

**Scrutiny
Annual
Report
2004 / 2005**







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Foreword

It is now five years since Luton Borough Council adopted the new political structures of Executive and Scrutiny. There have been relatively few changes to the constitutional arrangements over those five years. However Scrutiny has developed and improved by learning from good practice elsewhere including at other Councils and by a programme of development for scrutiny Councillors.

The last twelve months have seen a number of important studies completed. The study of educational achievement focussed on learning from other local education authorities that have succeeded in raising attainment. The study of accommodation provision for older people was also based on learning from what has been done elsewhere to learn from the best and to avoid some of the mistakes that have been made elsewhere. The study of enforcement looked at ways and means of addressing the problem of eyesore sites in the town and recommended that the Council should adopt a much more pro-active approach to dealing with land in private ownership that is used for fly tipping. The Executive welcomed all of these reports and, whilst Scrutiny must recognise that it will take time and resources to implement the recommendations, the progress being made will be kept under review.

The budget scrutiny protocol developed by Performance Resources and Assets Scrutiny Committee has proved to be a vast improvement on the previous year's process and I am optimistic that this success can be built on for next year.

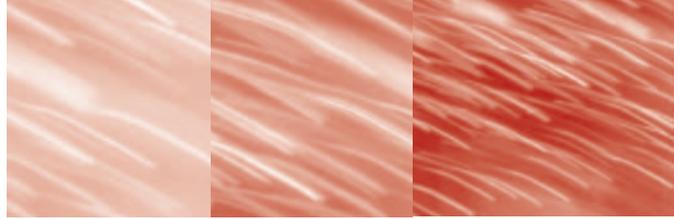
The Scrutiny team is very small with only four officers being devoted exclusively to supporting the five committees, the Board, the several panels and the joint health scrutiny committees. It would not be possible for the Members and the committees and panels to do their job effectively if they were entirely dependent upon the Scrutiny Team so, as well as recording my thanks and appreciation to them, I would like to use this opportunity to say 'thank you' on behalf of scrutiny to the many other officers of the Council that have worked for and supported scrutiny and to officers and Members of other authorities and organisations that have helped with information and advice or have hosted visits or appeared as witnesses. Thanks are also due to members of the public, who have shown an interest in what we are doing by attending meetings, asking questions and expressing their views.

Scrutiny is now well established within the Council and Councillors and officers understanding of the purpose and process is maturing. Some progress has been made in improving communication internally within the Council through the scrutiny newsletter and externally with the public through Luton Line; however consulting the public, gaining their views and involving them in the scrutiny process remains a big challenge for the future.

We lost a valued Member of scrutiny when Councillor Hand died last year. Many tributes have already been paid to him and he will be missed from many roles; however he was a great exponent of scrutiny and could be relied upon to ask the question that would reach to the very heart of the matter. His contribution to the work of scrutiny will be valued and remembered for a long time to come.



Councillor Sheila Roden
Chair of the Scrutiny Board

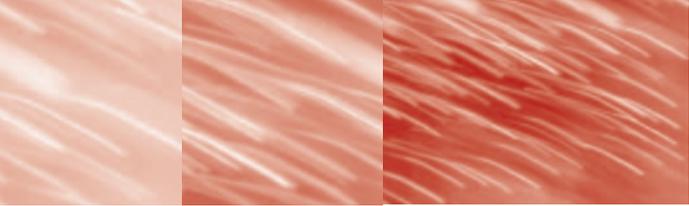


1. Introduction

Welcome to Luton Borough Council's Scrutiny Annual Report for 2004/05. The report details the work carried out by the five Scrutiny Committees, panels and joint committees over the last year.

It provides further evidence and support that Scrutiny at Luton has achieved some fundamental milestones since its implementation and is moving on from the developmental stage by actively challenging the Executive and holding them to account. Scrutiny has shown progress over the past year learning from experience and best practice in other local authorities.
Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)

The Council opted for a Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) that was carried out in November 2004. The results of the assessment have been published. The overall assessment received from the inspectors show that council strengths continue to outweigh weaknesses. The comments in relation to scrutiny were "The council uses scrutiny reviews effectively to focus on key strategic issues such as care services for frail elderly people; this ensures focus on both user needs and service provision. Scrutiny has continued to improve in its effectiveness and is providing useful challenge to the council in understanding areas of weaker performance for instance the ongoing review of educational attainment is beginning to bring out important issues to inform the executive's future policy decisions". "the lifelong learning scrutiny committee has looked extensively at better performing councils and is in the process of incorporating the learning into its recommendations on the way forward for Luton to improve educational attainment." "Scrutiny and best value reviews demonstrate effective learning. The best value review scrutiny committee is actively involved in reviewing the delivery of services and is effective in challenging lack of progress to implement plans and deliver service improvements."
None of the inspectors' comments about scrutiny were negative and their report did not identify scrutiny as an area requiring improvement.



2. What is Scrutiny?

The Local Government Act 2000 introduced scrutiny as part of the modernisation of the governance of local authorities. The primary aim of scrutiny is to improve efficiency, transparency and accountability in Local Government and has consequently introduced some fundamental shifts in the working of Local Government.

The Local Government Act 2000 required all Local Authorities to implement a new political structure in the form of an Executive and a Scrutiny function. At Luton most of the decisions taken on running Council services are made by a small group of elected Members called the "Executive". Other Councillors, through the "Scrutiny" process, can challenge decisions taken by the Executive but they cannot be overturned.

Scrutiny Committees operate on a similar basis to Parliamentary Select Committees by examining decisions taken by the Executive. Scrutiny reviews the performance of the Council in delivering services, enquires into issues of concern to local people, including services provided by other public bodies, and helps to develop Council policies.

3. History, Structure and Process of Scrutiny at Luton Borough Council

Executive and Scrutiny Functions have been in place at Luton Borough Council since May 2000.

The Role of the Scrutiny Board

The role of the Board is to plan, organise, monitor and review the work of the Scrutiny Committees and panels and to evaluate the effectiveness of the scrutiny process. The Board gives advice to Committees about how they should conduct Scrutiny and exercises the power of Scrutiny in its own right.

The Council's constitution, introduced in December 2001, states that each of the scrutiny committees reports once a year to the Scrutiny Board and the Board reports once a year to the Council.

