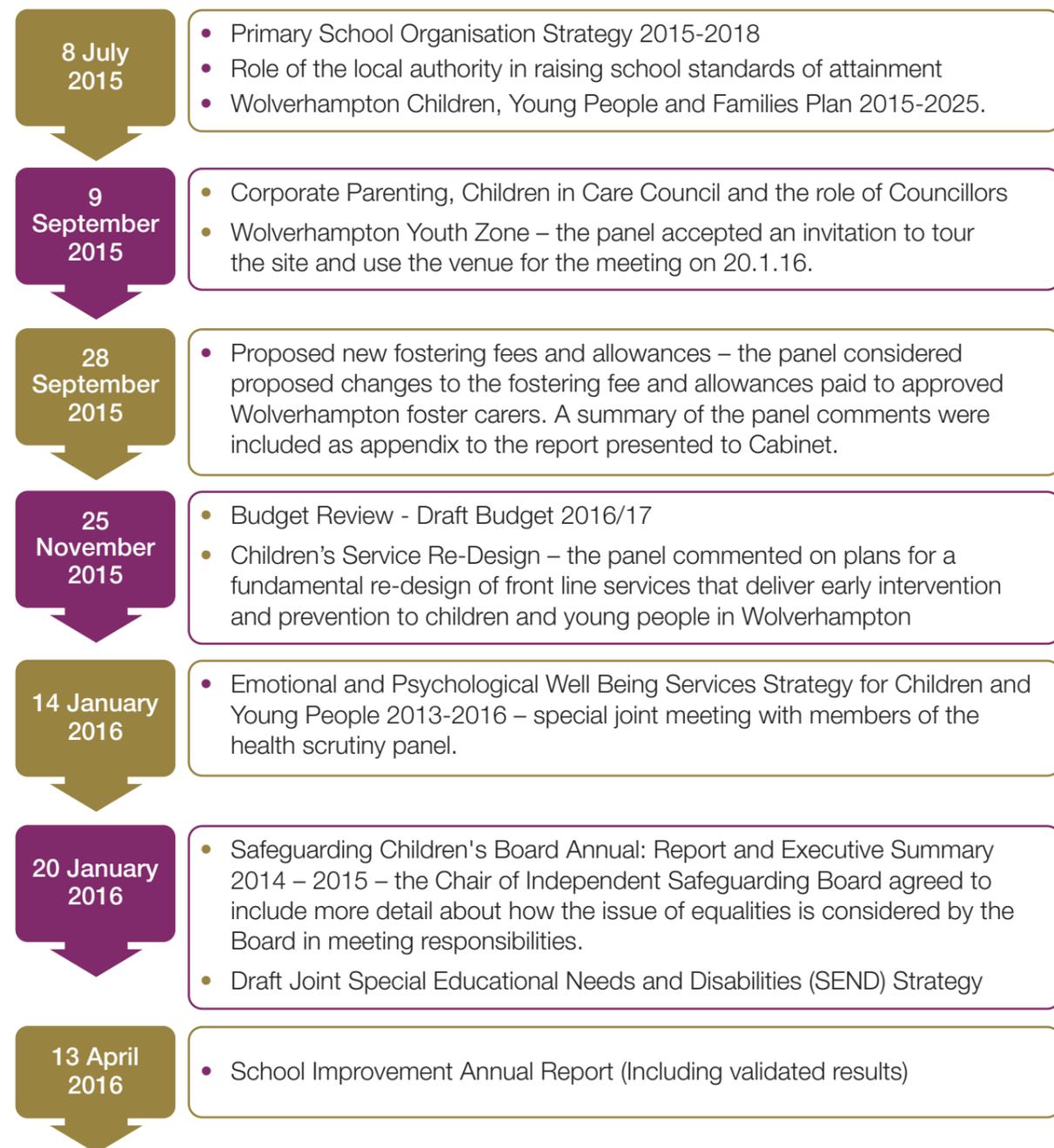
- Provision of all local authority services for children and young people including education, social care, special needs and play provision.
- Children's safeguarding.
- Child sexual exploitation.

