

Overview and Scrutiny in Rotherham



Annual Report 2014 - 15

Forward Plan 2015 - 16

Check Challenge Change

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Introduction



Message from Councillor Brian Steele, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Welcome to the 2014-15 Annual report of Overview and Scrutiny here in Rotherham.

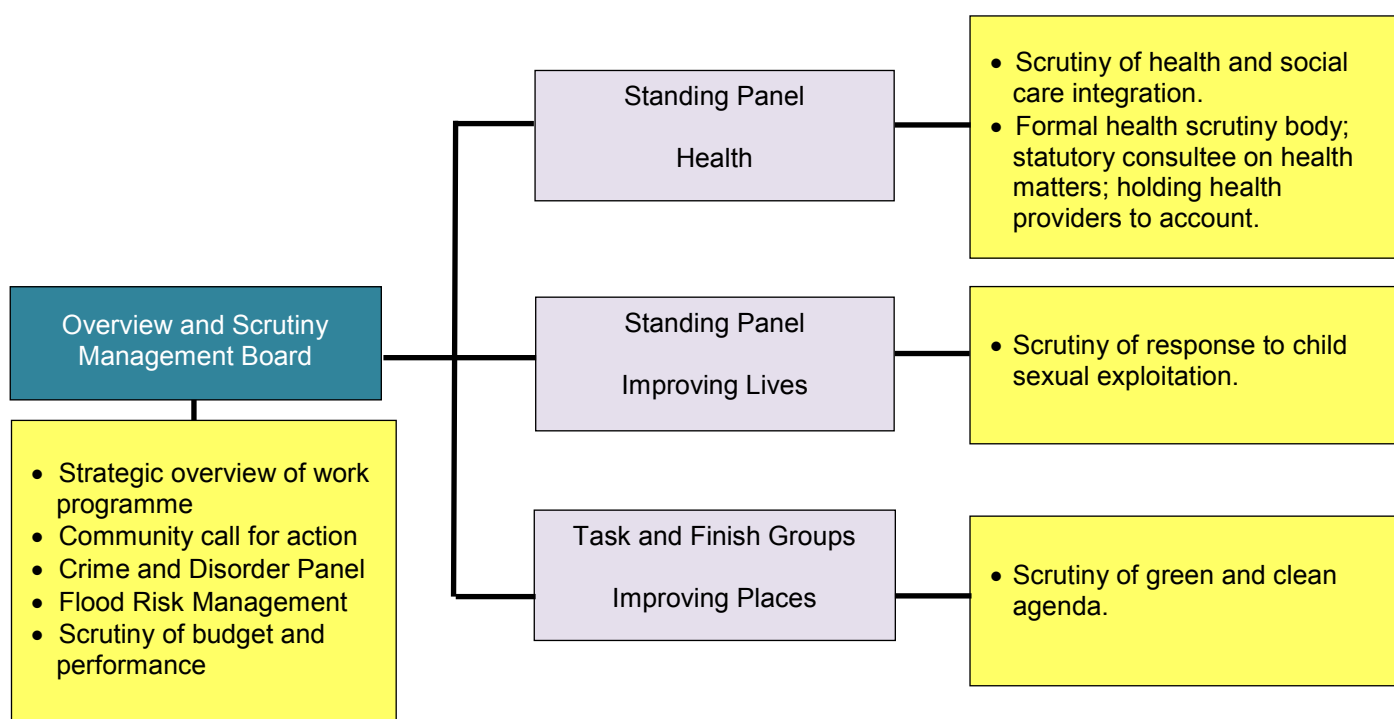
The scrutiny function of the Council is a key tool for engaging members and officers of the Council and the general public in the delivery of public services and the workings of local democracy and as such helps to ensure added value to the work of the Council. Clear programmes of work ensure that it is focused and more likely to deliver clear outcomes.

The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government announced the nature of the government's intervention into Rotherham MBC in a statement to the House of Commons on the 26th February 2015. This resulted in the Scrutiny role of Elected Members, as set out in the Council's constitution, being suspended pending further deliberations of the five appointed Commissioners. Since their appointment in March 2015, the Commissioners have engaged with Elected Members to determine a realistic and focused Scrutiny programme for 2015-16, clearly identifying the areas they would like Members to prioritise. As a result of these discussions the proposed areas were as follows:

- Scrutiny of plans and services designed to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation
- Scrutiny of the Health and Social Care integration agenda
- Scrutiny of the Council's budget
- Task and finish scrutiny of litter and waste (to include fly-tipping)

This will provide a focused approach to the work programme for Scrutiny that can effectively be delivered by the existing Scrutiny structures (see diagram below).

The scrutiny work programme helps to achieve corporate priorities by addressing key policy and performance agendas and outcomes focus on added value to the work of the Council.



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Introduction

There has been much change during 2014-15 and this has been experienced in Scrutiny as much as anywhere else in the Council. The Chairs and Vice Chairs changed a number of times throughout the year, including myself taking over as Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board. I would therefore like to thank Councillor Glyn Whelbourn formally for his time and commitment to Scrutiny in Rotherham over many years. I would also like to thank all outgoing Chairs and Vice Chairs and Commission Members for their work during the year.

One area of achievement I am very proud of, and a fitting legacy for Councillor Whelbourn's time as Chair of Overview and Scrutiny, is the introduction of the living wage within the Council for its employees. This work was initiated via Scrutiny and the early investigations and deliberations were triggered by a report requested by the Management Board in June 2013. The introduction of this and the impact on the Council's lowest paid employees is to be welcomed as a very positive step.

I am happy to report that, despite all of the changes, 2014-15 has been another busy and fruitful year for Scrutiny in Rotherham. Although the work programme was not totally completed in advance of Government intervention in the Council, it was well on its way. The programme has always been designed with maximum flexibility in mind and this was tested to the fullest this year when Overview and Scrutiny Management Board was able to replace its scheduled meetings and issues to carry out an in-depth, two day public Scrutiny review of plans and services to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in Rotherham, as a result of the Jay report being published. This was an excellent example of effective Scrutiny and again I am proud of these achievements. More information on this can be found in the Management Board section of this report.