The Board appoints individual members to oversee the work of Scrutiny Committees. Membership of the Board for 2004/05 is as follows:



Cllr Roden (Chair)



Cllr Mead (Vice Chair)



Cllr Bashir



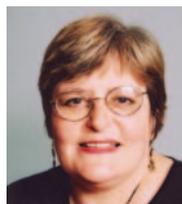
Cllr Garrett



Cllr Haji. Abid



Cllr Siederer

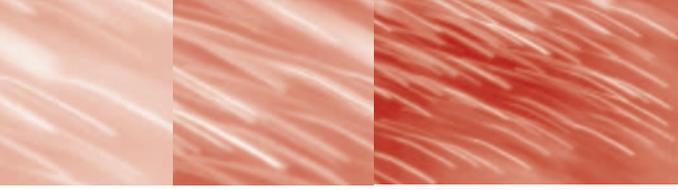


Cllr Simmons



Cllr Davis

Note: Following the death Of Councillor Hand his place was taken by Councillor Simmons.



The Role of Scrutiny Committees

The five Scrutiny Committees are:

- Environment and Non-Executive Functions
- Lifelong Learning
- Regeneration and Citizenship
- Social Inclusion
- Performance, Resources and Assets

The role of scrutiny committees is as follows

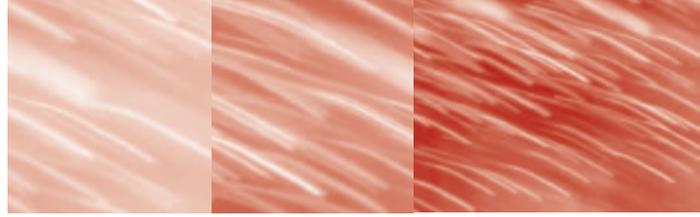
- To hold the Executive to account
 - By considering Executive decisions which are 'called in'
 - By giving advice to the Executive about matters included in their forward plan
- To monitor and evaluate performance
 - Using performance Indicators
 - And best Value reviews of services
- To examine topics of public interest or concern
- To consider topics referred by the Executive
- To undertake policy development, reviews and revision
- To undertake the role of community champion
 - By reviewing the performance of other public and 'common' services
 - By considering matters affecting the area and/or local people

From time to time Panels may be set up to deal with specific topics, usually because a topic overlaps the remits of more than one Committee. Most panels have a limited life and are disbanded once the task is completed. (See Other Forms of Scrutiny PG: 31)

The Scrutiny Process - Reviews

All Scrutiny Reviews, which are undertaken by the Scrutiny Committees, undergo a six-stage process:

- Scoping and planning. This stage involves making key decisions about the aims and objectives of the review. Including the purpose, the evidence to be collected and key stakeholders who have an interest in the review.
- Evidence and information. This second stage involves collecting all relevant evidence and information from sources such as council officers, key stakeholders, best practice examples, publications and statistics. This may involve taking evidence from witnesses and visits to see best practice elsewhere.



- Analysis of evidence and information. This third stage involves drawing together all the evidence and information gathered at stage two and identifying key points and common themes that have arisen as a result of the review.
- Draw conclusions and formulating recommendations. This fourth stage involves drawing conclusions from the evidence gathered, “what has been found?” and from these conclusions developing ‘SMART’ recommendations to be submitted in the final report to the Executive or the Council.
- Report stage of the review. The fifth stage involves writing a report of the progress of the review from stages 1-4; what the aims were, how the review was conducted, what the evidence told us, and ultimately what we recommend should be done as a result of the review. The report is presented to the Executive (the decision making body), who then decide whether or not the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee should be implemented.
- The final stage is only undertaken when the Executive accept the recommendations presented to them by the Report of a Scrutiny Committee. This stage involves reviewing and monitoring whether the implementation of the recommendations is accurate and timely, and the “value added” effect the recommendations have had on the service in question, (i.e. Has the implementation of the recommendations had the desired or predicted effect?).

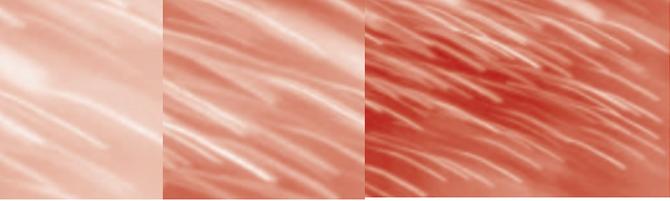
Monitoring Function of Scrutiny

Performance

Two Members are appointed by each scrutiny committee to monitor statistical information about the service delivery and performance of services that come within the remit of the committee. It is the responsibility of the two nominated members to draw the Committees attention to any potential performance issues. The Scrutiny Board took the decision that each scrutiny committee should receive reports on priority performance indicators in relation to services that fall within that committee's remit. How scrutiny carries out performance monitoring is currently under review.

Call in

Any two Members of the Council can call in a decision taken by the Executive (provided it is not exempt from call in) and that decision can then not be implemented until it has been scrutinised by the appropriate scrutiny committee. The committee has to deal with it within a limited timescale and then either raise no objection or advise the Executive to think again. Even so the scrutiny committees have no power to make the Executive change their decision. Attached as appendix A is the record of Executive decisions called in to scrutiny during 2004-05.



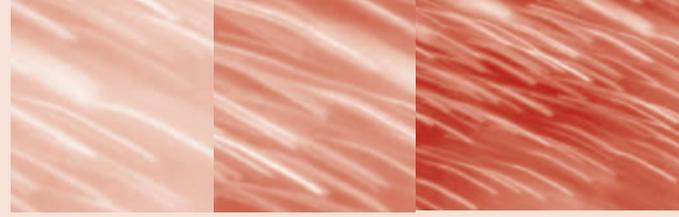
Best Value Reviews

A Best Value Scrutiny Panel has been set up to oversee the work carried out on Best Value Reviews. Scrutiny Committees also consider the final reports of Best Value Reviews before submission to the Executive for approval and implementation.

Scrutiny Topics

Completed studies of major topics invariably result in recommendations for change that are developed into action plans either by the scrutiny committee as part of the study or by the Executive following the submission of the scrutiny report and recommendations. It has become the practice of the committees to set a timetable to review the progress made in implementing those action plans. Usually the intervals are long, often twelve months, however the committees look not only at the timeliness of the actions being implemented but also the effectiveness and any unintended consequences (see stage 6 above).

