
**Annual Report of the Overview and
Scrutiny Committee 2021-22**

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Foreword from the Chair



It has been a joy and a privilege to chair the Overview and Scrutiny Committee this year. We have been ambitious and innovative, and achieved a great deal. The role of Scrutiny has been more important than ever in the past two years, as we recover from the pandemic and continue to face financial challenges as a council.

We have sought to help the city come back, and continued to hold the administration to account. This has been achieved generally, through our regular examination of finances and performance, and specifically through updates on Covid-19 recovery. We have also dealt with the fallout from the cyber incident of last year and how this has affected council services and budgets. No doubt this will continue to be on the agenda for the coming year.

The council has lost income in many areas due to the lockdowns, for example in car parking fees, and we have asked tough questions of the Cabinet as to how they plan to mitigate these losses, and deal with uncertainties about future footfall and shopping habits. The Committee have also looked into cultural services, festivals and events as they come back after a long hiatus, and suggested ways to grow.

We have examined the major contracts, such as the waste, street scene and grounds maintenance services contract, which is where the council is most visible to residents. We will continue to scrutinise this contract with our new streetcars partner Ubico.

The report of the Race Relations Commission and the Review of Monuments in the city were milestone moments in the year and provoked thoughtful and challenging debate. We look forward to updates on both of these reports in the coming year.

As a committee we have innovated, and our collaborative approach has led to useful additions, such as the standing item of 'actions from previous meetings'. It has always been difficult to keep track of what has happened as a result of notices of motion, so an agenda item to provide updates on actions from previous council notices of motion has been welcome.

Suggestions from members have also led to new kinds of meetings such as the airport Scrutiny meeting, where we also had the Chair of Cheltenham Borough Council's Scrutiny committee join us. Community safety has been on minds a lot since the murder of Ramarni Crosby, and we have a meeting later in the year to look at what more we can do to make our streets safer.

I would like to thank all members of the committee for their hard work this year, and also Terry Pullen as Vice-Chair, and Andy Lewis and Andrew Durdey as successive Lead members. Lauren Richards has supported me and the committee brilliantly, and nothing is too much trouble. Thank you too to the officers, Cabinet members and others who have attended Scrutiny to give evidence or take questions. Finally, I would like to pay tribute to my predecessor Tom Coole, who will be a hard act to follow. They have been very helpful with advice as I took over the chair.

Please enjoy this report of our activity for the year and don't hesitate to ask me any questions you may have.

Sebastian Fülh.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members 2021-22

Councillor Sebastian Field
(Chair)

Councillor Terry Pullen
(Vice-Chair)

Councillor Andrew Durdey
(Spokesperson)

Councillor Declan Wilson

Councillor Lyn Ackroyd

Councillor Linda Castle

Councillor Paula Dee

Councillor Sylvia Evans

Councillor Andrew Gravells MBE

Councillor Jeremy Hilton

Councillor Jaro Kubaszczyk

Councillor Colin Organ

Councillor Brendon O'Donnell

Councillor Raymond Padilla

Councillor Sarah Sawyer

Councillor Shamsuz Zaman

The Year in Scrutiny

At the time of writing, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has held 10 ordinary meetings with 1 further meeting due to be held in April. The Committee also held a special meeting to consider the Future Plans for Grounds Maintenance Partnership Arrangements before the Budget meeting in December 2021.

The table below sets out the range of different items and issues considered by the Committee over the civic year.

Meeting	Recommendations and Actions
Monday 7 th June 2021	
2021-21 Year-End Performance Report	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report
Monday 5 th July 2021	
2020-21 Financial Outturn Report	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report
Gloucester Culture Trust Update Report	<p>RESOLVED that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee RECOMMENDS that:</p> <p>(1) Enquiries are made of the other Gloucestershire districts as to their level of interest in being part of a bid for City of Culture 2025 and;</p> <p>(2) The Overview and Scrutiny is consulted at all stages of the bid process should Gloucester be on the longlist following consideration of the Expression of Interest.</p> <p>OUTCOME:</p> <p>*This recommendation was accepted by Cabinet on 14th July 2021 however a decision was later taken to withdraw the bid to submit expressions of interest for City of Culture 2025*</p>

