

SOUTHAMPTON CITY COUNCIL

# OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY

## ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21



# CONTENTS

Chair’s Introduction .....	3
The Purpose and Functions of Overview & Scrutiny .....	4
Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee.....	5
Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel.....	7
Children and Families Scrutiny Panel .....	9
Scrutiny Inquiry Panel .....	11
Getting Involved.....	13

# Chair's Introduction

---



## **Councillor S Galton**

### **Chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee – (OSMC) 2020/21**

As this report will highlight, Covid-19 has been a prominent factor impacting upon numerous agenda items across our scrutiny panels during 2020/21. Each scrutiny panel or committee has sought to take a different approach to developing its understanding of the impact the pandemic has had on our city.

The Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel focussed on the collective response of the local NHS and social care providers to the pressing medical challenges presented; the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel considered the impact of the lockdowns on educational attainment, as well as scrutinising safeguarding issues such as child exploitation and domestic abuse; whereas the OSMC considered the Council's response to the crisis and the subsequent financial pressures it has created. As the longer term impact becomes clearer I anticipate the scrutiny function will seek to work with decision makers to ensure that actions proposed to address the problems are both considered and effective.

Due to the pandemic all scrutiny meetings were held virtually. This has presented some difficulties, but I want to thank members and officers for how they have responded to these challenges to ensure that panels were able to undertake a full programme of scrutiny meetings, albeit with a few technical problems along the way. Virtual meetings have a number of benefits, but I personally look forward to the commencement of face to face meetings in 2021.

The requirement to hold meetings virtually probably had the greatest impact on the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel. The ability to attend meetings from home and not to have to come into the Civic Centre enabled the Panel to hear from adult carers, parent carers and young carers throughout the Carer Friendly Southampton inquiry, thereby ensuring that the views of carers were reflected in the final report. The use of technology also permitted each meeting of the inquiry to be recorded allowing carers and representative organisations to view the proceedings after each meeting. This has proved beneficial to those who are in the process of drafting the next iteration of the Southampton Carers Strategy. However, it is undeniable that the need to meet virtually led to a number of excessively lengthy meetings, increasing the demands on elected members and, at times, limited the ability of Panel members to challenge the evidence presented due to PowerPoint overload!

During the year I have expressed concerns about the lack of items on the forward plan of key decisions and a growing willingness of the Executive to take decisions directly to Council, thereby circumventing the formal scrutiny process. Scrutiny plays a crucial role in holding decision makers to account as well as helping to sense check draft proposals, policies and strategies. It is therefore essential that scrutiny committees are provided with advance notice of decisions to enable them to schedule these essential discussions on appropriate agendas. As part of the new administration I have already made my views on the importance of scrutiny and how we undertake decisions going forward, and what needs to change.

As I stated in last year's report, I am grateful to members of the various scrutiny panels for their hard work and contributions throughout the year. I am also grateful to all the local groups, national organisations and individuals who have attended virtual meetings, made presentations and provided evidence, and to council officers and Cabinet Members for their attendance.

# The Purpose and Functions of Overview & Scrutiny

---

## Decision making context

The Full Council of 48 councillors approves the policy framework which sets out the key policies and programmes for the main services provided by the Council. In February each year Council meets to set the Council Tax for the following year.

The Executive make decisions relating to services provided by the Council, except for those matters which are reserved for decision by full Council, and planning and licensing matters which are dealt with by specialist regulatory panels. The Executive is made up of a Leader, elected by Council, and their appointed Cabinet Members.

The Scrutiny function helps to inform the decision making process and improve the way the Council works. Scrutineers assess what impact the Executive's policies and plans will have on the city and its residents.

Scrutiny is a process for:

- Holding the Cabinet, chief officers and senior members of staff to account for the discharge of its functions by examining, challenging and, if necessary, requesting changes to executive decisions made but not yet implemented.
- Scrutinising and reviewing policies and practices within a cross-service remit, assisting in the development of such policies and practices and scrutinising policy outcomes – e.g. the implementation of strategic priorities.
- Reviewing decisions and policies made by the Executive and considering whether they are right for the city.
- Assessing the council's performance against its planned targets and monitoring critical success factors.
- Reviewing the work of other partnerships and public sector organisations in the city, particularly the Safe City Partnership and health providers and commissioners.
- Championing issues of local concern to residents and contribute to policy development and service improvement.

## Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC)

The OSMC is a parent committee that manages the overview and scrutiny process and meets on a monthly basis. The membership of the OSMC is appointed for the municipal year at the Annual Council meeting in May.

There are a number of Scrutiny Panels that support the work of the Executive and the council as a whole. The Scrutiny Inquiry Panel carries out a work programme of scrutiny inquiries approved by the OSMC. These arrangements allow citizens to have a greater say in council matters by holding public inquiries into matters of local concern. These member led inquiries lead to reports and recommendations which advise the Executive and the council as a whole on its policies, budget and service delivery.

In addition the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel undertakes the statutory scrutiny of health and adult social care agencies in Southampton, and the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel scrutinises services for children and families in the city, including education.

The OSMC also monitors the decisions of the Executive and can 'Call-In' a decision which has been made by the Executive but not yet implemented. This enables them to consider whether the decision is appropriate.

## Councillor Call for Action

Enables all councillors to refer single ward issues, or 'local government matters', to the OSMC.

## Scrutiny Panels 2020/21

- Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel
- Children and Families Scrutiny Panel
- Carer Friendly Southampton Scrutiny Inquiry Panel

# Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee

---

**Councillor S Galton**

**Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee (OSMC) - 2020/21**

## **Committee Members (April 2021)**

Councillor Fuller (Vice-Chair)

Councillor Bell

Councillor Bunday

Councillor Cooper

Councillor Fitzhenry

Councillor Harwood

Councillor Renyard

Councillor Whitbread

## **Appointed Members – Church Representatives    Parent Governors**

Mrs Catherine Hobbs

Mr Rob Sanders

Mrs Nicola Brown

Mr Francis Otieno

Mrs Claire Rogers

Whilst the OSMC has scrutinised a wide variety of issues in 2020/21, the impact of the pandemic has been a consistent presence, directly or indirectly influencing the lines of enquiry and recommendations made by the Committee at virtually every meeting.

## **The City Council's response to the pandemic**

At the inaugural meeting of the municipal year the Committee invited the Leader and the Executive Management Team to provide an overview of the Council's response to the Coronavirus pandemic. The Committee recognised the significant contribution made by the Council in supporting the population of Southampton and agreed to return to the issue in due course to identify key lessons learnt from the experience.

The pandemic indirectly generated a number of other agenda items considered by the OSMC. The financial impact of the crisis either required the Executive to bring a number of issues before Cabinet for decision or substantially impacted upon policies and plans that were already in train for consideration. This included a decision to return the management and maintenance of Southampton Golf Course to the Council on an interim basis; the distribution of Covid-19 grants; the Medium Term Financial Strategy and 2021/22 budget (considered at 2 meetings of the Committee during 2020/21); the development of the Local Plan; and, the Economic and Green Growth Strategy.

The financial challenges presented by the pandemic will inevitably be factored into a number of discussions led by the Committee in 2021/22 as the city looks to recover and plan for a prosperous future.

## **Green Transport Recovery Plan**

With the aim of supporting social distancing and active travel, the Council produced a Green Transport Recovery Plan (GTRP) in 2020. Activities outlined in the Plan were a combination of 'soft' behavioural change measures designed to support behaviours adopted during the pandemic, and 'hard' physical measures that ranged from small scale adaptations to larger scale quickly delivered schemes.

Reflecting concerns that there had been inadequate consultation and that the GTRP did not support economic growth and included insufficient focus on schemes that have the most likely chance of

encouraging the long-term facilitation of active travel, the Committee 'Called-In' this item for further consideration with the Executive.

The Call-In meeting was lengthy and challenging, resulting in the OSMC recommending that Cabinet reconsider the called in decision at their next meeting. Whilst Cabinet subsequently agreed to implement their original proposals it is encouraging to see a number of the initiatives being withdrawn as the ineffectiveness of the approaches became apparent to the decision makers.