After supporting Rotherham Youth Cabinet with their review on self harm last year it is very pleasing to see how their work is contributing to ongoing work by the Council and its partners on mental health and wellbeing. Of particular note is the new practice guidance for all staff working with children and young people, recognising that this is an emotive issue for staff supporting young people.

Following their excellent work on self harm Rotherham Youth Cabinet has continued to prioritise mental health in the manifesto and work plan. In 2014 we did not run a specific Children's Commissioner's Day but the scrutiny review of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services included a workshop session with members of the Youth Cabinet. The young people willingly shared their own research findings with the review group and contributed insightful comments to the discussions, which informed the recommendations made by Members.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the co-optees (past and present) who have given their time voluntarily to add value to the Scrutiny process. I am looking forward to 2015-16. The Commissioners have set Scrutiny in Rotherham a challenging work programme and given us an opportunity to demonstrate how it can add value to the Council and its democratic decision making processes. I am certain we are up to this challenge and expect to be reporting yet more positive outcomes this time next year.

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Getting Involved in Scrutiny

Following the public engagement review Scrutiny are looking at ways to encourage more on-line communication and increase public interest in and awareness of the work of Overview and Scrutiny by reaching a wider audience and getting more people involved and giving us their views.

Another outcome from this review was further development/strengthening of the links between Scrutiny and Area Assemblies. Area Assemblies are a valuable mechanism for hearing directly from all our communities.

The broad themes for the forthcoming work programmes can be found on pages 8, 11, 14 and 18. This gives a flavour of the work coming up. All Scrutiny meetings are held in public and have a dedicated slot at each meeting for members of the public to ask questions or raise issues of concern or interest. We are also happy to receive suggestions for future issues or topics for review.

Our website contains up to date information about the scrutiny process, reviews that have been carried out and the Cabinet's response to the recommendations made.

http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/homepage/178/scrutiny_in_rotherham

We have recently had enquiries from members of the public wanting to get involved and we would welcome more. The link below gives information on how to get involved and there is a "Have your say" form on the website to contact us if you want to make a suggestion, submit evidence or have any queries about Scrutiny.

http://www.rotherham.gov.uk/info/1031/scrutiny/941/get_involved

Alternatively, you can write, telephone or email:-

Deborah Fellowes, Scrutiny Manager, Rotherham MBC, Rotherham Town Hall, The Crofts,
Moorgate Street, Rotherham, S60 2TH.

Tel: 01709 822769 or email: deborah.fellowes@rotherham.gov.uk

Public engagement during the year

Select Commissions have continued to welcome members of the public to their meetings as observers and co-opted committee members. Scrutiny Members have also valued their input in a number of reviews and would like to extend thanks to the co-optees that have served on the Commissions in 2014-15.

Health

Victoria Farnsworth, Speakup
Robert Parkin, Speakup

Improving Lives

Ann Clough, ROPES
Joanna Jones, GROW
Mark Smith, Children and Young People's Voluntary Sector Consortium

Improving Places

Lilian Shears, RotherFed
Patrick Cahill, RotherFed
Brian Walker, Individual

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Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

OSMB's remit is as follows:

- Councillor Call for Action
- Designated Crime and Disorder Committee
- Equalities and diversity
- Monitoring and holding to account the performance of service delivery
- Co-ordination of carrying out value for money reviews
- Scrutinising the annual budget setting process
- Monitoring the Council's budget, medium term financial strategy and achievement of efficiencies
- Assigning overview and scrutiny work as appropriate to the Select Commissions

Positive outcomes from our previous reviews

Children's Commissioner's Day 2014

As part of the ongoing commitment to the Children's Commissioner's Day, members of OSMB supported Rotherham Youth Cabinet to undertake a scrutiny review that explored support and advice available to young people around issues of self-harm. Their work focused on information/awareness raising; the response from partner agencies, including access to early help; and the role of schools and colleges.

What has resulted:

- New practice guidance on self harm for services working with young people aged up to 25 was approved by the Health and Wellbeing Board in March 2015. It incorporates the findings from the work by the Youth Cabinet, which includes the voice of young people who self-harm. The purpose of the guidance is to promote a safe, timely and effective response to children and young people who harm themselves or are at risk of harming themselves.
- The Youth Cabinet are continuing to work with staff from Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Trust (RDASH) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services on service development and how services can "fit" more around young people, including out of hours advice and support.
- Delegates at the borough-wide conference on suicide prevention were impressed by the presentation given by members of the Youth Cabinet to outline their work and made pledges to confirm their support for this agenda.
- The Youth Cabinet were involved in developing the updated School Nursing Service specification.
- A new website www.youthi.org.uk includes a range of user-friendly health messages including sections on self harm, positive mental health and looking after yourself before you need services.

Department of Work and Pensions Sanctions

This review was conducted by a review group from OSMB, chaired by Cllr Glyn Whelbourn. The purpose of the review was to ensure that the DWP's conditionality and sanctions regime is implemented fairly, consistently and flexibly, reflecting the needs and circumstances of claimants, with increased transparency and more effective partnership working.

What has resulted:

- The report was taken through the decision making process and all recommendations were accepted. The Welfare Reform Steering Group was key to ensuring that it was all implemented.
- As the report was published, its profile was raised nationally and local MPs used the evidence and findings from the review to raise the issue nationally, receiving some media coverage of the issues.

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Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Positive outcomes from our previous reviews

Community Safety

The Management Board is responsible for the Council's statutory function to scrutinise the work of the Safer Rotherham Partnership and its Crime and Disorder Plan. In 2014 the Board focused on changes at a national level to Anti-Social Behaviour policy and how this was impacting at a local level within Rotherham. The Board scrutinised 'Total Anti-Social Behaviour' rates, showing current performance and the direction of travel by Rotherham compared to the other three South Yorkshire authorities, by North, South and Central Rotherham, and by Area Assembly.

What has resulted:

- Building on the joint sessions with the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Panel, a joint working protocol has been agreed by all four South Yorkshire Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committees and the Police and Crime Panel, which will result in further close working and information sharing about matters of a sub regional significance.
- Elected Members also took part in a seminar to raise further awareness of the new powers to tackle anti social behaviour.
- OSMB members carried out further scrutiny of the Vulnerable Persons Unit with the aim of increasing understanding of its role and work.