Monday 6 th September 2021	
Action Point Item	Following a discussion between the Group Leads, it was agreed that a regular standing item be included in Overview and Scrutiny Committee agendas to provide Members with updates on any action points arising from previous meetings. It was agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would receive update on Council Notices of Motion as well as previous Overview and Scrutiny meetings.
Membership of UK100 and Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy	<p>RESOLVED that –</p> <p>The Overview & Scrutiny Committee RECOMMENDS that</p> <p>(1) When this item is considered at the Council meeting on 23 September 2021, further details be provided as to the funding models of the UK100 network and Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy.</p> <p>OUTCOME:</p> <p>*This recommendation was accepted by Cabinet on 15th September 2021 and further details regarding the funding models were provided at the full Council meeting on 23rd September 2021.*</p>
Financial Monitoring Quarter 1 Report	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report
Performance Monitoring Quarter 1 Report	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report
Monday 4 th October 2021	
Waste Street Scene and Grounds Maintenance Services – Transitional Progress	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the update
Draft Council Plan	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report
City Council Energy Costs and Reduction Projects Annual Report	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report

Armed Forces Community Covenant Update	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report
Monday 1 st November 2021	
Revenues and Benefits Service	<p>RESOLVED that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee RECOMMENDS that:</p> <p>(1) The Revenues and Benefits Service be insourced to the Council for a minimum of three years unless there are significant reasons why this would be financial detrimental to the Council.</p> <p>OUTCOME:</p> <p>*This recommendation was accepted by Cabinet on 10th November 2021.*</p>
Overview of Progress on Covid-19 Recovery	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the update
Future of the Tourism and Destination Marketing Team	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report
Monday 29 th November 2021	
Financial Monitoring Quarter 2 Report	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report
Performance Monitoring Quarter 2 Report	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report
Review of Office Accommodation	<p>RESOLVED that the Overview & Scrutiny Committee RECOMMENDS that:</p> <p>(1) The option to relocate to the Eastgate Shopping Centre be approved and that improvements are made to public accessibility by moving the Gateway customer services into the unit as soon as possible, or as and when a suitable alternative unit is available.</p> <p>(2) Long-term options for office accommodation for City Council staff are kept under review unless there is a significant change in circumstances.</p>

	<p>OUTCOME:</p> <p>*This recommendation was accepted by Cabinet on 8th December 2021.*</p>
Property Investment Review	RESOLVED – As per the recommendations in the confidential report.
Monday 6 th December 2021 (Special Meeting)	
Future Plans for Grounds Maintenance Partnership Arrangements	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report.
Monday 6 th December 2021 (Budget)	
Draft Money Plan 2022-27 & Budget Proposals for 2022/23	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report.
Monday 10 th January 2022	
Gloucester Commission to Review Race Relations Final Report	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report.
Monday 31 st January 2022	
Gloucester City Monuments Review	<p>RESOLVED – That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee RECOMMENDS that:</p> <p>(1) An update on any progress on the recommendations of the Monuments Review be provided to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in 12 months' time.</p> <p>OUTCOME:</p> <p>*This recommendation was accepted by Cabinet on 9th February 2022.*</p>
Events and Festivals Report on 2021 and Plan for 2022-23	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report.
Tourism and Destination Marketing Report	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report.
Task and Finish Group	<p>RESOLVED –</p> <p>(1) That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee establish a Task and Finish</p>

	Group to consider how the Council engages with young people.
Monday 28th February 2022	
Financial Monitoring Quarter 3 Report	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report.
Performance Monitoring Quarter 3 Report	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the report.
Monday 28th March 2022	
Gloucestershire Airport Scrutiny Session	RESOLVED – That the Overview and Scrutiny Committee NOTE the update.