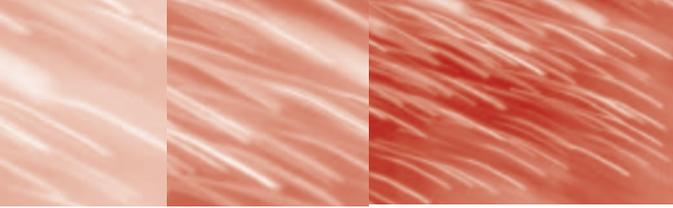
Completed reviews are normally reported to the Council's Executive; however, occasionally a report will be made to the Council. This may be done if there is a desire to show that the whole Council supports the conclusions of the review as was the case with the report on community cohesion.



4.

**Environment
and
Non-Executive
Functions
Scrutiny
Committee**





Environment and Non- Executive Functions Scrutiny Committee

4.1 Membership



Cllr Ireland (Chair)



Cllr Dolling (Vice Chair)



Cllr Boyle



Cllr D. Chapman



Cllr Haji Abid



Cllr Worlding

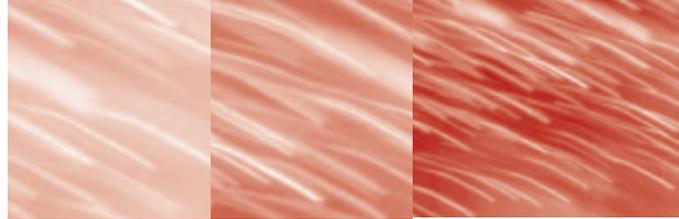
4.2 Terms of Reference:

Executive Portfolio

Environment

Functions

- Physical infrastructure – provision and maintenance
- Use of land and impact of uses
- Local Agenda 21 and sustainability
- Pollution control
- Pest control
- Value and appropriateness of services
- Operation of external partnerships
- Critiques budget proposals, standards, performance and Best Value including reviews
- All functions within the terms of reference of:
 - Administration Committee
 - Development Control Committee
 - Regulation Committee



4.3 Reviews Completed

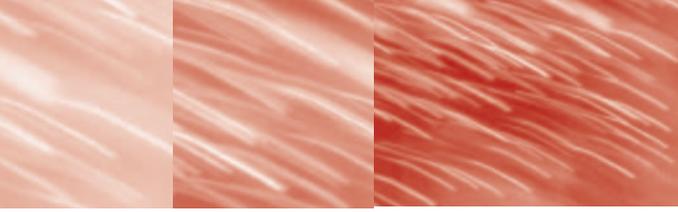
The Environment and Non Executive Functions Scrutiny Committee final report on 'Enforcement' was completed in November 2004. The topic was chosen after concerns were expressed by officers on the increasing levels of accumulated rubbish on private land in Luton. The problems highlighted were focused around the current level of enforcement that could be taken by enforcement officers, who experienced difficulties persuading private landowners to become responsible for accumulated rubbish on their land. Evidence was heard from internal service departments with an enforcement role within the council and external evidence was gathered from outside partnership agencies such as the Arson Task Force officer. The final recommendations agreed by the Executive were:



- That the council take a proactive approach in responding to identified cases of accumulated rubbish on private land and for sufficient resources and budgets to be made available from service departments for the work to be carried out to clear and secure land from further fly tipping. The Executive agreed that the responsibility for clearing and securing private land should be carried out by the Street Services Division and the Head of Street Services to draw up an action plan on the level of resources and budgets required to enact the recommendation.
- For the council to be proactive in using all powers of legislation available to pursue persistent landowners who refuse to keep their land free of rubbish and for the council to continue to prosecute landowners for work carried out in default.
- For collaborative working to be continued with the council, Luton Arson Task Force and the Safer Luton Partnership to educate and train schools and residents of Luton on the council's stance on fly tipping. Training is also to be extended to officers who have enforcement duties and to Magistrates to highlight the importance of bringing cases to court for harsher penalties to be imposed.

Outcome of the review

A growth bid was put forward from Street Services in the 2005/06 budget for £158,160, which was considered at the Council Budget meeting in February when it was decided not to provide the resources requested for the removal of fly tipped waste from private land but that additional provision should be sought elsewhere to fund such cases if and when they arise. Street services have identified £100k underspend that will need the approval of the Executive to carry forward into this year's budget. If



approval is granted the proactive approach to clear private land of accumulated waste will be funded for a year after which another proposal will need to be made in the budget 2006/07 for the service to continue.

4.4 Reviews in Progress

'Conservation' is the current topic for this committee, which was scoped in January 2005 and is now at the evidence gathering stage. The committee held a special meeting in November 2004 at the John Dony Field Centre to hear evidence from members of the public who expressed an interest in conservation. Further evidence has been received from internal service departments with responsibility for nature conservation. In February this year the committee received reports and presentations from external agencies such as English Nature, the North Chilterns Trust and the Beds and Luton Wildlife Trust. The final report is expected to be available in September 2005.



4.5 Monitoring Function

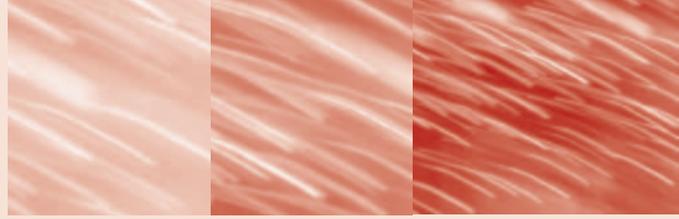
The committee has consistently received monitoring reports throughout the year on:

- The action plan that was created from the review on 'clean streets'
- Priority Performance indicators that relate to environment
- Progress on the Railway Station development
- Waste Minimisation Strategy
- Progress on Traffic and Transport action plan
- Translink
- Local Plan
- Licensing Act
- Eastern Corridor
- Local Transport Annual Progress

4.6 Future Work Programme

Future topics selected by the committee but not prioritised are as follows:

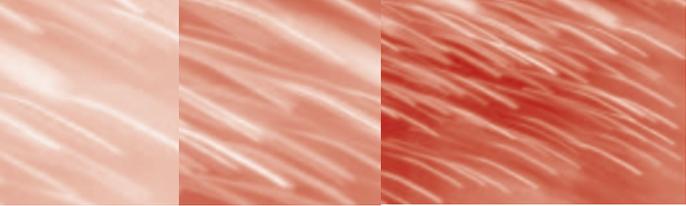
- Energy
- Impact of the Environment on Health
- Waste and Recycling
- Co-ordinated Street Scene
- Commercial and Industrial Recycling
- Underground Services



5.