OSMB - our work this year

Community Safety

The impact of both the Jay and Casey reports was felt in the field of Community Safety and therefore had direct implications for the work of the Safer Rotherham Partnership. In continuing its responsibility as the statutory Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee, therefore, OSMB carried out two pieces of work:

- considering the Taxi Licensing Policy in Rotherham; and
- carrying out an annual review of the Safer Rotherham Partnership, holding it to account for its strategic, planning and delivery during the year.

What happened - Both sessions took place during regular OSMB meetings. Members were given an opportunity to raise questions about, and to input to, the development of a new Taxi Licensing Policy for Rotherham. During the annual review, Members held senior officers from the Council and South Yorkshire Police to account around the following areas of the Safer Rotherham Partnership and its plans and services:-

- Governance
- Performance
- Priorities
- Resources
- Response to Casey report and issue of CSE

Outcomes - Members wanted to ensure that the Partnership had learned from the recent reports of Rotherham and its ineffective tackling of CSE. Reviews of the Partnership and outcomes of performance clinics will all be reported back into OSMB by October 2015. In addition, further information at ward level will be provided to Members and awareness raising will be undertaken with new Elected Members regarding new anti social behaviour powers.

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Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

OSMB - our work this year

Plans to Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham

This was the biggest piece of work that Scrutiny undertook during 2014 and it involved Members of Improving Lives Select Commission as well as OSMB. Taking place over two separate days in December 2014, it involved Members in many hours of training and preparation in advance of the sessions and consequently it dominated the work programme of both OSMB and the Improving Lives Select Commission. It was absolutely crucial that scrutiny of plans to tackle this issue was carried out in an open, transparent and robust manner, and in a way that reassured members of the public that such plans would be held fully to account.

What happened - All Scrutiny Members were invited to take part in a two day high profile scrutiny of existing plans. It was designed to focus on how things will be improved in the future and considered the implications for both Local Government and Criminal Justice Agencies, particularly focusing on current plans and strategies to tackle CSE. It also focused on the support available and potential improvements to services for victims and survivors of CSE and their families. Finally, it drew together various ideas and thoughts about the future, based on input provided by several independent expert witnesses.

Outcomes - This report was slightly unusual in that as it was completed, the Council went into Government intervention, effectively precluding it from proceeding through the executive decision making arrangements. Instead it has been fed into new governance arrangements and plans and strategies to tackle the issues, for example the Children and Young People's Improvement Board, Local Children's Safeguarding Board sub groups and the new strategy entitled "Moving Forward". Improving Lives will be taking on the monitoring of its implementation as part of their work programme for 2015-16.

Our wider work

These two key areas of work took up a considerable amount of Members time and dominated the work programme for 2014-15. In addition, however, some smaller pieces of work took place.

* Budget Principles

As the budget timetable for the year commenced OSMB received a presentation on the principles which were being proposed as the basis for key difficult budget decisions to be made. OSMB were able to question senior officers regarding these principles and influence the final version to be used for the process.

* Review of Polling Stations

Members of OSMB were invited to comment on a review of districts and polling places, carried out by the Council as required under the Electoral Administration Act 2006, on a four yearly cycle. They considered the proposed scheme as an outcome of this review.

* Call-ins

OSMB also considered two call ins during 2014-15; South Yorkshire Broadband Project and Magna Trust Loan. Both resulted in the original decision being up-held.

OSMB - our work programme in 2015-16

Overall priority - Scrutiny of the Council's budget

- ◆ Annual budget setting process
- ◆ Monitoring the Council's budget and medium term financial strategy
- ◆ Crime and Disorder mid year and annual review
- ◆ Performance monitoring of the Council
- ◆ Corporate priorities and planning

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Health Select Commission

The remit is to carry out overview and scrutiny as directed by the OSMB in relation to:

- being the council's designated scrutiny body for any health issue relating to health and public health
- partnerships and commissioning arrangements for health and well-being and their governance
- scrutinising the integration of health and social care services and budgets
- health improvements and the promotion of wellbeing for adults and children of Rotherham
- measures to address health inequality
- food law and environmental health
- issues referred to it by Healthwatch

Positive outcomes from our previous reviews

Hospital Discharges

This review was carried out due to a perception, based on anecdotal evidence, of a problem with out of hours discharges (late at night or weekends) and patients being discharged without adequate support arrangements in place. Evidence did not support the perceived problems about discharges but Members recognised the potential impact that an unsafe discharge could have for patients and their families.

What has resulted:

- A business process review considered how Community Services could be better engaged with admission and discharge processes and the findings have fed in to the current Community Transformation Programme.
- The Care Co-ordination Centre and the hospital have worked together on managing how discharges are planned and co-ordinated, which includes talking to patients about their predicted date of discharge and having written communication with patients and relatives.
- Hospital and social service colleagues meet three times a week to review delayed discharges and operational issues, with Continuing Health Care colleagues joining once a week. This multi-agency forum is developing a Discharge to Assess model, which will support earlier discharge from hospital whilst ensuring a robust assessment process for ongoing care.

Support for Carers (Joint review with Improving Lives)

The purpose of this review was to establish the extent to which carers in Rotherham are able to access the right information at the right time, enabling them to access support and services that meet any specific needs they have as carers and also helping them to maintain their own health and wellbeing.

What has resulted:

- Review recommendations were incorporated within the Joint Carers Action Plan, which will be refreshed in 2015 in light of the new duties to support carers introduced by the Care Act.
- Rotherham CCG have developed a "Supporting Carers Top Tips" document for GPs in respect of ways to identify carers and ways to support carers.
- The Carers' Charter will be reviewed and refreshed within partner organisations to reaffirm the commitment to actively promote flexible and supportive employment policies that benefit carers.

Childhood Obesity

Self Regulation made a referral to the HSC to consider service re-commissioning following a report showing the outcome "More people are physically active and have a healthy way of life" was rated as red.

What has resulted:

- The service specification for the school nursing contract has been updated to include weight management service referrals. Promotional materials have been developed for parents.
- The Local Development Plan includes an exclusion zone for new fast food takeaways near schools.
- New weight management service contracts commenced in 2015 and the service pathway specifies the most appropriate service for each child's weight and height to maximise success. A new data management system ensures commissioners will have constant access to performance data.

