12. **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from Councillor Goonan.

13. **Unconfirmed Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 August 2016**

Resolved:

that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 August 2016, be signed as a true record.

14. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

15. **To Confirm or Vary the Order of Business**

Resolved:

that the Order of Business be as printed on the agenda.

16. **Annual Review of the Health Scrutiny Committee**

16.1 The Chair reported that the main concerns of residents were:
The lack of availability of doctor appointments, in particular at the Two Rivers GP Practice where some patient’s appointments had been cancelled by telephone.

The University of Suffolk had issued a report to the Suffolk Community Foundation, ‘Hidden Needs in Suffolk Five Years On (2011-2016)’ which highlighted concerns.

During the Overview & Scrutiny Committee, Task and Finish Group for Mental Health Awareness it had been reported that 1 in 5 young people had been diagnosed with high anxiety or depression.

16.2 The Chair introduced Suffolk County Councillor Michael Ladd, the Chair of the Suffolk Health Scrutiny Committee who provided an update on what the Committee had dealt with during the last 3 meetings.

16.3 In January 2016 the meeting had been held at Ipswich Hospital and the main topic had been the Transformation Plan of Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services in Suffolk (CAMHS). A new strategy was being developed and one of the immediate priorities was that a single point of access was key. The development of online guidance for young people, parents and professionals was also important as well as for families as it was confirmed that 10% of children and young people had a diagnosed mental health condition. Councillor Ladd had visited Carlton Court in Lowestoft, run by the Norfolk & Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust which included some family units in a spacious building. The CAMHS Transformation Plan would be reviewed by the Health Scrutiny Committee in January 2017.

16.4 A Task and Finish Group had been set up with Education and Children Services to consider how schools could support the Transformation Plan, how behaviours could be identified for early intervention and to signpost to support, especially within academies. Also in January 2016 there had been a Task & Finish Group report on Winter Pressures and the lessons learnt from the previous year.

16.5 At the meeting in April 2016, the current and future capacity in the residential and nursing care market in Suffolk had been considered and action plans for improvement were ongoing. Full support had been given for a bid to the New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership (NALEP) for skills training in social sector care and this had proved successful.

16.6 In July 2016 changes to the provision of primary care services at Hopton and Stanton GP surgeries had been considered. The shortage of GP’s in these areas remained and the Committee had been concerned about the lack of engagement with the patients and the local community. A Joint Health Scrutiny Task & Finish Group had been set up for early in 2017 with North East Essex Health Scrutiny Committee to consider the NHS Sustainability and Transformation Plans.

16.7 Also at the meeting in July a presentation had been given by the Chief Officer of Ipswich and East Suffolk and West Suffolk Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) who reported that £13m of efficiency savings needed to be achieved in
the current financial year. Concern was expressed about the response times of the East of England Ambulance Service and Councillor Ladd confirmed that any decisions on proposals to reduce cycles of In-vitro Fertilisation (IVF) treatment and a more focussed outreach service for marginalised and vulnerable adults would be deferred until 2017.

16.8 The approach taken across the sector to work together in the wider interests of the local health economy for the recruitment and retention of nursing staff by the NHS and other health and care providers in Suffolk had been commended following detailed discussion with several Health Directors, Managers and Care Home Owners. Bursaries would no longer be available for those wishing to study nursing and it was considered that this would enable institutions to design their provision to suit the market.

16.9 Items to be discussed at the next Health Scrutiny Committee on 12 October 2016 were; the provision of GP Services at Hopton and Stanton, an update on the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG’s) financial position and an introduction to the Colchester and Ipswich Hospital’s partnership work.

16.10 Councillor Riley asked whether any guidance had been taken from the University of Suffolk about the lack of bursaries for nursing and Councillor Ladd said that a conversation with the University had taken place. The Health Scrutiny Committee had limited power to alter any decisions made however; it did have the responsibility, in everyone’s interest to keep this matter under scrutiny. Councillor Riley also asked what the Committee’s response to the shortage of GP’s had been and Councillor Ladd confirmed that the shortage was a national issue.

16.11 Councillor Darwin said that following the launch of the ‘Hidden Needs’ report it was clear that while Suffolk had an ageing population, Ipswich had a far younger population and she asked whether the measures of social care took this into account about how funding should be targeted. Councillor Ladd said that this had been discussed on several occasions but there were huge pressures on the health and social care system. Sustainability and Transformation Plans aimed for better collaboration between partners as well as to save money.

16.12 Councillor Darwin asked whether the Connect East project would be targeting the gaps for those leaving hospital and Councillor Ladd said that a whole system approach was needed.

16.13 Councillor Debman expressed concern about ambulance waiting times and that a lift which had been out of action at Bluebell Lodge until the hospital had repaired it, being unacceptable. Councillor Ladd said that he regularly met with Healthwatch to update them with his concerns which had either been reported to him or by Councillor Whittall. Councillor Ladd also said that he was due to meet with the East of England Ambulance Service next week to discuss the issues which the Care Quality Commission had picked up within their Inspection Report.
16.14 Councillor Macartney said that during the recent Overview & Scrutiny Task & Finish Group about Mental Health Awareness it had been reported that there was a lack of support in the area, young people had to travel far away to access the available services and often counselling sessions had to be funded by the family. Councillor Ladd said that he would be keen to be part of the Task & Finish Group and that he also recognised that part of the responsibility was with schools as changes in behaviour such as eating disorders or social media pressure could be an early indication of an issue. It was acknowledged that, at the Task & Finish Group, Councillor Richard Pope had maintained that early intervention was key and Councillor Ladd extended an invitation to Councillor Pope to attend the Suffolk County Council Health Scrutiny Committee in January 2017 to speak about this issue.