**Lifelong
Learning
Scrutiny
Committee**





Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee

5.1 Membership:



Cllr McKenzie (Chair)



Cllr D Chapman (Vice Chair)



Cllr Ashraf



Cllr Bullock



Cllr Campbell



Cllr Bailey



Cllr A Iqbal



Cllr Pantling



Cllr Roden



Cllr Yasin



Cllr Wates

Other members of the Committee are:

Co-opted Diocesan Representatives J Reynolds
Vacant

Parent Governor Representatives C.D. Brown
V.W. Cowell

Employee Representatives G Ryan
L Crick

Note: Following the appointment of Cllr. Pedersen to the Executive her place was taken by Cllr Pantling. Cllr Bailey was appointed to the vacancy arising from the death of Cllr Hand



5.2 Terms of Reference:

Executive Portfolio

Lifelong Learning

Functions

- Schools
- Education and Achievement
- Training
- Further Education and Higher Education links
- Post 16 and Learning Skills Council
- Adult Education
- Libraries
- Developing Young People as Citizens
- Youth Services

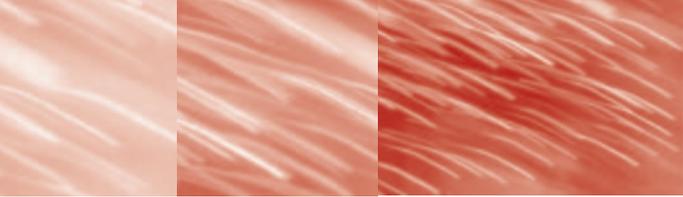
5.3 Reviews Completed

The Lifelong Learning Scrutiny committee have now completed the review on 'educational achievement' in Luton. The aim of the review was to look at the level of educational achievement in Luton schools to ascertain whether it was sufficient and identify if there was a need for improvement. The poor standard of education in Luton was highlighted in the local newspapers that criticised the level of achievement made by teenagers. This criticism was reflected in current Ofsted reports of the three secondary schools in special measures. Luton also have a spate of bad Ofsted reports e.g. 14-19

Inspection, Adult Education Inspection and the LEA Ofsted Inspection conducted in 2002 all highlight key areas that need addressing before Luton can achieve success.

The 'educational achievement' report identified that the level of achievement of pupils in Luton schools is moving at a slow pace. Only a few of the 'good' schools help make the situation look better overall. The report highlighted the secondary schools that have made little or no progress over the last few years.





Eight key recommendations were put forward to the Executive that highlighted areas needing to be addressed before success that was achieved by the London authorities highlighted in the report can be seen in Luton:

- Aspirations
- Resources
- Performance Data
- Partnerships
- Leadership and Management
- Teaching and Learning
- Behaviour
- Governors

The Executive in January 2005 approved the recommendations and requested Lifelong Learning department to produce an action plan to show how the eight key areas will be taken forward, which will be monitored by the Executive. The CPA inspection that took place in December last year commented on the 'achievement' report by saying that *'scrutiny has continued to improve in its effectiveness and is providing useful challenge to the Council in understanding areas of weaker performance, for instance the ongoing review of educational attainment is beginning to bring out important issues to inform the executive's future policy decisions'*.

Outcome of the review:

The Lifelong learning department are in the process of producing the action plan that will go to the Executive in June 2005. There are now only two secondary schools in special measures and it is hoped that they will be removed by the end of the year. The Lifelong Learning department is in the process of restructuring the school improvement section for a more effective service to be provided to Luton schools.

5.4 Reviews in Progress

'Special Needs Children' is the current topic for this committee. The scope was completed in January this year and is now at the evidence gathering stage. The committee received a joint presentation from officers within the Access and School Improvement divisions on the current SEN provision in Luton. In March 2005 the committee invited Professor Alan Dyson to give evidence on a publication that he co-produced entitled 'Inclusion and pupil achievement'.



5.5 Monitoring Function

The committee has received reports on:

- Clothing Grants
- Vocational Education for EBD Pupils (Rathbone)
- LEA & CC Post Inspection Plans
- Youth Action Plan
- 14-19 Inspection Results
- LEA Support for Schools in Special Measures
- Priority Performance Indicators
- Behaviour Action Plan
- Draft School Organisation Plan 2004/09
- Free transport provision for South Luton High School
- Key Stage Results
- Teacher Recruitment and Retention
- National Audit Survey
- Education Development Plan
- Adult Education Re-inspection Report
- Excellence in Cities

5.6 Future Work Programme

- School meals – obesity and healthy eating
- Funding initiatives – audit against outcomes for 2011



6.

Regeneration and Citizenship Scrutiny Committee





6.3 Reviews Completed

Regeneration Initiatives

This review investigated the impact of the externally funded Area Based Initiatives within Luton. Area Based Initiatives are government funded external grants aimed at specific geographical areas, normally with an economic / social regeneration bias. Initially the evaluation covered the whole of Luton, however in March 2004 the Committee agreed that a concentrated look at the Biscot and Dallow wards, including the area known as Bury Park, should be looked at in greater detail. It was also agreed that the review would concentrate on just four streams of funding, namely Single Regeneration Budget, European Regional Development Fund, National Lottery Funding Awards and Health Action Zone. These four streams of funding alone equate to some £13,053,196 of external grant support to the area over a five-year period. The review then went on to evaluate the effectiveness of those initiatives that received funding from those streams.



The review concluded that:

- The proportion of activity in the Biscot and Dallow Wards did not reflect the four priorities, which the area agreed as being important at the outset of the programme (i.e. health, employment, crime and educational underachievement.)
- There appeared to be very little collaboration between projects and statutory sectors, particularly projects with a social bias.
- The contribution by the priority areas to the outputs for the whole conurbation is less than 50% of the output achievements on the majority of outputs. However, funding to priority areas accounts for nearly 80% of all grants from external funding regimes

Community Safety - Drugs

The aim of this review was to investigate the links between crime and the misuse of illegal drugs in Luton. The review lasted from July 2002 to November 2004. Evidence was received from Key Stakeholders such as Safer Luton Partnership, Luton Teaching Primary Care Trust, the Drug Action Team and the Police. Evidence was also received from a number of relevant officers of the council on work that is being done in schools, with young people, teachers and parents. Social Services officers gave evidence of treatment and rehabilitation and the issues that need to be addressed such as the time it takes to get on rehabilitation programmes and the quality of treatment that is available to drug users. The impact of CCTV and monitoring its results was also considered.