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Health Select Commission

HSC - our work this year

Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services - CAMHS (Joint review with Improving Lives)

This review was the main priority in the HSC work programme for 2014-15 following local concerns about access to services. The key focus of Members' attention was to identify any issues or barriers which impact on children and young people in Rotherham accessing timely and appropriate mental health services from RDaSH and in particular in having an assessment within three weeks.

What happened - A full scrutiny review was carried out with evidence gathered from a number of sources including presentations, round table discussions and written evidence from health partners, RMBC officers and Rotherham Youth Cabinet, plus desk top research. Public engagement took place at the Fair's Fayre event at Magna and Members also examined a small number of anonymised case studies to understand how services work together in complex cases. Current services, referral processes, waiting times, resources, performance measures, service user engagement and partnership working were scrutinised in depth. Members explored how identifying and responding to child sexual exploitation is integrated within RDaSH services and considered support for the mental health and emotional wellbeing of looked after and adopted children.

Outcomes - The new Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Strategy for Children and Young People is a positive development and good example of partnership working. Implementing the supporting action plan should address many of the barriers and difficulties C&YP and families are experiencing in accessing mental health services. Similarly, changes to RDaSH CAMHS provision are also positive, such as the reconfigured Duty Team, now permanently staffed by experienced clinicians, joint drop-in clinic with Integrated Youth Support Services and self-referral for young people.

Although the principal focus of the review was RDaSH CAMHS these services are not provided in isolation but are part of a complex system of service commissioning and provision. As a result the review group made a number of wider recommendations besides ones solely for RDaSH. These recommendations are still progressing through the approval processes for RMBC and health partners.

Access to GPs

An initial scrutiny review was carried out in 2013-14 in response to local concerns about waiting times for appointments with GPs. The resulting recommendations addressed improving access; sharing good practice; improving information for patients; and capacity to deliver primary care. Due to a lack of detail regarding implementation of some recommendations follow up work was undertaken by HSC.

What happened - A spotlight review scrutinised the response template, which had been updated with additional written information from health partners prior to the meeting. NHS England, Rotherham Clinical Commissioning Group and the Care Quality Commission provided additional information on the day and answered questions from Members as they sought clarification on a number of points.

HSC also surveyed the practice managers to capture their recent experiences of having open surgery sessions. From 26 responses only five currently have such sessions, with most citing practical reasons such as staff planning and demand management as reasons for preferring other approaches, such as triage and booked appointments, both on the day and in advance. Members established that GPs have contractual requirements to meet the urgent clinical needs of their patients.

Outcomes - Progress has been made on some recommendations through national initiatives such as the development of a service specification for interpretation services, making greater use of ICT to improve patient access and a requirement to have patient participation groups to promote engagement.

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Health Select Commission

HSC - our work this year

In Rotherham work is underway to develop a “place based plan” focused on developing local services to meet local need and the review will feed in to this. There are still challenges in maintaining the primary care workforce but our GP training scheme has a full complement of 14 registrar GPs training and health partners are trying to encourage them to stay and feel a sense of ownership towards Rotherham.

Urinary Incontinence

The review subgroup sought to establish the extent to which preventive measures are promoted in Rotherham to reduce urinary incontinence, given the impact it has on people’s quality of life. There were three aims of the review, which were to:

- ascertain the prevalence of urinary incontinence in the borough and the impact it has on people’s independence and quality of life
- establish an overview of current continence services and costs, and plans for future service development
- identify any areas for improvement in promoting preventive measures and encouraging people to have healthy lifestyles

What happened - Following background research an initial report to the HSC provided an introduction and set the context. Evidence for the spotlight review was then gathered through a focused round table discussion with health partners and the Council’s Sport and Leisure Team. The review resulted in five recommendations which were all accepted by the former Cabinet. A further recommendation requested a report from the project on future development of the award winning Community Continence Service (CCS), which will include more focus on prevention.

Outcomes - Members established that urinary incontinence affects all age groups and should not be viewed as inevitable as people get older. Many forms may be treated or cured, particularly in relation to preventable stress and urge incontinence. The recommendations emphasized a need for wider awareness raising about the importance of good bladder and bowel health and being physically active, plus doing pelvic floor exercises as a preventive measure, as these could lead to fewer people having their quality of life diminished by urinary incontinence and result in lower future demand for services. Publicity to reduce the stigma associated with incontinence is also needed.

Active Rotherham have agreed to work more closely with the CCS to improve pathways to physical activity from the service. They will also include pelvic floor exercises in their existing “active always” provision. SYPTE have offered to use Rotherham Interchange to promote health issues in either road show or poster display format.

HSC - our work programme in 2015-16

Overall priority - Health and Social Care Integration

- ◆ Better Care Fund and funding streams
- ◆ Monitoring scrutiny reviews relevant to the integration agenda
- ◆ Scrutiny of Health Partners’ Quality Accounts
- ◆ Reducing health inequalities and improving outcomes

For further information contact:

Janet Spurling, Scrutiny Officer Tel: 01709 254421 or
email janet.spurling@rotherham.gov.uk

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Improving Lives Select Commission

The remit is to carry out overview and scrutiny as directed by the OSMB in relation to:

- the implementation of Rotherham's plans to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation
- the Every Child Matters agenda (note Health Select Commission responsibilities)
- the 'Think Family' and early intervention/prevention agendas
- other cross-cutting services provided specifically for children and young people

Positive outcomes from our previous reviews

Scrutiny Review of Domestic Abuse

A review was undertaken in 2013 to establish how well different agencies work together to support women and men and their families who have experienced domestic abuse. The review identified opportunities for agencies to work more effectively and efficiently, particularly at standard and medium risk level to stop further escalation.

What has resulted:

- Mainstream funding for Independent Domestic Violence Advocates was secured.
- Domestic abuse services are being commissioned in line with the findings of the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.
- Training for workers has been reviewed and refreshed. Attendance on this training is monitored by the RMBC Directions team and the Rotherham Local Safeguarding Board.
- Governance and reporting arrangements were developed; identifying a Cabinet lead and clarifying reporting protocols between the Domestic Abuse Priority Group and the Safer Rotherham Partnership.