### **A focus on the environment**

Policies and proposals relating to the quality of the city's environment featured prominently on OSMC agendas in 2020/21. At the October meeting the Committee explored the findings from an independent report on air pollution in Southampton during the initial lockdown. How the findings from this report are incorporated into future decisions will be keenly scrutinised moving forward.

In November the Committee reviewed the impact of the environmental enforcement services introduced in 2020 to tackle littering and fly-tipping in Southampton. The increase in fly tipping caused concern and the OSMC recommended, amongst other suggestions, a review of the location of charity bins in the city to reduce the level of fly tipping.



Proposals for a Clean Growth Fund, a £20 million capital spend to deliver energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in the Council's non domestic buildings, was also scrutinised in 2020/21. The Committee welcomed the scheme and the match funding from Salix Finance Ltd and look forward to savings being re-invested into additional energy saving solutions.

### **Safe City Partnership annual review**

Despite another increase in recorded crime in 2019/20, the Committee, when considering the annual review of the performance of the Safe City Partnership, were encouraged with a number of initiatives being deployed in Southampton designed to reduce levels of crime and disorder.

The work of the Violence Reduction Unit shows promise by coordinating multi-agency responses to serious violence or sexual offences. The Committee noted that, in contrast to previous years when it was dominated by Hampshire Constabulary, the discussion had more of a partnership feeling to it with the Council playing a more active and strategic role. This approach will be required as the city prepares for an end to lockdown restrictions and the opening of the night time economy.

### **Contribution to Council policy**

A prominent feature of OSMC agendas has been the use of the Committee to help inform Council policy. Alongside approval of scrutiny inquiry final reports into childhood obesity and enabling Southampton to become more carer friendly, I was pleased that we were encouraged to consider the renewal of the Statement of Licensing Policy in September 2020. The discussion involved representatives from the city's hospitality sector and Go! Southampton as well as the Cabinet Member and Council officers. This offered the opportunity for the Committee to provide feedback during the consultation period and helped ensure that there was cross-party support for the proposals when they were subsequently discussed at Council.

The use of the OSMC as a sounding board for key decisions is a welcome development that can lead to more informed policies that have Council-wide support. This is an appropriate use of the Committee, particularly when the forward plan is bereft of key decisions.

# Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel



**Councillor Bogle**

**Chair of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 2020/21**

## **Panel Members (April 2021)**

Councillor White (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Laurent  
Councillor Prof Margetts

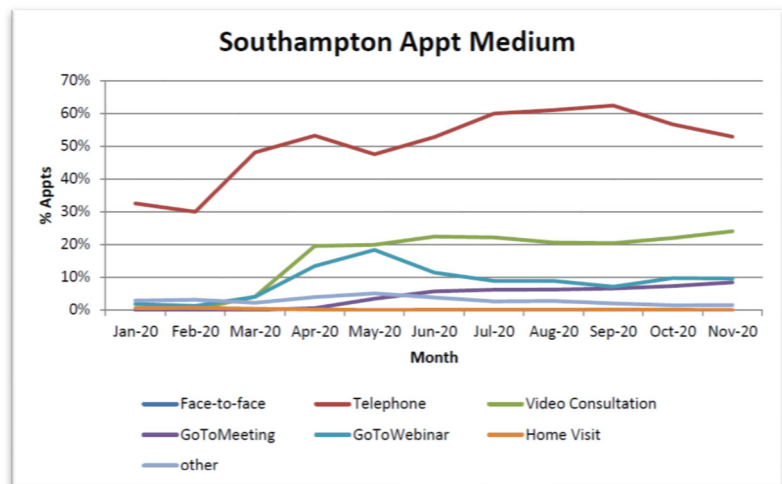
Councillor Noon  
Councillor Payne  
Councillor Vaughan

The Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel devoted significant time to considering two important issues in 2020/21. As expected, the response to, and the impact of Covid-19 was virtually ever-present on agendas this year. The second key topic that has been the subject of lengthy discussion is the reform of CCGs across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight.