As a result of this review the Council, in co-operation with key stakeholders held a drug awareness seminar. An outcome from this seminar was the need to develop a corporate drugs strategy. A key characteristic of this review was the close working relationship with external agencies which has built a firm basis for partnership working in the future on community safety issues.

The key recommendations of the review included an improvement in the response to the duties of the local authority under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

The Review has alerted the Local Authority and its Partners to keep abreast of the developments regarding the proceeds of crime and how they will be disbursed by the Asset Recovery Agency. In particular how Luton can benefit from the provision of the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

The final report on the drugs element of the Community Safety topic was approved by the committee in February and will be considered by the Executive in March.

6.4 Reviews in Progress

Community Safety – Domestic Violence

The review into Domestic Violence was split into two sections. The first dealt with a context review, which enabled the Committee to answer questions like:

- How wide spread is domestic violence in Luton?
- What is the difference between actual and reported domestic violence?
- What are the different types of domestic violence?
- What are the causes of domestic violence?
- What are the effects of domestic violence, on the person experiencing it, the person's family and wider society?



The Committee agreed the following definition of domestic violence:

“Any violence inflicted by a partner, former partner or current or former family member, at any time and in any location. This violence can be physical, sexual, emotional or financial. And the victims include not only the immediate person on whom the violence is being inflicted, but all related persons who witness such violence.”

The review then concentrated on the services that are available to people experiencing domestic violence in Luton looking at services delivered by the Council, and then services that are delivered by external agencies, such as Police, Women's Aid, PCT, Probation. This will enable the Committee to establish whether there were any gaps in services, and to determine, by examining examples of best practice from other local authorities, how these gaps could be filled by organisations that provide such services.

6.5 Monitoring Function

The committee has received reports on:

- The Hat Factory
- Best Value review of sport and P.E.
- Best Value review of community development
- Marsh Farm Community Development Trust – New Deal for Communities
- Performance indicators
- Warden schemes
- Luton Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership
- “Sticking Together” report (the report on the scrutiny of community cohesion) – action plan

6.6 Future Work Programme

The future work programme of the committee includes:

- Encouraging and supporting new business – linked to a best value review of the Regeneration service.
- Community Safety - alcohol



7.

**Social
Inclusion
Scrutiny
Committee**



Social Inclusion Scrutiny Committee

7.1 Membership



Cllr Shaw (Chair)



Cllr Yasin (Vice Chair)



Cllr McGarvie



Cllr Iqbal



Cllr Skepelhorn



Cllr Timoney

7.2 Terms of Reference

Executive portfolios Deputy Executive Leader (part)
Environment and Housing (part)

Functions

- Children's Issues and Initiatives
- Youth Offending Team
- Corporate Parent
- Looked After Children
- Anti-poverty
- Housing
- Benefits and welfare
- Services to vulnerable people
- Disabilities
- Exclusion and disadvantage
- Health and Health Action Zone
- Elders
- Mental Health
- Homes and Day Centres



7.3 Reviews Completed

Modernisation of services to vulnerable adults

The committee embarked upon the scrutiny of the modernisation of services to vulnerable adults in late 2003. The topic was too broad and would not have lent itself to a meaningful scrutiny of all the aspects. It was therefore agreed that it be subdivided into two sections: One that deals with services to older people and the other to deal with services to people with a learning disability. It was a classic situation where an active participation of those whose lives are directly affected by the changes to the services was vital. The strategic work done on the topic was specifically mentioned by the Corporate Performance Assessment Team as an example of an effective scrutiny that focussed both on the service and user needs.

Services to Older people

A very active group of older people from Luton and internal and external providers of services to older people was set up to assist with the process. The group met periodically and have recently been given the status of a permanent group of consultees until the modernisation process has been completed. The value of their contribution is reflected in the above decision and that the service has now to consult them as a matter of course.



The Older People's Group received guidance and evidence from a number of council officers and officers from authorities considered to have established good practice elsewhere in the country. Members of the Group visited Liverpool accompanied by officers and Councillors. The University showed its support by allowing a young student to accompany them as their media officer. On many occasions Members of the group and Councillors wrote and presented their own reports about best practice ideas to the scrutiny committee meetings.

The Service completed its plans for the modernisation of the Future Living Needs of Older People incorporating all the recommendations of the Older People's Working group.

Day Care Services for People with a Learning Disability

This year the scrutiny of the modernisation of day care services for people with a learning disability was also concluded. The committee felt that it was vital to involve the users of the service and their carers in any changes that are made to the way services are provided. It was considered to be totally unrealistic to invite them to meetings at the town hall or elsewhere.

With the help of the service manager, meetings were arranged at a local day centre for people with a learning disability. Having carers and users on site proved very useful. A group of nearly 70 users and carers was set up. Key organisations that are at the forefront of the learning disability movement e.g Mencap, took an active part.

Presentations were received from potential providers of services. The group selected a "Way Forward Group" with a Chair and Vice Chair from amongst the users of the service. The Way Forward Group met frequently and visited Greenwich and Thurrock bringing back lessons to be learnt and examples of good practice that can be used in Luton. It is to be noted that the work of the Members of this group included the production of a questionnaire by Mencap, a change management programme and the presentation of a report back to the scrutiny committee on several occasions from visits undertaken by the Group.



All the recommendations of the Group were accepted and incorporated by the service in their report on the modernisation of the service. Members of the Way Forward Group were invited to become a part of the Mental Health Partnership Board. Progress reports are to be presented to the scrutiny committee on a quarterly basis. The first report is due in March 2005.

7.4 Reviews in Progress

Modernisation of Services for Vulnerable Adults

The committee has completed its work on the future living needs of older people and the modernisation of Day Care Services for people with a Learning Disability and is currently considering the Modernisation of Accommodation needs of People with a Learning Disability and Day Care needs of Older People.

Social Housing Development in Neighbouring Areas

The aim of this review is to investigate how a greater supply of affordable housing can be achieved outside of the Borough for Luton residents, to meet the growing need for housing in the Town.