Budget Scrutiny 2021-22

A major theme identified through the quarterly Financial Monitoring reports was the ongoing impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Council's finances and this was also a pressure highlighted in the annual Money Plan and Budget proposals. Part of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme includes a designated Budget meeting where Members receive presentations from the Leader of the Council and Cabinet Members on each of their individual portfolios, highlighting anticipated budget pressures, savings and future priorities.

Key Observations:

- As a result of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and the emergence of the Omicron variant, there was continued uncertainty surrounding the pace of economic recovery with particular implications for the Performance and Resources portfolio. This was due to income streams which were naturally sensitive to Covid-19 restrictions or lockdowns, such as parking and commercial property. There were however savings identified through the insourcing of the Revenues and Benefits Service, disposal of the HKP warehouses and proposed office move from Shire Hall to the Eastgate Shopping Centre in Summer 2022.
- The Culture portfolio also faced significant challenges as a result of Covid-19, which had dramatically impacted the ability of the Council to provide public-centered events. When the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Budget proposals in December 2021, the outlook was still uncertain however it was noted that there was very much an appetite for events after 2 years of restrictions and the Cabinet Member confirmed his priority to pursue cultural development funding proposals and a full festivals and events calendar for 2022.
- The Final Budget Proposals were put to full Council at the meeting on 24th February 2022 and it was noted that the Council was forecast to be £238,000 over budget. The Leader of the Council noted that this overspend was moderate compared to many other authorities, and particularly in view of the pressures brought about by Covid-19.

Scrutiny Highlights

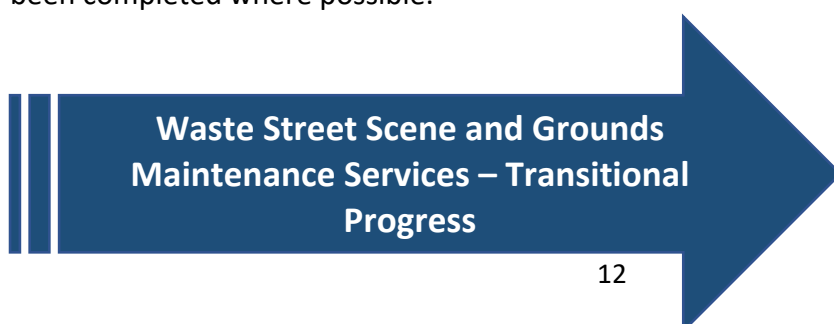
Over the course of the year, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee have closely monitored the Council Forward Plan and have considered a range of items, including Cabinet reports of interest to Members and regular Performance and Financial Monitoring reports. The Work Programme was updated regularly as the Forward Plan became populated and as anticipated in the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's annual report of 2020-21, the Committee retained a key interest in the Culture portfolio throughout the city's recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. The Committee held particularly detailed sessions on the Events and Festivals Plan for 2022-23 and the Tourism and Destination Marketing Report.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee also requested updates and briefings outside of the Forward Plan, from partner organisations including Ubico and Gloucestershire Airport, and implemented an innovative new agenda item. A summary of some of the key achievements of the Committee is set out below.



Following an initial suggestion from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Group Leads, Members agreed that a new standing agenda item would be added to Overview and Scrutiny meetings. The new item titled 'Action Points Arising from Previous Meetings' provided Members with written updates and answers to follow-up points of clarification agreed during meetings.

Since there was previously no formal mechanism to update Members on the outcomes of Council Notices of Motion, it was also agreed that the new agenda item would include updates on Notices of Motion. For this update, officers were asked to provide confirmation that the action points arising from Notices of Motion had been followed through, and if possible, to provide an update on any progress since the Motion was brought to Council. The aim of this item was to provide Members with assurances that follow-up actions had been completed where possible.



At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on Monday 4th October 2021, Members received an update from the Managing Director and Head of Operations for Ubico. This session followed a request from Members for an update on the transitional progress of the Waste Street Scene and Grounds Maintenance Services contract, which was due to be taken over by Ubico as the Council's new waste service provider on 1st April 2022.