## **Health and care response to Covid-19**

At early meetings the Panel were informed of the adaptations that providers were making to enable essential health and care services to continue operating during the initial lockdown. Technological solutions that had previously been under utilised were deployed across Southampton, replacing face to face meetings with a number of alternative approaches. The attached chart shows how mental health services adapted to the imposed restrictions to keep patients in touch with clinicians.

The pandemic encouraged joint working across the health and care system, demonstrating what can be achieved when there is less of a focus on organisational boundaries and rigid processes.



The Panel put on record their thanks to NHS, Public Health and care staff for their commitment and dedication during the pandemic. They have worked tirelessly meeting the health needs of our population in the most testing of circumstances.

The pandemic has created a lengthy backlog of patients requiring medical procedures. Expectations are that health inequalities will have been exacerbated and the Panel were informed about the potential long-term impact on the mental health of our residents due to the lockdowns. I expect that these issues will continue to be scrutinised by the HOSP and the Panel will be encouraging the utilisation of a population health approach as the city seeks to build back stronger post Covid-19.

## **CCG reforms**

Reflecting the direction of travel outlined in the NHS Long Term Plan, in 2020 CCGs across Hampshire and the Isle of Wight announced their intentions to merge to create a single NHS commissioning body for the area, excluding Portsmouth. This will lead to the creation of an Integrated Care System in 2022.



The Panel recognise that benefits can be achieved by working at scale, and that the commissioning of certain services is best undertaken on a Hampshire and Isle of Wight level, but have been vocal in their insistence that the reforms do not result in commissioning at scale at the detriment of a local approach.

At HOSP meetings the Panel have emphasised the value that they place on local, place-based decision making and accountability, and the integration of health and care in Southampton, predominantly through the Integrated Commissioning Unit.

The Panel will continue to advocate for a strong Southampton voice in decisions that impact on the health of our residents. The Panel have made it clear that it expects to be consulted on significant developments with regards to the governance and decision making arrangements for the new CCG and the planned Integrated Care System.

### **Pressure on Adult Social Care**

The 2019 LGA Peer Challenge identified concerns regarding quality of practice and outcomes delivered by Adult Social Care in Southampton. Covid-19 has added to the challenges the service faces by increasing the demand for adult social care services, creating additional pressure on the infrastructure, including the sustainability of care homes, and on budgets, thereby reducing capacity to deliver the required transformation.

On a number of occasions the Panel considered the Adult Social Care roadmap and the progress made delivering against the key workstreams. Whilst the direction of travel is supported by the HOSP the Panel are keen for metrics to be improved to provide assurance that the service is improving and is delivering better outcomes for service users. The challenge for the service remains getting the basics right on a consistent basis.

### **NHS developments**

In 2020/21 the Panel continued to review proposals to reconfigure health services impacting on Southampton. The proposed closure by Southern Health NHS Foundation Trust of Willow Ward, a ward based at Moorgreen Hospital in West End, for adults with learning disability whose behaviour challenges services, was considered at a meeting in September 2020. The Panel endorsed the plan with caveats linked to the establishment of a community based Enhanced Intensive Support Service.

The Panel also agreed to form a joint committee with Hampshire County Council to consider proposals to modernise health services in Mid and North Hampshire. The options being considered include the construction of a brand new hospital, potentially impacting on services being delivered from Royal Hampshire County Hospital in Winchester. The HOSP expressed concern that such a development could increase demand on Southampton General Hospital and the Panel were therefore keen to ensure that Southampton is represented at future meetings to discuss the proposals.

### **Key issues for 2021/22**

As a result of the pandemic and the ongoing changes to the health and care system, I anticipate the HOSP will be re-examining during the next municipal year a number of issues that have been the subject of debate this year. The Panel will continue to have oversight of the health outcomes outlined within the Strategic Needs Assessment and the objectives within the Southampton Health and Care Plan and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. By maintaining a public health perspective, including the health in all policies approach, the Panel can ensure that any discussion is focussed on improving health outcomes and reducing the troubling health inequalities evident in our city.