7.5 Monitoring Function

The committee has received reports on:

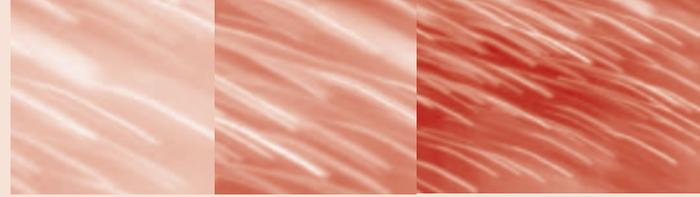
- Night block manager services
- Tenants Participation.
- Building Works – support service charges and tendering.
- Social housing tenants
- Options for future management of Kirkdale and Rochdale Courts
- Social housing development in neighbouring areas- scoping
- Recruitment of Social Workers
- Homelessness
- Supporting People Draft Strategic Vision
- Priority Performance Indicators
- Report back on cover for out of hours occurrences
- Anti Poverty Unit
- HRA Estimates and Rents
- Housing Benefits
- Social Services Joint Review Action Plan



7.6 Future Work Programme

The committee's future work programme includes:

- Tenant participation
- Social housing Development in neighbouring areas



8.

**Performance,
Resources and
Assets Scrutiny
Committee**



Performance, Resources and Assets Scrutiny Committee

8.1 Membership



Cllr Harris (Chair)



Cllr P Chapman (Vice Chair)



Cllr Ashraf



Cllr Hoyle



Cllr Pantling



Cllr Siederer



Cllr Titmus

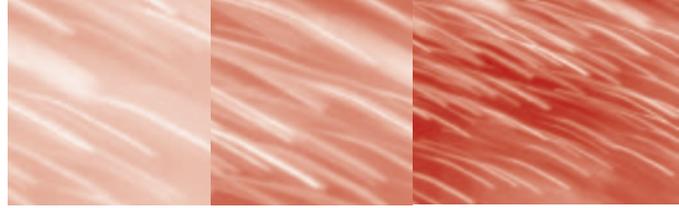
Note: During the year Councillor Skepelhorn's place was taken by Councillor Pantling.

8.2 Terms of Reference:

Executive portfolios Leader's
Deputy Leader's
Resources and Assets

Functions

- Capital Asset Management
- Human Resources
- Property
- Information Management
- Financial Strategy
- Stewardship of Public Funds
- London Luton Airport
- Trusts
- Subscriptions and contributions to outside agencies
- Pooled Budgets
- To act as the Council's "Audit Committee"



8.3 Reviews Completed

Budget Scrutiny

Following the very difficult experience of scrutinising the budget during 2003-04 this committee took on the task of reviewing the process and comparing with best practice elsewhere and good practice recommended by national bodies. The Centre for Public Scrutiny had published a guide to the role of scrutiny in examining budgets and budget proposals and best practice was identified at a regional seminar, by utilising the opportunity for the Director to lead a discussion at the County Council Scrutiny Officers' Network and by the Director visiting Birmingham City Council. The committee agreed to the development of a protocol designed to set out the way in which budget information was to be treated by the scrutiny committees and the purposes for which the information was to be scrutinised. The draft protocol made several trips to the Executive and back to this committee before the final version was agreed just in time to be used during the 2004-05 budget rounds. The key features of the protocol are that the scrutiny committees will get to see the officers' proposals for changes to the base budget in confidence and will be able to scrutinise them and advise the Executive if they wish. The confidential nature of the options information will be respected by Members of the scrutiny committees. Information about the proposals to be put to the Executive will be provided to scrutiny, in the public domain, in sufficient time to allow for examination and comments. Members also agreed to reserve the political debate about the allocation of resources for the meeting of the full Council when the budget is set.

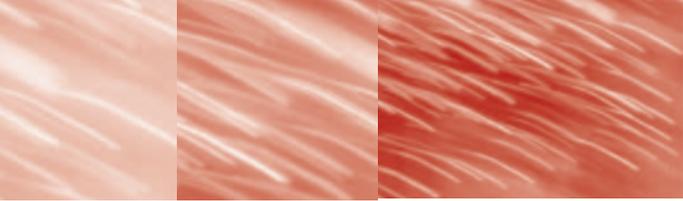
The budget scrutiny process was much better with the protocol than it had been the previous year without it; however the committee will be reviewing the protocol and its effectiveness at the June meeting.

8.4 Reviews in Progress

Asset Management

Work on this review was completed last year and a summary of evidence submitted to the committee in September but the committee has yet to consider a final report on the subject. The deployment of the Council's property assets and the way in which future service and operational requirements are to be met is currently under review and the final report will need to reflect developments, particularly around topics such as 'building schools for the future' and 'office of the future'.





8.4 Monitoring Function

The committee has received reports on:

- Audit – the committee is the Council’s audit committee
- Performance indicators
- Information management
- Efficiency review (Gershon)
- Workforce planning
- Workforce survey results
- Human resources strategy
- Pay and reward strategy
- Recruitment and retention
- Communications strategy
- Corporate and departmental HR management arrangements
- Best Value Performance Plan
- Charging and trading
- Customer services
- Key stage 3/4 pupil referral unit
- Corporate Plan
- Community Plan
- Budget

8.5 Future Work

The committee’s future work programme includes:

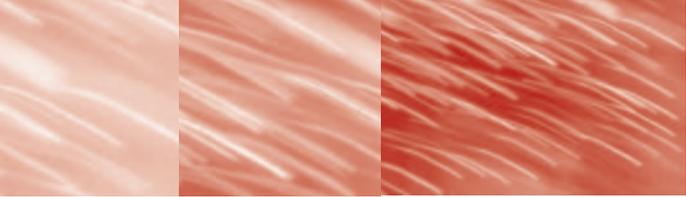
- Collection of Council Tax
- Procurement
- Performance management – strategy and systems
- Budget monitoring - system



9.

Other Forms of Scrutiny





Other forms of Scrutiny

9.1 Panels

- The **Best Value Scrutiny Panel** was formed in July 2003 to advise the scrutiny committees on the best value reviews at their various stages and to keep a watching brief on reviews in progress. The Board also delegated to the panel the approval of the annual programme of reviews. During this year the remit of the panel was widened to include performance and procurement. The panel undertook an in depth examination of the Audit Commission report on their Comprehensive Performance Assessment of the Council as a result of which detailed recommendations were submitted to the Executive. The Panel will continue to monitor progress in addressing the areas identified by the inspectors as requiring improvement.
- The **Children's Services Scrutiny Panel** has been retained to receive reports on performance in relation to children's social services.
- The **Swimming Pool and Leisure Facilities Panel** met only once during the year to assist with the consideration of and consultation about an alternative site in the vicinity of Oakley Road. The Panel drew to the attention of the Executive a number of issues that they felt would need to be resolved before a final decision on the new pool's location could be made. The Council has decided to go ahead with a Leisure Trust which was the recommendation of the previous Leisure Panel.
- The **Grants Panel** was set up to examine the Council's processes for inviting, receiving and considering applications from voluntary organisations for grant funding from the Council. The Panel conducted a survey of both those who had been awarded grants and those who had not and took evidence directly from applicants and recipients. It drew some conclusions and made a series of recommendations that were accepted and adopted by the Executive.