16.15 Councillor Gage asked whether annual checks on the response times of ambulances took place as part of a statutory duty and it was confirmed that response times in rural areas was of concern. This had been looked at 2 years ago and Councillor Ladd said that this would be discussed with the East of England Ambulance Service next week. Councillor Gage suggested that this be considered as part of an action plan before the January 2017 meeting and Councillor Ladd assured her that ambulance response times would be discussed as part of the Winter Pressures item at the next Health Scrutiny Committee.

16.16 Councillor Gage also asked for information about the services being provided by the Connect East Ipswich project. Councillor Ladd was unaware of how Connect East were providing services and suggested that the SCC Cabinet Member for Health and Social Care be invited to comment on this matter. Councillor Gage also asked about the ‘delayed discharge' procedures, the quality of care in care homes and the delay in setting up ‘in home’ care for those coming out of hospital especially in view of the coming season. Councillor Ladd said that this had been reviewed 2 years ago and problems often occurred when there was no co-ordination between health and social care. Ipswich Hospital now had the contract to look at this and assessment and co-ordination should happen on entry to hospital and not be left until the day when patients were discharged.

16.17 Councillor Chisholm said stigma existed in the ageing population which prevented the community coming forward to seek help for those suffering from dementia. Councillor Ladd said that any questions which had been left unanswered would be put to the Cabinet Member when the minutes were issued. He suggested that the Cabinet Member for Health be invited to speak to the Committee about the review of the Health Scrutiny Committee next year.

16.18 Councillor Grant questioned why the Clinical Commissioning Group were looking to reduce the budget by £13m at a time when they should be investing more resource for those with Mental Health issues? With crisis intervention being the main option and there being no focus on early intervention should the Health Scrutiny Committee be looking at how well this service was being funded. Councillor Ladd agreed that prevention was key and more funding
needed to be set aside for the Mental Health service but such a vast amount of funding went to the hospitals.

16.19 Councillor Whittall made the following observations:

- Having had the opportunity to contribute to the good work of the Health Scrutiny Committee (as the representative from Ipswich Borough Council) the main concern remained the co-ordination of services.
- The ‘voice of patients’ was key and Healthwatch made an important contribution to the whole process of service design.
- It was the responsibility of the Health Scrutiny Committee to oversee that within contracts that teams had adequate capacity.
- The concerns of the ‘Hidden Needs’ report should be considered by the Health Scrutiny Committee to respond to changing demographics.

16.20 Councillor Ladd said that he would take back the following concerns to the Health Scrutiny Committee which had been highlighted:

- Concern that a lift had remained out of action at Bluebell Lodge until the hospital had repaired it.
- A request for information about the services being provided by the Connect East Ipswich project.

16.21 It was agreed that Councillor Whittall should be made aware of any future service level concerns of Councillors (as the representative from Ipswich Borough Council) and the Chief Executive agreed to follow up on information regarding the Connect East project. The Chair thanked Councillor Ladd for his attendance at the meeting.

17. **OS/16/04 Annual Report of Write Off of Bad Debts 2015/16**

17.1 The Operations Manager, Finance & Procurement presented this annual report and explained that under the Council’s Financial Regulations, the details of the write off of bad debts 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016 were attached for consideration at Appendix A to report Ref No: OS/16/04. It was confirmed that it was the Council’s duty to collect a debt for as long as it was financially prudent to do so.

17.2 A breakdown of the different categories of ‘write-off’ was listed, broken down into amounts and as had been requested during discussion of the report the previous year, the write-offs due to bankruptcy or liquidation were also detailed. In respect of the total of write-offs in comparison to the £169m collected by the Council in total, 99% of income was collected and this figure was within the amount anticipated and was accounted for within the budget.

17.3 It was confirmed that this report was submitted to the Committee to allow the remit of challenge within the public domain and that there were no debts over £50k. If a customer, due to a change in circumstance, became able to pay a debt they would be pursued for the money previously owed in the normal manner.
17.4 Councillor Gage asked if any benchmarking had been undertaken and the Officer said that previous benchmarking had shown Ipswich Borough Council to be amongst the top ranking collectors of debt even though urban authorities had a more transient population than rural authorities.

Resolved:

that the sums written off, under Financial Standing Order 22, in the period 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2016 amounting to £1,504,900, be noted.

18. **OS/16/05 Annual Report of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee 2015/16**

18.1 The Chair presented the Annual Report of the Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Committee, attached at Appendix 1 to report Ref No: OS/16/05.

Resolved:

1. that the Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Committee Annual Report 2015/16, attached at Appendix 1 to report Ref No: OS/16/05, be approved for submission to Council.

2. that the 2016/17 Work Programme of the Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Committee, attached at Appendix 2 to report Ref No: OS/15/05, be approved.

19. **OS/16/06 Work Programme 2016/17**

19.1 Councillor Debman requested that prior to the next meeting, when the Update on the Speed Restriction on the Orwell Bridge would be discussed, that a Task & Finish Group be convened to formulate questions about whether there had been a reduction in accidents for the Norfolk & Suffolk Roads Policing Inspector of the Suffolk Constabulary and Highways England to answer. Councillors Holmes and Gage agreed to take part in the Task & Finish Group, and the Chief Executive put forward that the Integrated Traffic Officer would also be invited to attend.

Resolved:

that the Strategic Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2016/17, as attached at Appendix 1 to report OS/16/06, be agreed.

The meeting closed at 7.05 pm

Chair