

East Herts

Annual Scrutiny Report 2024-25



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Councillor David Jacobs

Introduction from the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

It is my pleasure as Chairman to provide a summary of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee over the last 12 months. This report summarises the committee's activities during 2024-25, starting with our first meeting on 1 July 2024. The meeting in June 2024 was replaced by a workshop arranged by Democratic Services to allow the Committee to meet and discuss the work programme for 2024/25.

All reports and minutes are available on the council's website. An Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Protocol document was considered by the Committee in March 2025, and this document was approved by the Executive on 18 March 2025. This document can be viewed online [here](#).



1 July 2024

Award of the Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract

The Members of Overview and Scrutiny were invited to consider and comment on the award of the Waste, Recycling and Street Cleansing Contract. Members were being asked to make recommendations to the Executive in respect of a preferred bidder for the award of the contract.

The history of this report was that the Executive had agreed the service design for the new waste, recycling, and street cleansing contract on 21 December 2023, along with new aims and principles of the Shared Service, based around delivering services which were both financially and environmentally sustainable.

Members were asked to support a number of recommendations which affected the service mobilisation and were required for the successful delivery of the new services in 2025. Members of Overview and Scrutiny commented on the likely increased recycling rates and reductions in carbon content and the challenges posed by additional bins.

Members also talked about local engagement, electric vehicles, IT challenges and the importance of educating residents about the new systems.

The full details of the report, the recommendations and the decision of Overview and Scrutiny, as well as the webcast of the meeting, can be viewed [here](#).



10 September 2024

Council's response to the climate emergency

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee were presented with a report inviting Members to consider the council's actions in reducing its carbon footprint in line with its commitments in the Climate Emergency Declaration passed by Council on 26th July 2023. The report provided Members of Overview and Scrutiny the opportunity to review the issues involved and share views and ideas about tackling climate change with the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability for his consideration.

Members of Overview and Scrutiny talked about emissions and progress that was being made, and Members also talked about non-carbon tariffs and percentages in respect of carbon reductions. The Committee made comments in respect of rainfall and flooding and carbon offsetting.

The full details of the report, the recommendations and the decision of Overview and Scrutiny, as well as the webcast of the meeting, can be viewed [here](#).



5 November 2024

The use of Glyphosate in grounds maintenance

Members of Overview and Scrutiny outlined an interest via a scrutiny proposal form to scrutinise the council's use of the herbicide Glyphosate to control weeds. The report considered by Members set out whether there were alternatives to Glyphosate, and also whether there was adequate oversight of the use of Glyphosate by contractors. Members asked for a higher level of detail than that offered in a previous Bulletin Summary in May 2024 which had provided a very brief outline of the key issues to inform further discussion.

Members were advised that a significant amount of weed control carried out by the Council was on behalf of the County Council as part of an agency agreement that included chemical application on highway footpaths. The Committee discussed the use of Glyphosate and possible alternatives. Members resolved to set up a cross-party working group (Task and Finish Group) during the 2025/26 civic year.

The full details of the report, the recommendations and the decision of Overview and Scrutiny, as well as the webcast of the meeting, can be viewed [here](#).



14 January 2025

Draft Parking Strategy

Members of Overview and Scrutiny were presented with a draft version of the Parking Strategy for East Hertfordshire, following public consultation and engagement. The Committee were invited to consider and provide comments on the parking strategy to the Executive Member for Environmental Sustainability before the issue was presented to the Executive and Council.

The Parking Strategy was designed to ensure that parking demand was being managed effectively whilst addressing the challenge of population growth and high rates of car ownership.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee made a number of comments and suggestions, which included the following:

- Concerns about proposed changes in respect of short- and long-term parking provision, and weekend charging in some areas.
- Behaviour change, and an overreliance on pricing rather than alternatives to influence parking habits.
- Greater provision of bike spaces.
- Some of the feedback had indicated that 30 minutes free parking was a valued option.
- Work of HCC regarding the LCWIP and alternative route provision.
- RPZs and the prosperity of high streets.

Digital Exclusion

Members of Overview and Scrutiny were given information in respect of the approach being taken in respect of digital services, and how the council accommodated those who were digitally excluded. In March 2022, Members of the Committee discussed digital exclusion, and subsequently requested an update on progress.

The Committee were invited to consider the information in the report in respect of 5 questions or lines of enquiry, and to make recommendations to the Executive in respect of digital exclusion.

The full details of both reports, the recommendations and the decisions of Overview and Scrutiny, as well as the webcast of the meeting, can be viewed [here](#).



4 March 2025

UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF)

Members of Overview and Scrutiny were provided with a comprehensive update in respect of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), which was due to cease on 31 March 2025 having officially begun on 1 April 2022. Members were invited to review the progress to date, and review and consider the priorities for the 2025/26 civic year and make any recommendations to the Executive in this regard.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee discussed and reviewed the progress to date, and considered the priorities for the 2025/26 civic year. Members recommended the following for UKSPF funding in 2025/26:

- active travel
- climate change
- town and village centres
- empowering the voluntary community

Executive and Overview and Scrutiny Protocol

Overview and Scrutiny Committee were invited to comment on the newly drafted Overview and Scrutiny and Executive Protocol, prior to the approval of the protocol document by the Executive on 18 March 2025.

Members were advised of the research carried out into the protocol, and of the rationale for preparing this document. The protocol will guide the relationship between the committees. The protocol will be reviewed in June 2027, after the District and Parish Elections in May 2027.

The full details of both reports, the recommendations and the decisions of Overview and Scrutiny, as well as the webcast of the meeting, can be viewed [here](#).