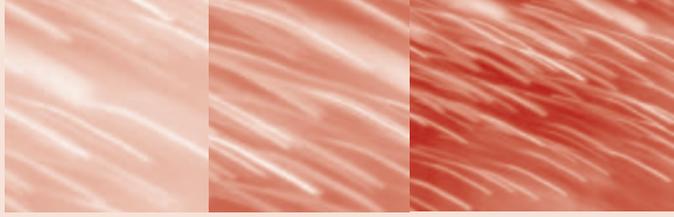
9.2 The Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

The joint committee with Bedfordshire County Council has met on a monthly frequency throughout the year. This Council's representatives were again Councillors Pedersen, Timoney and Titmuss until Cllr Pedersen was appointed to an Executive Portfolio following which Councillor Abid took her place. The committee has received reports from the Directors of Public Health in Bedfordshire and Luton and will be basing its future work programme on the health inequalities identified in those reports. The annual report of the Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Health Scrutiny Committee is attached as appendix B.



A joint health scrutiny committee has been established with both Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire County Councils. The committee was set up to consider and respond to the imminent consultation on the future of mental health services by the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Strategic Health Authority (Investing in your Mental Health); however its terms of reference include monitoring the implementation of 'Investing in your Health', scrutinising the Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire Ambulance and Paramedic Trust across the area and responding to statutory consultations about proposed changes or developments affecting patients from all three areas.

A special joint health scrutiny committee has been formed by Cambridgeshire County Council to receive and respond to the consultation about the proposed move of Papworth Hospital to Cambridge and Luton Members have been invited to serve on that committee; however Luton has decided not to participate in that joint committee.



10.

**Forthcoming
Year**



Forthcoming Year

10.1 Training

Learning and development for Members has continued through the year with feedback from visits to Parliament and to other local authorities renowned for good scrutiny going to the Board and being disseminated to the committees. In the same way the results of a workshop session run by a facilitator from the East of England Regional Assembly were disseminated through reports to all committees. The development programme for scrutiny Members is a priority for 2005-06.

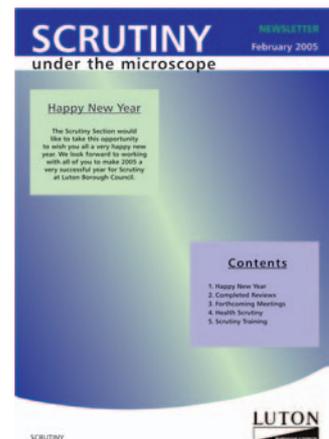
10.2 Handbook

The development of a handbook for Members, officers, witnesses and stakeholders has been a major undertaking which is accessible on the Council's website.

10.3 Newsletter and other publications

In order to improve communications and raise the profile of Scrutiny internally a newsletter is now published electronically every half year and circulated (by a link to the intranet website) to Members and senior officers. The first two issues have been well received and it is intended that this should be a regular feature.

Guides to witnesses have now been produced and will be used to advise witnesses, both internal and external, what to expect when they appear in front of a scrutiny committee or panel.



10.4 Website

The Council's website continues to develop and the scrutiny section now contains a number of completed reports on major topics and other information about scrutiny such as the handbook.

10.4 CfPS Self-Evaluation Framework

The Council is a member of the Centre for Public Scrutiny and participates in many of their events such as the annual conference, the parliamentary visits and the health scrutiny network. A member of the team was on the national working group that has developed a self assessment framework to enable scrutiny functions to assess how effective they are being and to identify areas for improvement. Luton was a pilot site for the self assessment tool and the results were reported to the Board from where they were referred to the five committees so that the learning could be applied in practice.



Appendices

Appendix A

Number	Decision Called In	Subject of Decision	Reason	Name of Members	Date of Executive Meeting	Date of Call In	Date of Meeting Considered
1	EX/184/04	Best Value Review Community Development Options and Improvement	Concerns over impact on future of some Centres	Harris McKenzie	7th June 2004	14th June 2004 (3.45pm)	Regeneration & Citizenship 1st July 2004
2	EX/230/04	Review of Frail Elders Strategy	Already with Scrutiny Committee	Shaw Rl Davis	5th July 2004	5th July 2004	Social Inclusion Additional Meeting 5th August 2004
3	EX/231/04	Application for Dispersal Orders Under Sections 30 to 36 (Part 4) of the Antisocial Behaviour Act 2003	Not considered in right order or for the right reasons	Shaw Hand	2nd August 2004	6th August 2004	Regeneration & Citizenship 12th August 2004
4	EX/270/04	Housing Revenue Account	Reason not stated	Harris Shaw	13th September 2004	18th September 2004	Social Inclusion 11th October 2004
5	EX/72/05	Renovation etc. Grants Policy	Dissatisfaction with the report	Shaw Simmons	28th February 2004	1st March 2005	Social Inclusion 15th March 2005
6	EX/59/05	CPA Corporate Assessment Report	Not satisfied with the Executive Response	Harris Shaw	28th February 2004	7th March 2005	7th April 2005



Appendix B

Draft Annual Report from the Bedfordshire & Luton Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

1. The Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Health Scrutiny Committee comprises members from Bedfordshire County Council, Luton Borough Council and a councillor from each of Bedford Borough Council, Mid-Bedfordshire District Council and South Bedfordshire District Council. The Chair is held by Bedfordshire County Council with Luton Borough Council providing the Vice Chair. The Joint Committee has recently agreed to provide non-voting participant observer places to the PPI Forums with 2 places being made available for the seven PPI Forums.
2. The Bedfordshire and Luton Joint Committee has worked within the context of the Investing in Your Health Strategy adopted by the Strategic Health Authority in 2003. Much of the Committee's work has been focused on following up proposals set out in that strategy. Since May 2004 the Agenda items have focused on the consequent Regulation 4 consultations as well as briefings in advance of such consultations. Details are given below.