# Children and Families Scrutiny Panel

---



**Councillor Taggart**

**Chair of the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel – 2020/21**

**Panel Members (March 2021)**

Councillor Mitchell (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor J Baillie  
Councillor Chaloner

Councillor Guthrie  
Councillor Laurent  
Councillor Mintoff

**Appointed Members – Parent Governors**

Mrs Nicola Brown  
Mr Francis Otieno  
Mrs Claire Rogers

**Church Representatives**

Mrs Catherine Hobbs  
Mr Rob Sanders

Understandably, given the developments nationally and locally, 2020/21 has been an extremely busy year for the Children and Families Scrutiny Panel. The early meetings of the Panel focussed on the impact of the initial Coronavirus lockdown on education and safeguarding, whilst the later meetings have been characterised by oversight of the improvement journey Children’s Services and Learning are embarking on.

To provide context for the various agenda items, and to ensure that the meetings are focussing on the appropriate areas, the Panel continue to use performance data to scrutinise the safeguarding of children in Southampton. This detailed analysis of monthly data remains pivotal to holding services to account for the outcomes experienced by vulnerable children and young people across Southampton.

**The impact of Covid-19 on children’s outcomes**

At the June 2020 meeting the Panel scrutinised the plans to re-open schools for all pupils and the proposals to support disadvantaged pupils to catch up on missed lessons. This reflected concerns that the lockdown imposed on 23 March 2020, and the subsequent expectation that children would be educated at home, could exacerbate the existing attainment gap in our population, and may lead to an increase in demand for mental health services and emotional support within schools.

In addition, the Panel, when reviewing performance data, considered issues related to hidden harm such as domestic and sexual abuse and child exploitation and the work being undertaken by safeguarding services and partners to enable oversight of our most vulnerable children, despite the limitations imposed by the lockdown restrictions.

The Panel recognised the tremendous work undertaken by teachers and social workers to find solutions to the challenges they faced but there is an understanding that the various lockdowns will have contributed to some long-term challenges that the Panel will have to re-visit on a regular basis.

**Children’s Services Improvement Plan**

At a special meeting in August 2020 the Panel considered the report on the service improvement learning deriving from the investigation into a whistleblowing complaint within children’s social care services.

Many of the issues identified in the learning report had been raised by the Panel following regular analysis of the dataset. Concerningly, re-assurances had repeatedly been sought by the Panel and provided to the Panel, in particular about whether the child’s best interests were the primary factor

in decision making when numbers of looked after children were rapidly reducing and when clearing the backlog following the surge in demand for safeguarding services from January 2019.

Following the publication of the Learning Report, and the findings from the January 2020 Ofsted inspection report, the Council has committed to improving services through the delivery of a comprehensive improvement plan. The Panel have agreed to provide oversight of the implementation of the plan and will continue to act as a critical friend for the service throughout the journey.

### **Child Friendly City**



Reflecting the ambitions outlined in the Improvement Plan the Panel were informed about the vision for Southampton to be recognised as a Child Friendly City by 2025. At present only seven local authorities in the UK have achieved UNICEF Accreditation, including Liverpool, with none in the South East region of England. The Panel supported the aspirations and encouraged the officers to align the proposals with the City of Culture bid and our sustainability ambitions. An update on progress is scheduled for Autumn 2021.

### **Supporting Southampton's Looked After Children**

At the request of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) the Panel, at the March 2021 meeting, considered learning from complaints that the ombudsman has investigated on behalf of looked after children. The Panel then compared the good practice identified by the LGSCO with that employed in Southampton. Following the discussion, the Panel determined, subject to agreement with the incoming Chair, to scrutinise placement sufficiency, including fostering, and the use of unregulated provision at the July Panel meeting.

The March agenda also included proposals to improve participation activity with looked after children and care leavers. The Panel were pleased to endorse a proposal for all members to complete Total Respect training which is designed, delivered and led by young people who have experienced the care system, and focuses on changing the way staff and members listen to and respond to looked after children.

