

## **Report to Council**

**Date of meeting: 16 December 2014**

**Subject: Overview and Scrutiny Report to Council – November 2014**

**Contact for further information: Cllr R Morgan**

**Committee Secretary: A Hendry**

---



### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**That the Overview and Scrutiny Progress report from November 2014 to the Present be noted.**

### **Report:**

#### **Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meeting 10 November 2014**

1. At our meeting on Monday 10 November we received a presentation from Chris Martin, the Integrated Commissioning Director (West) from Essex County Council. He was there to talk about Children's Services in the County and their current commissioning intentions for young people based upon an Early Years review they had recently completed.
2. Mr Martin noted that it was important to support children and their families from birth right through to the early years of their life (2 to 5 years), to give them the best possible opportunity to succeed. They wanted to be challenging and have all the people working across the early years system to have a single vision of what needed to be changed, this would require big shifts in culture and practice.
3. As always, after his presentation, he was closely questioned by the Members of the Committee and the other Members present.
4. We then went on to consider the Communities and Local Government (CLG) Consultation on 'Planning and Travellers', seeking views on proposed changes to planning policy and guidance for the travelling community. The consultation period ended on 23 November 2014.
5. The stated intentions of the proposed changes were to:
  - (i) ensure that the planning system applies fairly and equally to both the settled and traveller communities;
  - (ii) further strengthen protection of "sensitive areas" and Green Belt; and
  - (iii) address the negative impact of unauthorised occupation.
6. The consultation also stated that the Government remained committed to increasing the level of authorised traveller site provision in appropriate locations to address historic undersupply as well as to meet current and future needs.
7. After some discussion we endorsed the officers draft response to the consultation question, which was put into a response letter and dispatched to the CLG under my signature on behalf of the Council.
8. We reviewed both the Committee's and the Scrutiny Panel's work programme for the last six months.

9. We noted that that JCC had asked that the Council's apprentices be allowed to give a presentation to our Committee on their first year working at the Council. We asked that a PICK form be completed so that we could consider this request formally.

10. Finally, we reviewed the Cabinet's Forward Plan but had no specific items that we wanted to consider.