ILSC - our work this year

The work programme for the Improving Lives Select Commission was substantially changed over the course of the year. This was as a result of the publication of the Jay Report and the wider ramifications of its findings and recommendations; the critical Ofsted inspection of Children's safeguarding services; and changes to senior personnel in Children and Young People's Services. Rescheduling meetings and reprioritising work resulted in a significant change to the scheduled work programme.

In last year's work programme, the Commission agreed to hold a single issue meeting focusing on how agencies in Rotherham work together to counter child sexual exploitation (CSE) in Rotherham. ILSC resolved to revisit the action plans on an annual basis to ensure that progress was maintained. However, following the Jay Report and the failings of services to tackle CSE effectively, the follow-up meeting planned for 2015 was brought forward to December 2014. This is reported in the section on OSMB.

Although the programme was altered during the year its focus was on the broad theme of safeguarding and the following sections give a flavour of the work undertaken.

The Chair and Vice Chair of Improving Lives Select Commission were also members of the joint review with the Health Select Commission that scrutinised Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services delivered by Rotherham Doncaster and South Humber NHS Trust (RDaSH).

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Improving Lives Select Commission

ILSC - our work this year

Children missing from education

This ensued from work the previous year when the Commission raised concerns that Rotherham had large numbers of young people missing from education. Following the 2013 meeting, officers reported that improvements had been made to the way cases were reported and tracked and to how information was shared and escalated. Members expressed concerns about safeguarding issues regarding children missing from education, particularly in relation to risks of sexual exploitation and forced marriage.

Forced Marriage and so-called honour based violence

This issue was requested from the previous year's scrutiny review of domestic abuse in order to get a better understanding of the issues in Rotherham.

What happened - In a detailed presentation the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator outlined the definitions of so-called honour based violence and forced marriage; current legislation; the local picture; and what services and support are in place to support victims. The meeting was also attended by the Chief Executive of Apna Haq; a local charity providing confidential, one to one support for Asian women and their children who are experiencing violence in the home.

Outcomes - The presentation and subsequent discussion highlighted issues around consistent recording and that cultural and religious sensitivities could act as a barrier to reporting and action being taken. Following on from their earlier discussion about children missing from education, the Commission also noted the importance of information being shared and acted upon in a consistent way across agencies.

It was acknowledged that forced marriage is a violation of human rights, and a form of child/adult/ domestic abuse and should be treated as such. However as with other parts of the country, because of under-reporting, it was difficult to assess the extent of these crimes in Rotherham.

The Commission noted the work being undertaken by the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator to identify local needs and welcomed the appointment of a young person's domestic abuse advocate. However, Members agreed that further work should be carried out to assess the effectiveness of the response of the Council and other agencies to these issues and asked that this be built into the future work programme.

Safeguarding Adults Annual Report

Following on from its work on domestic abuse, the ILSC examined the Adults Annual Report (2013-14); and questioned what policies, procedures and practices were in place for the protection of vulnerable adults. Using the Centre for Public Scrutiny Guide (April 2010), the Commission explored:

- outcomes for vulnerable people
- service delivery and practice
- working in partnership
- ongoing training and support for workers
- effectiveness of reporting routes

Improving Lives Select Commission

ILSC - our work this year

Rotherham Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report

The Commission did not consider the annual report until early 2015. It questioned the LSCB Chair on the issues raised in the Ofsted report, particularly around the measures put in place to ensure that the LSCB held partner agencies to account. Other questions focused on how performance was challenged and if assessments were completed in a timely way and to a quality standard. Members sought assurances that past failings were understood and are being addressed, as it was clear that the Ofsted report highlighted serious concerns around safeguarding practice. ILSC also reflected on what additional steps should be taken by Scrutiny to ensure that their questioning was robust and effective.

Education Lifestyle Survey

The annual Education Lifestyle survey is completed by Year 7 and Year 10 pupils and covers a number of themes including health, bullying, relationships and wellbeing. It provides a helpful snapshot highlighting trends, emerging concerns and ongoing challenges.

What happened - The Commission sought evidence that the results of the survey, which had a 63% participation rate, are being used to inform service design and delivery. Drawing on earlier work that Scrutiny had undertaken with the Youth Cabinet on self-harm, Members questioned the availability of school nurses and whether children and young people had sufficient access to them.

Outcomes - ILSC made a number of suggestions about the future format of the report, particularly around presenting data to show trends over a spread of years. It also asked for further categories to be added to the bullying questions to ensure that the survey accurately reflected young people's experiences.

ILSC - our work programme in 2015-16

Overall priority - Child Sexual Exploitation

- ◆ Scrutiny of Rotherham's plans to tackle child sexual exploitation
- ◆ Outcomes for Looked After Children
- ◆ Schools and performance
- ◆ Early help and intervention
- ◆ Safeguarding

For further information contact:

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Improving Places Select Commission

The remit is to carry out overview and scrutiny as directed by the OSMB related to:

- Community cohesion and social inclusion
- Tourism, culture and leisure
- Housing and Neighbourhood strategies
- Economic development and regeneration strategies
- Environment and sustainable strategies

Positive outcomes from our previous reviews

Supporting the Local Economy

Due to the changes to Local Government finance and in particular business rates, it was agreed the Council needed to focus on ways to support the local economy to generate an increase in business rates, generating employment and training opportunities for local residents and stimulating the multiplier effect, retaining as much private sector investment in the local economy as possible.

What has resulted:: Implementation of the review recommendations has commenced, although much is dependent on the Rotherham Growth Plan 2015-2025 which seeks to drive sustainable economic growth in the borough. This will impact on the provision of new jobs (9,000+ net new jobs over the lifetime of the Plan, mainly private sector) and creation of new businesses (750 net new businesses over the next five years).

Work themes include:

- Identifying targets and outcomes for the Plan's themes and the organisations with responsibility for delivery of them.
- Developing the priority projects needed to drive the transformation of the Rotherham economy.
- Working with partners at City Region level to ensure the best impact of economic activity, but with Rotherham based delivery to tackle specific local needs.
- Identifying potential funding opportunities to deliver Growth Plan priorities, such as European funds, Regional Growth Fund, RMBC Capital.