I believe the training suggested by Dr Jenny Molloy will be of enormous benefit to all councillors, especially those on the Scrutiny Panel. I very much hope that this will not only formalise and improve the profile of corporate parenting among councillors, but will also lead to more mentoring of children and young people by councillors and greater involvement in celebratory events, such as the formal event for care leavers.

### **Looking ahead**

Whilst I will not be Chairing the Panel in 2021/22, I am confident that through initiatives such as the Line of Sight, advocated by the Executive Director, where opportunities are provided to the incoming Chair and Panel to make site visits to, and attend meetings with, officers in the Children's Services department, the Panel will continue to recognise and champion good practice and to call out actions and performance that have a negative impact on outcomes for children and young people in the city.

Scrutiny can often happen in a rather abstract way and for Panel members to have more experience of the work done by our officers, along with the training they receive, the resources they have and the environments they work in, it could foster improved understanding of the challenges and risks at play, and perhaps a greater sense of being corporate parents. All of which will benefit the scrutiny of children's services in Southampton moving forward.

# Scrutiny Inquiry Panel

---



**Councillor Savage**

**Chair of the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel – 2020/21**

**Panel Members (April 2021)**

Councillor Prior (Vice-Chair)  
Councillor Coombs  
Councillor B Harris

Councillor McEwing  
Councillor White  
Councillor Windle

Prior to the pandemic, Carers UK estimated that 1 in 8 people provide unpaid care. Using this ratio, the number of carers living in Southampton, including over 2,000 young carers, is estimated to be about 32,000, providing everything from a few hours of support a week to intensive and complex round the clock care.

Given the contribution made by carers, and the recognition that there is a need to improve outcomes for carers in Southampton, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee recommended at the September 2020 meeting, that an inquiry focussing on improving support for carers in Southampton is undertaken by the Scrutiny Inquiry Panel.

## Consultation


The Scrutiny Inquiry Panel undertook the inquiry over 6 evidence gathering meetings. At the start of each meeting the Panel received feedback from carers ensuring that the views of adult carers, parent carers and young carers were represented.

In addition to hearing from carers, the Panel received information from a wide variety of organisations. This included Carers UK, NHS Providers in Southampton, Portsmouth City Council, Surrey Heartlands ICS, NHS England and Improvement, the Department for Work and Pensions, The Children’s Society, No Limits, Carers In Southampton as well as officers from Southampton City Council and NHS Southampton City Clinical Commissioning Group.

## Findings and conclusions

Information presented to the Inquiry Panel identified that:

- Carers are essential. They make an enormous contribution to the people they support and are an integral part of our health and social care system.
- Caring can have a considerable impact on the mental and physical health of carers, their employment prospects and many carers experience financial difficulties due to their caring role.
- Carers have been hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 pandemic. The closure of support services has resulted in many carers not being able to



‘I had to reduce hours from full time to 4 days a week, so financial cost - huge emotional cost on me balancing work commitments and commitments to the person I care for - feeling I never do either as well as I want to.’

take a break from their caring role, increasing their isolation and the burden and pressure on them.

- Carers have their own needs too, and, throughout the inquiry, the Panel were made aware of the increasing commitment from health, care and voluntary organisations in the city to address the needs of carers and this has been matched with action designed to improve outcomes for Southampton's carers.
- Despite improvements being made, in Southampton there are currently:
  - Too many carers that have not been identified and are not known to carer organisations or health and care providers
  - Too few carers receiving timely assessments of their needs
  - Too few carers in receipt of help to support them in their caring role and to live a life outside their caring role
  - Too many carers that are having to leave work to care or are having their prospects damaged by the impact of their caring duties on their educational attainment.
- Improving outcomes and support for carers will not happen overnight. It takes time but it can be done. Evidence suggests that investment in carers' services to support them in their caring role is financially beneficial for social care services and sees a significant return on any investment made.
- No single organisation has all the solutions and the solutions cannot all come from statutory services. It is vital that we work with partners beyond health and care organisations to raise awareness of caring among the wider population to build a carer friendly community in Southampton.