### Priorities

#### People – Stronger Communities

- People live longer, healthier lives
- Adults and children are supported in times of need
- People and communities achieve their full potential

## Activities and Outcomes



### Proposed new fostering fees and allowances

The panel were asked to comment on a report detailing proposed changes to fostering fees and allowances. The panel were concerned about the monthly inventory check on the clothing stock of the foster child(ren) . The panel commented that it would not be appropriate or sensitive to the needs of the young person concerned to have this done. Service Director accepted that the specific paragraph gives a misleading view of what happens in reality and agreed to make

changes to the paragraph before the report was submitted to Cabinet, in response to the concerns expressed. The panel commented on the potential for Wolverhampton to become a leading authority if the proposed scheme is successful and the potential to deliver on behalf of other local authorities by acting as a fostering agency should be explored.

# Confident Capable Council Scrutiny Panel

<p><b>Chair</b></p>  <p>Cllr Rita Potter</p>	<p><b>Vice-Chair</b></p>  <p>Cllr Andrew Wynne</p>	<p>Cllr Harbans Singh Bagri Cllr Mary Bateman Cllr Payal Bedi Cllr Alan Bolshaw Cllr Jasbir Jaspal Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal Cllr Lorna McGregor Cllr Rita Potter Cllr Caroline Siarkiewicz Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman Cllr Wendy Thompson Cllr Andrew Wynne</p>
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Find out more about our work here:  
<http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId>

## Remit

The scrutiny of organisation and performance of the human, financial, technical and material resources to support the delivery of Council services.

## Priorities

### **Confident Capable Council – Stronger Organisation**

Future Council – stronger council ready and able to deliver change

- Future customer
- Future people
- Future performance
- Future works
- Future practice
- Future money
- Future space

## Activities and Outcomes





### Public Finance

The panel agreed at the start of the year that they would consider an issue aligned to the corporate plan, for example future money or future place. This process helped new members of the panel to understand the remit of the panel and to inform areas for question and challenge. The feedback from the service area was very positive as it allowed report authors to talk about wider issues affecting their work and subsequent action addressing them. The panel set up a specific reserves working group to make observations on the appropriateness of the specific reserves held by the Council.

The panel queried the rationale for the amount of reserves held and challenged services to explain in more detail the decision about how funds were being used. The feedback on work of the panel was very positive and offered a real challenge to services. The Specific Group will reconvene in October 2016 to repeat the exercise and contribute their comments much earlier into the public budget consultation process.

## Health Scrutiny Panel

Chair	Vice-Chair	
		Cllr Harban Singh Bagri Cllr Craig Collingswood Cllr Mark Evans Cllr Val Evans Cllr Jasbir Jaspal Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal Cllr Peter O'Neill Cllr Stephen Simkins Cllr Wendy Thompson Health Watch
Cllr Milkinderpal Jaspal	Cllr Mark Evans	

*Find out more about our work here:*  
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The scrutiny of the health provision in accordance with the Health and Social Care Act 2001 and subsequent relevant legislation and Government guidance.



## Activities and Outcomes



## Priorities

### People – Stronger Communities

People live longer, healthier lives

### Substantial variations

Role and responsibilities of OSCs considering health services.

Health OSC role enables Councillors to consider issues affecting the health of local people (the overview role) and to call the NHS to account on behalf of local communities (the scrutiny role). The Health and Social Care act 2012 requires Local Authorities to have social services responsibilities and to have an OSC that can respond to consultations by local NHS bodies on substantial variations or developments of health services and can take up the power of overview and scrutiny of broader health issues.

The ever changing landscape of health services, reducing resources and inspection outcomes highlighted the need for HOSC to prioritise changes that would impact on the

availability and delivery of services to the public.

HOSC considered and helped shape the consultation plans on substantial variations and development of health services in the work programme to ensure that the consultation was equal, inclusive and that the views of patients and the public about what could be improved could be gathered on matters such as Sexual health, Musculoskeletal services and provision of services at Pond Lane Hospital.

The HOSC helped shape consultation and received reports about the consultation outcomes and further shaping of health services.