Section 106 agreements (S106)

Members had expressed concerns regarding a lack of information about how this source of funding is utilised by the Council, particularly with regard to addressing the shortage of school places (considered by ILSC). The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will now largely replace off-site Section 106 financial contributions that are negotiated via planning applications on a site-by-site basis (e.g. school places), but S106 will still be used, where appropriate, to secure affordable housing and on-site mitigation. Prior to its adoption the CIL charging schedule has to be submitted to Government for independent examination.

What has resulted:

- Preparation of our CIL to help raise money to support local infrastructure needed as result of development proposed in the Local Plan – the draft charging schedule, which has been formally consulted on earlier in 2015, includes both primary and secondary education.
- It has been assessed and found that charging of the CIL would be viable for future residential, convenience retail (supermarkets) and retail warehouse development and once adopted could be charged for these types of development.
- The Council is required to produce a list of infrastructure it *may* fund from CIL receipts (known as a Regulation 123 list) which in addition to school places, includes key bus route improvements and junction improvements, provision of doctors surgeries, green infrastructure and specific projects such as the flood defence scheme.

Check Challenge Change

Improving Places Select Commission

Positive outcomes from our previous reviews

Allocations Policy

IPSC conducted a spotlight review of the policy in July 2013, in order to understand the local position fully and to make informed input to the revised policy. The recommendations to Cabinet were all accepted and included some fairly substantive changes to the way the Housing “waiting list” was be managed and operated. In particular the Select Commission recommended that the general waiting list be replaced with a Register of Housing Need.

What has resulted:

On 29th October 2014, a revised Housing Allocation Policy was launched. The policy was updated, to take into account the size of the register, pressures on the service and the fact that the Council could use the opportunities in the Localism Act 2011 to help local people in housing need.

Further changes are now being proposed and Elected Members are currently being consulted. An “All Member Seminar” was held on 9th June 2015, and officers took Members through the gaps in the current policy, and provided a number of detailed options for them to consider. A further Member consultation session took place on 1st July 2015.

The proposed changes will not only consider further amendments to the Allocation Policy, but will also propose that the Council adopt a more flexible Direct Home Policy to allocate low demand housing and a revised Transfer Policy to include both Rotherham Council and Rotherham Housing Association tenants. The review of the Allocation Policy will also take into account the Government’s new “Right to Move” regulation, which will ensure local connection requirements do not prevent social tenants from moving into an area to take up work or apprenticeship opportunities or to avoid hardship.

Potholes

Members requested this work because of the high levels of public complaints and concerns it causes. IPSC had previously considered a comprehensive report regarding road maintenance and in particular the approach to repairing potholes.

What has resulted:

Streetpride has presented a number of reports regarding the use of a ‘Multi-hog’ machine which continues to deliver permanent repairs to potholes throughout the borough, subject to road type, traffic management requirements, and the general condition of the road. Such repairs are identified by Highway Inspectors through scheduled safety inspections on low trafficked and residential type roads predominantly which support the use of ‘Multi-hog’ machine.

The ‘Multi-hog’ machine has undertaken pothole repairs on residential type roads through safety inspections for approximately 3 years. The machine has also continued to support the Council’s Winter Service and other general highway maintenance works including larger surfacing schemes and pre-patching works prior to surface treatments.

Between 01 April 2014 and 31 March 2015, approximately 1620 potholes were repaired by the ‘Multi-hog’ on residential type roads, which included the replacement of over 5600 square metres of road surface. At a cost of £35 per square metre, this represented a saving of £15 per square metre compared with the traditional method of repairing potholes on these road types.

The 48 hour target for the removal of safety defects (potholes) by the ‘Multi-hog’ machine, compared with the 24 hour target for the traditional method of pothole repairs on roads, where the use of the ‘Multi-hog’ machine is not viable, has not caused any increase in the number of claims for damages against the Council.

Check Challenge Change

Improving Places Select Commission

Positive outcomes from our previous reviews

Homelessness Strategy

The review focused on improving information for customers faced with homelessness; the impact of welfare reform; and the availability of temporary accommodation. Progress on the recommendations has been good with the two outstanding recommendations due to be completed by March 2016.

What has resulted:

In March 2015 a housing options service review was conducted, as recommended by the National Practitioners Support Service. This was a local authority sector-led peer review scheme, designed to help local authorities deliver more efficient and cost effective homelessness prevention services. It follows a ten step continuous improvement approach that starts with a pledge for local authorities aspiring to 'strive for continuous improvement in front line housing services' and culminates in an application for the "Gold Standard Challenge". The review was successful and we are now able to apply for the ten challenges to achieve Gold Standard in front-line housing services. A Continuous Improvement Plan has been developed following this review and will complement the Scrutiny review recommendations.

Customer Service Centres and Libraries

Members reviewed the impact of library closures and changes to opening times, and the implementation of the joint library and customer service model, both in terms of staffing changes and customer feedback and perception.

What has resulted: Library and Customer Services continue to deliver statutory services through 16 locations across the Borough – these include joint service centres and buildings operated in partnership with other agencies. The service provides a wide range of corporate frontline services to customers: books and other material for loan, enquiry services and free supported access to the internet. Services are also delivered using vehicles to rural locations, residential and sheltered care establishments and to individuals in their own homes, along with a traded service delivery to schools.

During 2014-15 the service has :

- issued 5,603 Blue Car Badges
- responded to 6,328 housing enquiries
- dealt with 4,537 licensing enquires
- issued/renewed 625,496 books to 25,684 people
- had 8,806 new members joining libraries
- handled 34,578 enquiries relating to benefits and/or council tax

Key performance indicators for the year showed that 97% of customers are satisfied with the overall service they received and 85% of face to face customers to library and customer service centres were seen within 20 minutes.

IPSC – our work this year

Selective Licensing

Context – In completing their work on a previous review of private sector landlords, Members wished to consider options for the potential introduction of either a mandatory selective licensing scheme or a voluntary local scheme and to make recommendations to Cabinet on these options.