## Recommendations

The final report contains 24 recommendations in total which, if implemented, the Panel believe will improve outcomes for carers in Southampton over the longer term.

The recommendations reflect key issues presented during the inquiry relating to:

- The identification of carers
- Improving information, advice and guidance
- Improving the assessment process
- Providing additional support for carers
- Helping carers stay in, enter or return to work, education and training
- Co-production with carers
- Support for carers transitioning between services
- Improving co-ordination and the sharing of data.



## Cabinet

The inquiry report was presented to Cabinet in April 2021. A formal response from the Executive to the recommendations is expected to be considered by Cabinet in the summer.

The final report of the Inquiry Panel can be accessed here:

[http://www.southampton.gov.uk/images/carers-friendly-southampton\\_tcm63-442272.pdf](http://www.southampton.gov.uk/images/carers-friendly-southampton_tcm63-442272.pdf)

# Getting Involved

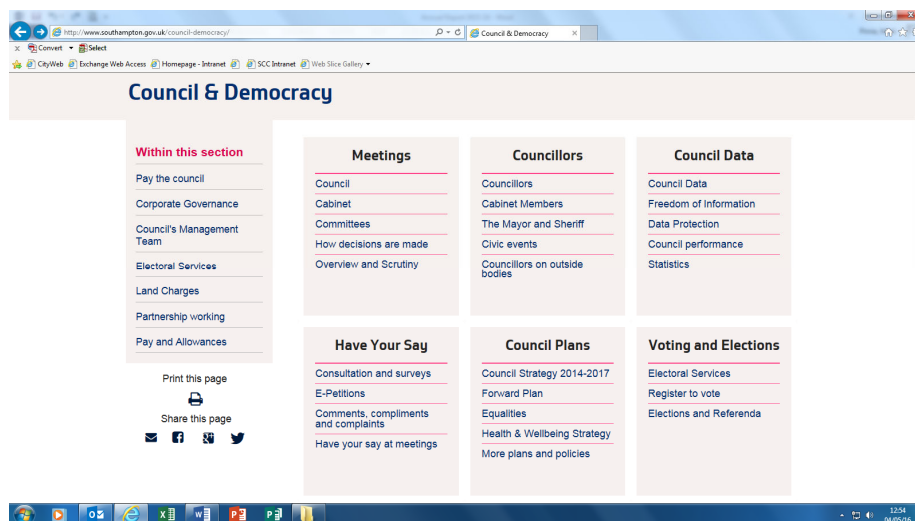
## How can I get involved?

There are a number of ways in which the public and interested organisations can get involved.

- **Attend a meeting of the Overview & Scrutiny Management Committee or a Scrutiny Panel.** All scrutiny meetings are held in public and, subject to agreed Covid restrictions, anyone is welcome to attend to listen to proceedings. Meetings are currently usually held in the Civic Centre. Only on rare occasions, when certain types of confidential information is being discussed, are members of the public not allowed to attend.
- Raise issues with your Councillor and request Overview and Scrutiny to consider as part of **Councillor Call for Action.**
- Give your feedback to inquiry meetings as part of evidence gathering.

Details of forthcoming scrutiny meetings, agendas, reports and minutes can be obtained from the City Council's website at:

<http://www.southampton.gov.uk/council-democracy/meetings/scrutiny/default.aspx>



## Providing written evidence

Scrutiny inquiries can consider written evidence and members of the public, community groups, or other key stakeholders can write in to bring evidence to the attention of Inquiry Panel members. Inevitably, scrutiny inquiries have only a limited amount of time, so they may not be able to hear oral testimony from all interested people.

Written evidence provides an alternative way to receive evidence from key stakeholders, policy makers, service providers, service users and community groups. Written evidence may put forward a particular perspective of the issue being considered, or may highlight evidence to help the investigation. It can also put forward questions for witnesses which may be taken up by members of the Panel during the discussion.

**Address:** Democratic Services – Municipal, Floor 1, Civic Centre

**Email:** [mark.pirnie@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:mark.pirnie@southampton.gov.uk)

**Telephone:** 023 8083 3886