## Stronger City Economy Scrutiny Panel

Chair	Vice-Chair	
		Cllr Harman Banger Cllr Phil Bateman Cllr Payal Bedi Cllr Val Evans Cllr Welcome Koussoukama Cllr John Rowley Cllr Paul Singh Cllr Tersaim Singh Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman Cllr Martin Waite Cllr Daniel Warren
Cllr Jacqueline Sweetman	Cllr Jonathan Yardley	

### Remit

The scrutiny of policies to attract and retain new businesses and employment in the context of sustainable economic and environmental regeneration



### Activities and Outcomes

28 July  
2015

- External Funding
- Risk of delays in approval of external funding
- Impact of Comprehensive Spending Review on Skills Funding
- Skills funding and small businesses
- Innovative ways of delivering apprenticeships
- Package to promote inward investment, City investment officer and marketing of Wolverhampton
- Evaluation of City Conferencing Programme

24  
September  
2015

- Attracting Investment Strengthening the inward investment offer: including ensuring people have right skills and better information about local suppliers
- Making it Happen video: different version developed for visitor economy; inclusion of new logo
- Information available on the internet to assist potential investors from abroad including frequently asked questions and proforma to highlight different requirements.
- Need to help and support growing businesses a key priority for the city
- Discussions to develop Cycle Race as part of Carvers marathon and a Mayoral visit to Wiggle

6 October  
2015

- Visitor Economy - City Visitor Ticket
- Opening hours of visitor attraction
- List of venues and facilities available within Visitor Economy
- Struggling night-time economy
- Cross marketing
- Event timetable
- Grand Post House/ cluster opportunity and opportunity to create a buzz in proximity of buildings by managing public buildings separately
- Visitor offer and integration with Grand Theatre
- Coaches at Grand Theatre

1 December  
2015

- Budget
- How we are supporting other cultural businesses including business plans for future financial sustainability
- Account Managers adding value to business communities
- Skills Commission
- Influencing West Midlands agenda re Skills and Employment
- Job Box
- One City One Campus

9 February  
2016

- Business & Enterprise
- Combined Authority: skills, enterprise start-up and delivering economic information.
- Business and Enterprise ties to skills agenda: how businesses are being supported to appoint and how businesses are influencing curriculum
- Update report in six months
- Paper to celebrate successes in the city including effectiveness of programmes
- Keeping Talent in the City: bridging the gap between growing local talent and local businesses; need for local Councillors to get involved and play a more active role.
- Smart City agenda

29 February  
2016

- The Custard Factory. Visit to the Custard Factory in Digbeth, Birmingham

16 March  
2016

- Stronger City Economy presentation and Review of the Year 2015/16

### Stronger City

The Panel work programme for 2015-16 was determined by the objectives in the corporate plan.

### Attracting Investment

The Panel considered the inward investment offer and good practice in Wolverhampton highlighting the i10 office building developed at the Wolverhampton Interchange which has brought a new generation of Landmark office space to the heart of Central Business District and within close proximity to Wolverhampton's key transport hubs and amenities, i10 is well positioned for all business needs and is already fully rented.

The Panel invited the Managing Director of Wiggle to provide a customer's perspective on inward investment in Wolverhampton.

### Business and Enterprise

The Scrutiny Panel identified the need to explore best practice in the West Midlands to see how buildings of historical importance have been developed in inner City areas to become a thriving hub for growing small enterprise, businesses and talent.

### The Custard factory visit

The site visit was fundamental in initiating a new direction for scrutiny to explore other uses for buildings and ways to attract investment and retain skills in Wolverhampton.

The visit highlighted that flexibility and technical proficiency plus adaptability of space in buildings is necessary to attract companies. The diversity of enterprise and networking opportunities attracts and builds link to London and the South as a cheaper and exciting location for business growth.

The links with Birmingham University were highlighted as essentially to build skills and retain talent in the City. The panel considered the work on-going with Wolverhampton University and the need to further scrutinise potential buildings in Wolverhampton during 2016-17 work programme.

### The Visitor Economy – the visitor offer

The Grand Theatre is an important attraction in the City, as part of the Panels work the Panel invited Adrian Jackson, Chief Executive of the Grand Theatre to share his vision and the Strategy for the Grand Theatre and to give his perspective of the current visitor offer.

The Panel explored the visitor offer with the Chief Executive and discussed what more the City needed to do to ensure disruption through building and refurbishment did not impact on the visitor economy. The Chief Executive highlighted that putting more resource into the offer and thinking differently could help synchronicity and improve the City visitor offer. The Panel heard that monthly meetings of representatives of top venues in the City were to consider event timetabling, an improved website would be redesigned to develop a joined up approach for potential visitors looking at Wolverhampton on the internet and that funding was being allocated to support the visitor economy through a period when the Civic Halls would be closed for refurbishment to keep potential visitors informed and in touch with developments.