The Managing Director and Head of Operations for Ubico updated Members on the environmental services mobilisation efforts, which included updates on the waste fleet, staff, contracts, infrastructure and communications. Members asked questions about the challenges of fleet service vehicle delivery and supply chain issues, as well as the steps Ubico were taking to mitigate those risks. There was also a discussion concerning staff transfer, and Members received assurances that efforts had been made with to meet with existing Urbaser staff ahead of the TUPE transfer process and that communication with staff would continue. At the time of writing, Ubico have commenced waste service delivery and transition arrangements are progressing well.



On 1st November 2021, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received an update from the Leader of the Council and Head of Place on how the Council was progressing with its recovery from Covid-19. It received an update on each of the 8 Covid-19 recovery workstreams identified during the early stages of the pandemic, which included economic recovery, housing recovery, community development, financial services, democratic services, Council services, environmental and climate recovery, and visitor and cultural recovery.

Members had the opportunity to question the Leader of the Council on the various recovery workstreams. Key themes included the Council's agile working policy and whether savings had been made as a result of Council staff working from home, the £20 million Levelling Up Fund for regeneration and investment in the city, and the redevelopment of the Debenhams building.



At the Overview and Scrutiny meeting on Monday 10th January 2022, the Committee received a presentation from the Chair of the Gloucester Commission to Review Race Relations on the Commission's findings and resulting Calls to Action. The City Council formally established the Gloucester Commission to Review Race Relations in November 2020. The Race Relations review was the second of 3 resolutions from a notice of motion unanimously approved by full Council on 9th July 2020, following the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota, during the Spring of 2020.

The Gloucester Commission to Review Race Relations included representatives from cross-sector organisations, including Gloucestershire Police, Gloucestershire County Council and Gloucester City Council, businesses, the voluntary sector, and the wider community. The Commission's Work Programme consisted of deep dive sessions into several key areas, namely criminal justice, education, mental health and representation at senior management level in the local workforce. The report outlined 4 Calls to Action which the Commission considered could be delivered at a Gloucestershire-wide level, including the establishment of an independent, permanent, funded and high-profile legacy institution for Gloucestershire. Other calls to action included implementing measures to monitor equality in the workforce, driving changes in culture to help collect high quality ethnicity data and a commitment at leadership level to tackle the existence of racism in Gloucestershire.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members paid tribute to the Commissioners for their hard work in producing such an important piece of work. Queries from Members centered around the consultation response and the barriers to engagement, planned next steps and responsibility of the City Council going forward. They also commented on the importance of working with partner organisations across the County to implement the Calls to Action.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a whole was keen to maintain momentum on the report and requested that regular updates be provided to the Committee. An interim update was provided to the Committee through the Action Points item at the meeting on 28th February, confirming that officers were working on a paper to submit to Leadership Gloucestershire outlining the best approach towards establishing the legacy institution. Members were also advised that conversations were being held with appropriate stakeholders and that outcomes of the initial Leadership Gloucestershire meeting were promising, with district Councils taking a keen interest in how they can help to deliver this work.



The Gloucester City Monuments Review was the third resolution from the Notice of Motion passed by full Council in July 2020, to undertake a review of all monuments, statues and plaques within the City connected with the slave trade or plantation ownership, and to

review the way in which the contribution of minority communities is presented as part of the City's history, including at the Museum of Gloucester.

One of the recommendations in the report was to create a display in the Museum of Gloucester to raise awareness of this area of the city's history, and objects connected to the transatlantic slave trade. Further recommendations included educational projects to improve public understanding and for the Council to encourage partner organisations to identify contested heritage assets.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the report on Monday 28th February and commended the exhaustive report. Several Members noted that it had provided an insight into the city which they previously did not have. Members welcomed the partnership working with stakeholders such as the University of Gloucestershire and the input from the Gloucester Commission to Review Race Relations. The Committee was particularly interested in the challenges where monuments were owned by third parties, how to make the report widely available to local educational institutions and how the Council would consult and engage with the residents when implementing the recommendations. In response to queries about next steps, Members were advised that a project plan would be developed to establish the best way of implementing the recommendations. Some necessary changes were highlighted by Overview and Scrutiny Members which were subsequently taken on board and amended in the final report to Cabinet.

All Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members were keen to maintain momentum on the findings of the review and the Committee made a recommendation that an update on any progress on the recommendations of the Monuments Review be provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 12 months' time. It was agreed that 12 months was a reasonable timeframe to implement some of the recommendations and the recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny was accepted by Cabinet on 9th February 2022.



The Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a presentation from the Managing Director of Gloucestershire Airport providing an update on the services offered at the Airport, the ongoing projects taking place and future plans, with a particular focus on green initiatives. The Committee also invited the Chair of Cheltenham Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Chris Mason, to take part in the session in view of Gloucester City Council and Cheltenham Borough Council's shared ownership of Gloucestershire Airport.

Members were particularly interested in the Airport's main income streams and the green initiatives outlined by the Managing Director, such as use of drones, solar panels and the Airport's latest energy report. Alongside a number of follow-up queries regarding the income streams, communications updates and energy report action plan, it was agreed that short- and medium-term updates on any progress on green initiatives would be provided to the Committee in due course.

Priorities for 2022-23

Task and Finish Group – Engagement with Young People.

The decision to establish a Task and Finish Group followed a Notice of Motion which was approved at the full Council meeting on 27th January 2022. The second of 4 resolutions proposed from the motion requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee set up a Task and Finish Group to consider how the Council engages with young people. At the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Monday 28th February 2022, the Committee approved the membership.

At the time of writing, the Task and Finish Group has met twice. An initial scoping session has been undertaken to establish the focus of the enquiry and desired outcomes. A Work Programme has been developed and will focus on 5 key areas of Council responsibility which particularly affect young people, namely regeneration, culture, parks and open spaces, climate change and democracy. Members will consider each topic and will hold evidence sessions with officers to establish how the Council engages with young people in each of the service areas and whether any recommendations need to be made to improve how the Council consults and engages with young people. The Task and Finish Group is currently aiming to present its findings later in 2022.

Race Relations Recommendations

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee have requested regular updates on the implementation of the Calls to Action identified by the Gloucester Commission to Review Race Relations. The Committee are anticipating a full update report in January 2023 and have also requested an interim update via the Action Point item at the meeting on 5th September 2022.

Community Safety Meeting

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee plan to hold a Community Safety meeting on Monday 4th July 2022, in response to a request from a Member. The Committee are hoping to invite organisations within the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) to attend the meeting and provide an update on how community safety issues are being tackled in the city.

Members' Attendance Record

<u>Nature of Meeting</u>	<u>Meeting Date</u>
Ordinary Meeting	Monday 7 th June 2021
Ordinary Meeting	Monday 5 th July 2021
Ordinary Meeting	Monday 6 th September 2021
Ordinary Meeting	Monday 4 th October 2021
Ordinary Meeting	Monday 1 st November 2021
Ordinary Meeting	Monday 29 th November 2021
Special Meeting (Future Plans for Grounds Maintenance Partnership Arrangements)	Monday 6 th December 2021
Budget	Monday 6 th December 2021
Ordinary Meeting	Monday 10 th January 2022
Ordinary Meeting	Monday 31 st January 2022
Ordinary Meeting	Monday 28 th February 2022
Ordinary Meeting	Monday 28 th March 2022

<u>Name of Councillor</u>	<u>Meetings Attended (Max:12)</u>
Councillor Sebastian Field (Chair)	11
Councillor Terry Pullen (Vice-Chair)	10
Councillor Andrew Durdey (Spokesperson)	11
Councillor Lyn Ackroyd	11
Councillor Linda Castle	10

Councillor Paula Dee	12
Councillor Sylvia Evans	8
Councillor Andrew Gravells	4 (out of 4 possible meetings)
Councillor Jeremy Hilton	12
Councillor Jaro Kubaszczyk	11
Councillor Brendon O'Donnell	11
Councillor Colin Organ	11
Councillor Raymond Padilla	10
Councillor Sarah Sawyer	6 (out of 7 possible meetings)
Councillor Declan Wilson	12
Councillor Shamsuz Zaman	6