What happened - A detailed consideration of the issues took place in the IPSC scheduled meetings. They received updates on work to implement a selective licensing scheme. Detailed consultation had taken place and members were briefed on the outcomes from this and the differing perspectives. They were also provided with evidence about the success or otherwise of similar schemes elsewhere and also previously in Rotherham (in terms of voluntary schemes).

Outcomes - IPSC supported the Executive position that a voluntary scheme should be implemented with a view to moving to a mandatory scheme as soon as possible if the voluntary scheme failed.

Check Challenge Change

Improving Places Select Commission

IPSC – our work this year

Sheffield City Region

As a result of the Supporting the Local Economy Scrutiny Review, Members had recognised the importance of the Sheffield City Region, particularly the significance of its Growth Plan for Rotherham. Members required a greater understanding of the bigger picture and governance structures of the Sheffield City Region, and also the funding mechanisms available.

What happened - Members considered a detailed presentation and report at one of the IPSC meetings regarding the background information to the Sheffield City Region, its objectives, its relationship to the Local Economic Partnership (LEP) and the future Combined Authority for South Yorkshire. The different boundaries for these initiatives were considered and the implications for governance arrangements.

Outcomes - Members re-iterated the importance of the City Region structures and the need for Rotherham to play its full part in this. They concluded that it was a useful starting point for them but that further work needed to be done on this agenda as part of future work plans and programmes.

Town Centre and Public Transport Safety for Young People

During the 2013 Children's Commissioner's Day, the concerns of young people were highlighted regarding their safety using public transport and in particular in and around the transport interchange in the Town Centre. Members of the Select Commission therefore specifically requested information on what initiatives had been implemented to tackle this and what progress was being made.

What happened - The information was presented to Members during a scheduled Improving Places Select Commission meeting. Detailed information regarding consultation with young people, and the research data produced by South Yorkshire Passenger Transport Executive, amongst other information was all considered. Members had the opportunity to explore how effective some of the implemented measures were proving to be. They also considered information from the Safer Rotherham Partnership about the impact of the Designated Public Place Order that covers the whole of the Borough.

Outcomes - Members noted good progress and particularly welcomed the dedicated police presence within the Town Centre. They also made recommendations to improve the way young people are consulted on this matter as part of the Lifestyle annual survey and for more detailed monitoring of the data and performance in the future.

IPSC - our work programme in 2015-16

Overall theme - Clean and Green Agenda

- ♦ Waste and measures to reduce fly tipping
- ♦ Street Cleansing and measures to reduce litter

For further information contact:

Christine Majer Scrutiny Officer Tel: 01709 822738 or
email christine.majer@rotherham.gov.uk

Check Challenge Change

Self Regulation Select Commission

This Select Commission has been disestablished for 2015-16 as part of the new scrutiny arrangements. Its remit to scrutinise the budget setting process; and to monitor complaints and compliments; whether efficiency savings are achieved or exceeded; and the performance of service delivery; has now been assumed by the OSMB.

Positive outcomes from our previous reviews

District Heating

The Select Commission undertook a scrutiny review following a report showing that the District Heating scheme did not secure full recovery of its costs and that despite action to address this, it had not proved possible due to significant increases in fuel charges and other factors.

What has resulted: As a result of the scrutiny review, an improvement plan for the management and delivery of district heating has been implemented in phases since 2013.

- A full Stock Condition Survey has been undertaken of the infrastructure, plant and dwelling-side heating supply for each of the 37 schemes. This has identified potential efficiencies for some schemes and others that would benefit from either further investment or an alternative approach.
- Subject to Renewable Heat Incentive grant funding being obtained, there will be investment in new fuel stores for three bio mass systems.
- The District Heating Scheme budget will be reviewed annually through the Housing Revenue Account capital monitoring process, with actual spend monitored monthly.
- Monthly multi-disciplinary steering group meetings take place attended by officers from all relevant services identified in the review.

SRSC - our work this year

Review of Standing Orders

The commission was requested by Council in September 2014 to consider whether RMBC should amend its Standing Orders regarding general questions at Council meetings, due to concerns about artificial restrictions placed on asking questions. It was also asked to consider petitions to the Council, arrangements for web casting council meetings, and any other matters in relation to public engagement in full council meetings that the commission thought needed to be explored.

What happened - A cross-party review group examined the Standing Orders in detail; followed by webcasting and petitions. Information was sought from other councils to examine how they deal with general questions; questions to decision makers and representatives on other bodies; and questions from members of the public. Proposed amendments were discussed with the Monitoring Officer and Legal and Democratic Services Officers before the review report was submitted to the former Cabinet to inform its recommendations to Council. Other issues relating to the wider Constitution and procedural rules arose during the review which could not be given due consideration, so further work may follow.

Outcomes - Various changes to the Standing Orders resulted, with some of the principal ones below:

- reduced time limit for repeat questions previously asked and answered at Council meetings
- extended timescale for questions to be submitted in writing in advance of the Council meeting
- a new provision to ask 'urgent' questions
- the 30 minute guillotine on general questions was removed
- a new provision for the public to ask for a Cabinet Member to give evidence at a public meeting

The Council's Scheme for Handling Petitions was amended so that 2,000 signatures would trigger a debate of the Council (previously it had needed 5% of the population).

Check Challenge Change

Self Regulation Select Commission

SRSC - our work this year

In the interest of openness and transparency, the review group fully supported regular webcasting of Council meetings. Each meeting of full Council; Planning Board and Overview and Scrutiny Management Board is now webcast and other meetings of significant interest may be webcast by exception. Further consideration is needed regarding longer term resourcing for webcasting and the practical arrangements.

Scrutiny Review of Commissioning and Procurement

SRSC began its work on this review in late 2013, to explore if the Council's procurement/commissioning processes are being used to maximise support to the local economy. After gathering evidence over the summer, it was due to report its findings in September 2014, but this work was re-prioritised to support scrutiny of CSE and the review of Standing Orders. Although the report was not finalised the members explored: the impact of procurement on the local area; if processes and practices are consistent across directorates; if there are more opportunities for Council resources to be targeted locally whilst securing best value for money; and if the bidding process could be made more straightforward for local suppliers.