The Panel welcomed the approach to developing the Grand Theatre and the City visitor offer and will keep overview of the progress in 2016-17.

# Vibrant Safe and Sustainable Scrutiny Panel

<p><b>Chair</b></p>  <p>Cllr Ian Angus</p>	<p><b>Vice-Chair</b></p>  <p>Cllr Chris Haynes</p>	<p>Cllr Ian Angus                  Cllr Mary Bateman                  Cllr Phil Bateman                  Cllr Val Evans                  Cllr Bhupinder Gakhal                  Cllr Malcolm Gwinnett                  Cllr Chris Haynes                  Cllr Keith Inston                  Cllr Lynne Moran                  Cllr John Rowley                  Cllr Caroline Siarkiewicz                  Cllr Andrew Wynne</p>
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## Remit

The scrutiny of:

- Vibrant sustainable communities where people feel proud to live
- Keeping neighbourhoods, city infrastructure and the environment clean
- Improving city housing
- Cultural and leisure services

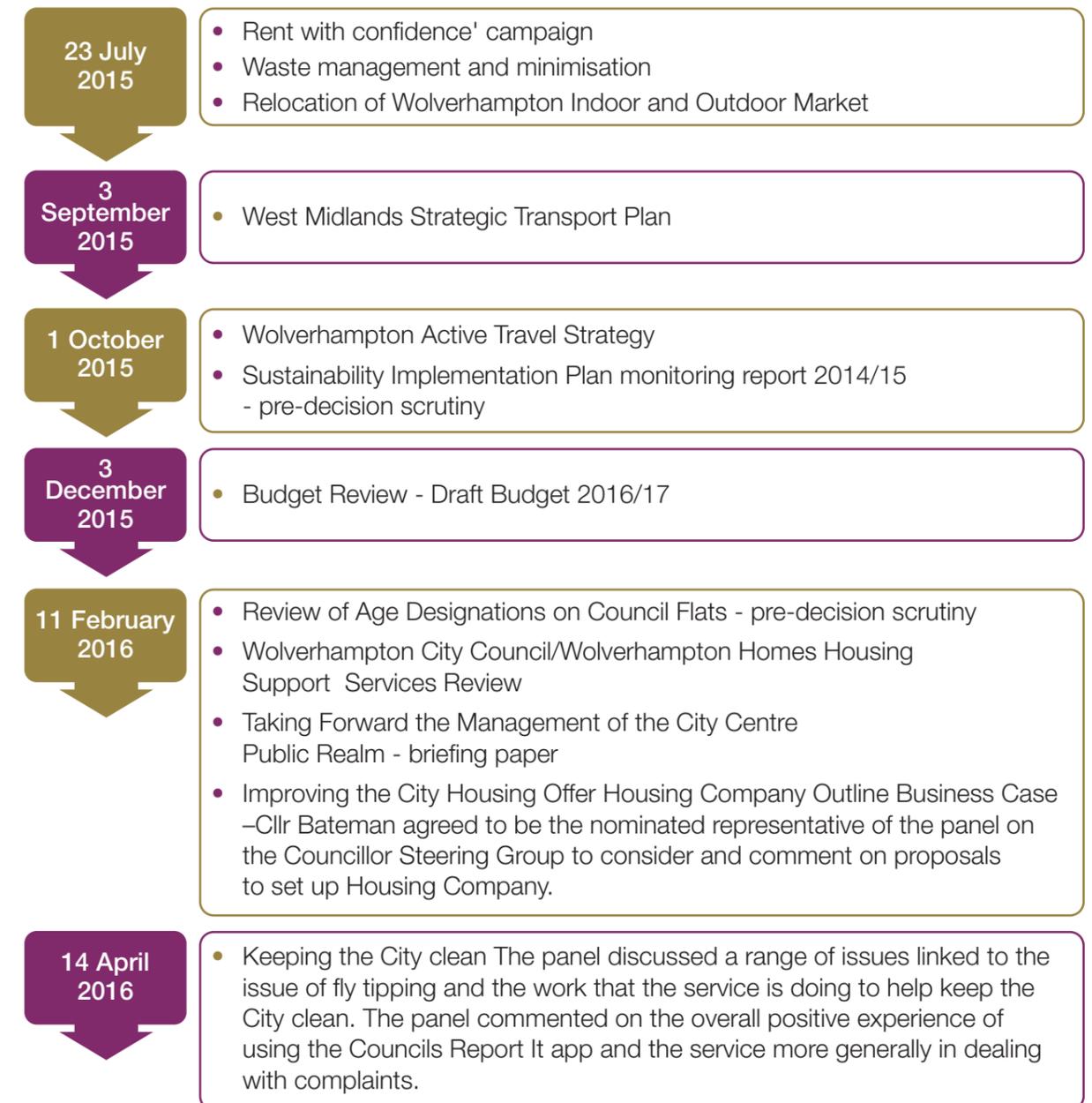
## Priorities

### Place – Stronger City

Delivering effective core services that people want

- Delivering effective core services
- Keeping the City clean
- Keeping the city moving
- Improving the city housing offer

## Activities and Outcomes



Find out more about our work here:

<http://wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=507&Year=0>

### Review of Age Designations on Council Flats

The panel considered a report detailing proposed changes to age designations for allocating Council flats. The Section Leader explained that the majority of blocks where it is recommended that age designations are removed are currently restricted to people aged 30 or over.

The report was considered for pre-decision scrutiny. The panel made a number of comments about the plan and expressed concerns that changes might cause concern to residents.

The panel asked detailed questions about the evidence supporting the change and the how the views of the public were considered. The report author agreed to produce a communication plan to explain to residents the proposals as the information was in the public domain. The panel wanted to allay any unnecessary fears of the public about the plan before it was considered by Cabinet a few weeks later.



## Scrutiny Reviews and Inquiries

The review process is set out below, some review groups carried out site visits during evidence gathering to meet with service providers, service users and partner organisations.