May 2004

Investing in Your Mental Health

Mid and South Bucks Health Community – Shaping Health Services – Consultation

Bedford Hospital – Former North Wing Site – Proposals for repositioning services

Emergency Closure of Appledore Respite Care Facility for Children

June 2004

Surgi-Centre Activity in Luton

Mid and South Bucks Health Community – Shaping Health Services – Consultation

Patient & Public Involvement in Health – Annual Reports from PPI bodies in Luton & Bedfordshire

Work Programme

July 2004

Work Programme

Investing in Your Mental Health

Proposals for Primary Care Services for Leighton Buzzard, Linslade & surrounding Areas (GP Accommodation)

GP Out of Hours Services – Heartlands PCT

September 2004

GP Out of Hours Services – Heartlands PCT

NHS Modernisation Plan - Briefing

Arrangements for Elective Surgery – Surgi-Centres

October 2004

Specialist Cancer Services – StHA Consultation Paper

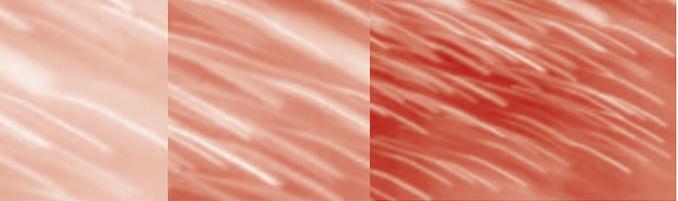
Luton's Children with Disabilities – Short Breaks and Family Support Services (Respite Strategy) – Joint

Commissioning Strategy 2004 - 2010

Bedfordshire Heartlands PCT – Financial position

GP Out of Hours Service – Arrangements in Bedford PCT

GP Accommodation – Bedford PCT



November 2004

CfPS Health Scrutiny Self Assessment Tool
Briefing on Mental Health Bill
Bedford PCT Public Health Report
GP Accommodation in Luton
PCT Out of Hours Service – Luton PCT

December 2004

PPI Forums Representation on the Joint Committee
Healthy Schools Initiative
Bedfordshire Heartlands PCT Recovery Plan
Report on Bedfordshire Heartlands Consultation on GP Accommodation in Biggleswade and Leighton Linlade
Briefing on the Health Implications of MKSM Growth Area as part of the sustainable Communities Plan

January 2005

Transfer of Outpatients from Weller Wing at Bedford Hospital
Partnership Trust for Mental Health & Specialist Learning Disability Services from 1st April 2005
Arrangements for Utilising the Support from the Centre for Public Scrutiny (see below)
Take-up of the Healthy Schools Initiative in Bedfordshire LEA Schools
Matters arising from the meeting of the Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire & Luton Joint Health scrutiny Committee held on 21 December 2004

February 2005

Investing in Your Mental Health Briefing
Treatment Centre: Delivering Faster, Quality Care and Choice for NHS Patients – Consideration of this paper from the Department of Health
Specialist Surgical Cancer Centres in Hertfordshire and South Bedfordshire
Healthy Schools Initiative
Bedfordshire Heartlands PCT Recovery Plan

March 2005

Investing in Your Mental Health - Consultation Strategy
Programme of Regulation 4 Consultations initiated by MHS Bodies in Bedfordshire & Luton
Healthy Schools Initiative – Action in respect of Unwanted Teenage Pregnancies and Sexually Transmitted diseases

April 2005

Meeting Cancelled

3. In addition the Committee has dealt with some issues by way of correspondence following earlier public consultation and presentations to the committee – these include Foundation Status for Luton & Dunstable Hospital, Addenbrookes Hospital and Papworth Hospital as well as a response to the Healthcare Commission expressing concern at the proposal from the Commission to their proposal to involve the Joint Committee in the validation of each of the seven NHS Trusts' self evaluation statements, as a prelude to the Healthcare Commission's inspection of each Trust.
4. The Committee has joined with Hertfordshire County Council's Health Scrutiny Committee to form a small Joint Committee to address Investing in Your Mental Health, the Health Implications of the Sustainable Communities Growth Agenda, Monitoring the implementation on the StHA Strategy Investing in Your Health and those issues relating to the Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire Ambulance and Paramedic Service which are relevant to the whole of the StHA's area. Along with other major consultations from the NHS, the Investing in Your Mental Strategy has now been postponed until early summer 2005.



5. Members of the Joint Committee representing both Luton BC and Bedfordshire County Council will also be involved in scrutinising, under Regulation 4 provisions, the options for the future relocation or redevelopment of Papworth Hospital which draws patients from Bedfordshire and Luton. This work will take place over the summer and early Autumn of 2005.

6. The Joint Committee has identified the following areas as those where it can best use the support from the CfPS:

A) Capacity & Capability -

- a) prioritising health issues:
- b) work programming:
- c) monitoring impact:
- d) pressures on health services (from relationships section)
- e) Mainstreaming health issues within scrutiny process
- f) better understanding of Public Health Observatory and Directors of Public Health

B) Knowledge

- a) Council's role in improving health
- b) workings of the local health economy
- c) Sources of information
- d) Patient flows
- e) NHS Funding and Joint Funding arrangements
- f) National Service Frameworks
- g) Role of Healthcare Commission

C) Joint Working

- a) Engaging with the Executive (to be undertaken with work on Executives)

D) Community Involvement & Engagement

- a) Councillors' constituency work on health issues
- b) Public involvement and engagement in work programming
- c) Working with media
- d) PPIF involvement in patient survey work on behalf of Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

E) Relationships

- a) pressures on health services (to be undertaken with issues set out above under section on capacity and capability)
- b) Executive and portfolio holder for health issues
- c) engaging with the Executive (see section on Joint Working above)
- d) relationships with Community Strategy and Local Strategic Partnership and Public Service Agreements

In addition it has set aside some of its CfPS resource for work within each of the participating authorities.

7. However the major issue facing the Joint Committee is the need to know more about the local NHS Bodies' proposals for Regulation 4 consultations as it will only then be possible to assess the Joint Committee's capacity to undertake Regulation 2 own initiative studies, if that is the wish of the parent authorities.

8. New arrangements have been put in place for the Chair of the Joint Committee to provide an accountability report to the Bedfordshire County Council at its meetings and the Vice Chair provides a similar facility for Luton Borough Council.

Bill Hamilton

Adviser to the Bedfordshire & Luton Joint Health Scrutiny Committee

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