Our wider work

As in previous years an important aspect of the work programme for Self Regulation centred on the monitoring of key Council processes, including the Capital Programme and Capital Budget. This work was primarily conducted in the scheduled meetings with detailed reports interrogated by Members.

*** Revenue Budget Monitoring**

The commission received regular reports on the revenue budget throughout the year. This allowed Members to track budget forecasts and to challenge and explore the reasons for potential variation from plan in terms of underspend or overspend on a service by service basis.

*** Corporate Risk Register**

A summary of the Corporate Risk Register was presented to Members showing the risks associated with the Council's most significant priorities and projects, and actions being taken to mitigate these risks. Key risks continued to relate to financial pressures faced by the Council. Members challenged the removal of certain risks from the register and suggested other issues for inclusion. As a result, schools in deficit seeking academy status was added as a risk to the register and a specific report on this issue requested.

*** Workforce Strategy and Planning**

SRSC requested information regarding workforce planning and how this had been affected by organisational changes within RMBC and changes in the workforce. A detailed report was presented by Human Resources explaining that organisational redesign, changes to working practices and changes to HR policies had been made. Members were reassured that although budgets for employee and manager development have reduced, the Council is still providing training to managers on a prioritised basis and the re-tendered soft skills training had led to reduced costs. Directorates are regularly provided with workforce data to enable them to review issues and trends in their services, to inform service planning.

*** Complaints, Compliments and Councillor Surgery Enquiries**

The commission considered a comprehensive report showing data and trends for the year ending March 2014. Members welcomed the emphasis on learning from complaints to identify service improvements and noted the target to achieve 100% complaint resolution, with lower escalation to further stages. The differing approaches taken by Directorates to e-Casework, a software tool to facilitate the quality and speed of responses to case work, were discussed. Members recommended that to improve consistency all Directorates should respond directly to surgery requests/members of the public, providing a copy of the response to the Councillor.

For further information contact:

Caroline Webb, Senior Scrutiny and Member Development Adviser Tel: 01709 822765 or email caroline.webb@rotherham.gov.uk

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Select Commissions 2015 - 2016

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board

Chair: Councillor (Cllr) Brian Steele

Vice Chair: Cllr Jane Hamilton

Meetings are held on a monthly basis on Fridays at 9.00am

Cllr Beck Cllr Cowles
Cllr Hughes Cllr Mallinder
Cllr Pitchley Cllr Reynolds
Cllr Sansome Cllr Julie Turner
Cllr Whelbourn Cllr Wyatt

Contact: Deborah Fellowes - Tel: 01709 822769



The Board is supported by three select commissions.

Health

Chair: Cllr Stuart Sansome

Vice-Chair:
Cllr Jeanette Mallinder



The commission meets (usually) at 9.30am on Thursdays at 6 weekly intervals

Cllr Ahmed	Cllr Alam OBE	Cllr Burton
Cllr Elliot	Cllr Ellis	Cllr Evans
Cllr Fleming	Cllr Godfrey	Cllr Hunter
Cllr Khan	Cllr Price	Cllr Reeder
Cllr Rose	Cllr Rushforth	Cllr Smith
Cllr M Vines		

Contact: Janet Spurling - Tel: 01709 254421

Improving Lives

Chair: Cllr Jane Hamilton

Vice-Chair:
Cllr Lyndsay Pitchley



The commission meets (usually) at 1.30pm on Wednesdays at 6 weekly intervals

Cllr Ahmed	Cllr Astbury	Cllr Beaumont
Cllr Burton	Cllr Clark	Cllr Currie
Cllr Cutts	Cllr Hague	Cllr Hoddinott
Cllr Jones	Cllr Rose	Cllr Rosling
Cllr Taylor	Cllr Tweed	Cllr John Turner
Cllr M Vines		

Contact: Deborah Fellowes - Tel: 01709 822765

Improving Places

Chair: Cllr Dominic Beck

Vice-Chair:
Cllr Glyn Whelbourn



The commission meets (usually) at 1.30pm on Wednesdays at 6 weekly intervals.

Cllr Atkin	Cllr Buckley	Cllr Cutts
Cllr Godfrey	Cllr Gosling	Cllr Jepson
Cllr McNeely	Cllr Pickering	Cllr Smith
Cllr Reeder	Cllr Robinson	Cllr Rosling
Cllr C. Vines	Cllr Wallis	Cllr Whysall
Cllr Wyatt		

Contact: Christine Majer - Tel: 01709 822738

If you or someone you know needs help to understand or read this document, please contact us:

Tel: 01709 822776

Minicom: 01709 823536

or by email to: scrutiny.works@rotherham.gov.uk

Slovak

Ak vy alebo niekto koho poznáte potrebuje pomoc pri pochopení alebo čítaní tohto dokumentu, prosím kontaktujte nás na vyššie uvedenom čísle alebo nám pošlite e-mail.

Slovensky

Kurdish Sorani

کوردی سورانی
ههگهر تۆ یان کهسێک که تۆ دهبناسی پێویستی بهیارمەتی ههیهیت یۆ نهوهی لهم بهنگهنامه یه تیپگات یان بیهویننیهوه،
تکایه پهیوهندیمان پێوه بکه لهسهه نهو ژمارهیهی سهروهدهدا یان بهو نیمهیه.

Arabic

عربی
إذا كنت أنت أو أي شخص تعرفه بحاجة إلى مساعدة لفهم أو قراءة هذه الوثيقة، الرجاء الاتصال على الرقم أعلاه، أو مراسلتنا عبر البريد الإلكتروني

Urdu

اُردو
اگر آپ یا آپ کے جاننے والے کسی شخص کو اس دستاویز کو سمجھنے یا پڑھنے کیلئے مدد کی ضرورت ہے تو
برائے مہربانی مندرجہ بالا نمبر پر ہم سے رابطہ کریں یا ہمیں ای میل کریں۔

Farsi

فارسی
اگر جناب عالی یا شخص دیگری که شما او را می شناسید برای خواندن یا فهمیدن این مدارک نیاز به کمک دارد لطفاً با
ما بوسیله شماره بالا یا ایمیل تماس حاصل فرمایید.