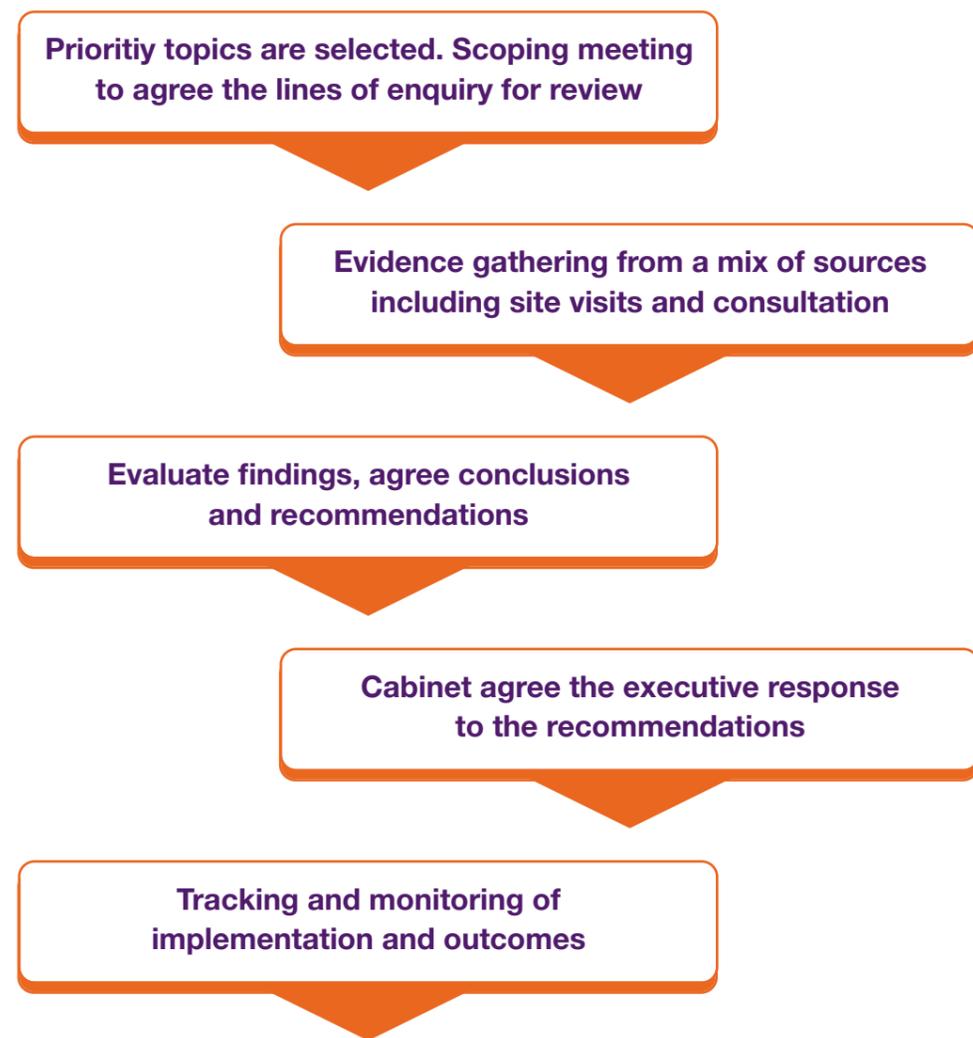


Figure 5 - The stages of a scrutiny review or Inquiry:

Scrutiny reviews are intense pieces of work over a four month period that take account of background research, the current service provided, planned improvements, best practice, expert witness evidence, public and service providers submissions and any other evidence that will assist the review group in their consideration of the review topic.

The wealth of findings and conclusions drawn from the evidence base are valuable to the Cabinet Member in their decision making and recommendation from all reviews are referred to Cabinet to receive an executive response and plan to implement the actions.

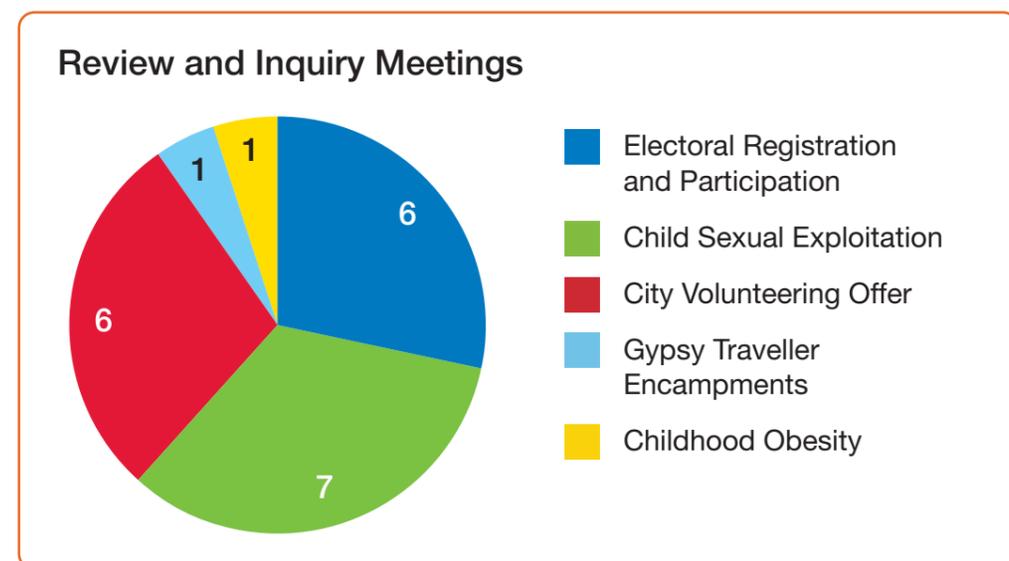


Figure 6 - Statistical information review and Inquiry meetings

## Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)

### Health

Following the evidence session the members of the Wolverhampton CCG held a health CSE scoping meeting to discuss their role in safeguarding children and young people. Local representatives from the main health providers such as GP, Accident & Emergency, GUM, paediatrics and mental health and others were invited to contribute to the discussion and also review health representation on a number of committees. The meeting addressed the use of the CSE screening tool in these areas and their effectiveness.

The scoping meeting outlined what the different providers were adding to the agenda and the level of representation by individuals on the groups, such as MASE, CMOG, and SEMT; and whether these participants needed to be updated.

### Licensing Service

The licensing service agreed to make a number of changes to make it easier for people to report concerns about drivers and also to make formal complaint. The following changes will be introduced to improve Private Hire Vehicle (PHV) client's access to making a complaint:

- On the next review of PHV signage Licensing will look at altering / supplementing the internal signage to advise clients that enquiries / queries can be made to The City of Wolverhampton Council.
- Licensing will also look at improving the relevant parts of the council website to ensure that when someone searches on the internet for how to complain about a taxi etc. in Wolverhampton that the relevant Council webpage can be found easily and the complainant directed to City Direct.
- It has been raised that some people complain to private hire vehicle operators either directly or via their social media sites. On the next review of PHV operator conditions an additional condition will be considered requiring the base to make complainants aware of City of Wolverhampton Council's role in licensing and that they can complain directly to the Council.

## Electoral Registration and Participation

### Why

Councillors undertook a scrutiny review assessing electoral registration and participation in Wolverhampton because of low voter turnout at recent elections, changes to the registration process and the drive for greater local democracy and accountability.

### What for / objectives

The review focused on issues that fall within the City of Wolverhampton Council's remit: identifying the barriers to increasing voter registration and participation and building intelligence for our on-going democratic service's work. The review sought to answer the following:

- How best could the Council communicate with residents about the eligibility criteria for registering to vote?
- What work should/could the Council do with educational institutions and voluntary and community groups to increase knowledge about registering to vote and voting?
- What barriers, if any, prevent eligible residents from registering to vote?
- What else could be done to maximise electoral registration?

### Findings

The review made recommendations to address the issues identified, which broadly fall into three themes: engagement, information and communication. The Council has already started to implement some of the recommendations, which should improve the mechanics of registering to vote and/or voting.

## City of Wolverhampton Council Volunteering Offer

In recent years there has been a shift in the way and reasons why people volunteer, and recognition that volunteering is an individual pursuit for which there should be robust mechanisms and support to embrace existing and develop new skills and experience; in turn this will add social value to existing service provision.

The report identifies that the Council's volunteer offer should make clear the difference between voluntary work placements, work experience and volunteering in its purest form. It outlines the different pathways, training and support that should be available to individuals, volunteers and supervisors in service areas. It considers the service area capacity and resource required to facilitate and provide equal opportunities and protection of all volunteers, supervisors and customers.

The main conclusions arising from the scrutiny review respond to the questions raised in the scoping of this work. They shape the recommendations to Cabinet and will feed baseline information into the wider development of a City Strategy for Volunteering.

The conclusions fall into four main areas:

- Volunteer Policy
- Skills and Pathways
- Additionality
- Resource

What changed during the review as a result of the evidence gathering? The Heads of Service Group received evidence gathered and findings of the review group to develop the Council's approach and ensure communication and consistency of offer. The review raised awareness of the current offer within services and with voluntary and partner organisations.

## Previous review outcomes during 2015-16

### **Scrutiny Review of Deaf Services 2010/11**

In May 2016 the Council committed itself to addressing key pledges to improve access and rights to the Deaf people by signing up to the charter. Work started with the deaf community following the scrutiny review and has continued to develop over the years.

### **Private Rented Sector Housing Review 2014/15**

'Rent with Confidence' as recommended by the review group is taking shape in Wolverhampton, the funding identified to resource licensing in arrears of deprivation has been made available by Public Health.

### **Infant Mortality Review 2014/15**

Scrutiny Board received an update report on progress in implementing review recommendations. The Public Health Consultant reported that a 12 recommendation plan had come out of the review which focused on co-ordinated local responses, issues of poverty and deprivation being addressed and existing practices and policies being changed. Health and Wellbeing Board received a report detailing the active participation from across all service areas and a willingness to work together to reduce the number of deaths. There is on-going work to make New Cross Hospital site smoke free and adopt examples of best practice from other NHS Trusts.

### **Details of how to find out more about Scrutiny**

Agendas, reports and minutes for all Scrutiny meetings are on the Council's website at [www.wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk](http://www.wolverhampton.moderngov.co.uk)

More information on Scrutiny at Wolverhampton City Council is available on the Council's website at [www.scrutiny@wolverhampton.gov.uk](mailto:www.scrutiny@wolverhampton.gov.uk) or from:

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