

**ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL  
8 DECEMBER 2009**

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY – QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT  
Assistant Chief Executive**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This report sets out the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) activity over the period August to October 2009, also the national and local developments in O&S.

**2 SUGGESTED ACTION**

- 2.1 **That the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the Overview and Scrutiny activity over the period August to October 2009, set out in section 5 and Appendices 1 and 2.**
- 2.2 **That the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the developments in Overview & Scrutiny set out in section 5.**

**3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

**(i) Overview and Scrutiny Activity**

Overview and Scrutiny Working Groups

- 3.1 The table at Appendix 1 sets out the current status of the O&S Working Groups, along with the list of completed reviews. Reports finalised and published in the quarter included: the Working Group reports on the review of NHS Core Standards, the review of Waste and Recycling, and the review of the Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan.

Partnership Scrutiny

- 3.2 Good progress has been made with implementing the agreed approach to partnership scrutiny. Responses have been received to most of the questionnaires previously sent to the ten Theme Partnerships. The Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Group held its first meeting on 28 September, electing Councillor Edger as Chairman, having a presentation and discussion on the approach being implemented; and consideration of the group's Terms of Reference and work programme. The group's next meeting will be in January 2010.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

- 3.3 The O&S Commission continues to meet on a two-monthly cycle. At its meeting on 24 September, the main items considered were: the Commission's response to the Government consultation document on 'Strengthening Local Democracy'; considering the Annual Report on Procurement for 2008/09; the quarter 1 2009/10 Performance Monitoring Reports for the Chief Executive's Office and the Corporate Services

Department; and the response by the Executive Member to the Overview and Scrutiny report on the Review of the Implementation of the Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan. The Commission's next meeting will be held on 19 November.

#### Environment, Culture and Communities O&S Panel

- 3.4 The Panel has continued to meet on a three-monthly cycle. It held its last meeting on 8 September at South Hill Park, and the main items included: having a tour and receiving a presentation from officers regarding the Lottery Fund grants to restore South Hill Park; considering a report setting out the progress achieved to date in the implementation of the Council's Carbon Management Plan; reviewing the Department's Performance Monitoring report for quarter 1; meeting the Chairman and Lead Officer of the Cultural Partnership; and receiving reports in respect of the sports pitches at Priory Fields and the use of covert CCTV in the Borough. The Panel's next meeting is on 8 December.

#### Health O&S Panel

- 3.5 The Panel has continued to meet on a three-monthly cycle. At its meeting on 3 September, the Panel: met representatives of the Local Involvement Network Steering Group, noting their annual report and work programme; received a presentation from the Chief Executive of Thames Hospicecare on how the organisation operates; discussed with the Chief Executive and Finance Director of Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust their financial position and the outcome of the 'Saving More Lives' consultation; and established the NHS Core Standards Working Group. On 9 October, members of the Health O&S Panel took part in a workshop focused on the progress on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and refreshing the Health and Well-Being Strategy. The Panel's next meeting is on 3 December.

#### Children's Services and Learning O&S Panel

- 3.6 The Panel is continuing a three-monthly meeting cycle. At its meeting on 16 September the main items considered by the Panel included: the department's 2009/10 Performance Monitoring report for the first quarter; a discussion with the Chairman and Lead Officer of the Children's Trust; receiving an update on the 'Grow Our Own' project; noting the recent work of the 14-19 Working Group; and receiving the Executive's response to the 'Children's Centres and Extended Services' review. The Panel's next scheduled meeting is on 16 December.

#### Adult Social Care O&S Panel

- 3.7 The Panel continues to meet on a three-monthly cycle. At its last meeting on 1 September, the main items considered by the Panel included: reviewing the statutory annual report for safeguarding adults; receiving a presentation on transforming adult social care; considering the work programme; and reviewing the department's latest Performance Monitoring Report, also the quarterly report of O&S. Panel Members have completed a structured round of visits to adult social care establishments. The Panel's next scheduled meeting is on 1 December.

## Joint East Berkshire Health O&S Committee

- 3.8 This Committee continues to meet broadly on a three-monthly cycle, rotating between the three Councils' venues. The last Committee meeting was on 14 September in Slough, when the Committee: established a Working Group for car parking charges at NHS establishments; received a presentation from the Director of Finance and Planning for Berkshire East PCT on their budgetary position; and received presentations from the Director of Public Health on the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and secondly on swine flu. The Committee's next meeting will be on 10 December at Maidenhead.
- 3.9 Responses to the feedback questionnaires on the quality of O&S reviews are summarised in Appendix 2.
- 3.10 Quarterly review meetings between O&S Chairmen, Vice Chairmen, Executive Members and Directors are taking place regularly for the Commission and the Panels. Agenda-setting meetings continue to be held, usually in combination with the review meetings.
- 3.11 The Overview and Scrutiny team made an input to the Member Charter assessment process, contributing to BFC being re-awarded the Charter.
- 3.12 External networking on O&S in the last quarter has included: delivering a presentation to the Bracknell Forest Partnership on 10 September; attending the South East Employers Joint Member and Officer O&S Network on 21 October; and agreeing to participate in an INLOGOV survey of O&S in local government.

## (ii) Developments in O&S

- 3.13 The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill is gradually nearing a conclusion and Communities and Local Government anticipate Royal Assent in November. As advised in the last quarterly report, the main clauses relating to Overview and Scrutiny relate to the handling of petitions and a requirement for a statutory officer designation for O&S.
- 3.14 The regulations and guidance for the O&S provisions in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 are still awaited, despite the Act having commenced on 1 April 2009. CLG is continuing to work with the Centre for Public Scrutiny to develop these.
- 3.15 The Council has responded to the Government's consultation entitled 'Strengthening Local Democracy', with the O&S Commission providing the responses to the O&S questions. CLG have advised that they have received over 250 responses and they are currently going through these. There has been broad support for the expansion of O&S to Utility companies, etc, and common themes in the responses covered resources, training and local discretion. The Government's response to the consultation outcome will be issued in the 'winter of 2009'.

## Background Papers

Minutes and papers of meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Panels.

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUPS – 2009/10**

Position at 30 October 2009

<b>Overview and Scrutiny Commission</b>								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
No current Working Groups								

<b>Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel</b>								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults	Turrell, Leake, Edger, Mrs Shillcock	Zoe Johnstone	Andrea Carr					The first meeting has been arranged for 14 December when Members will scope the review.

**Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Strategic Review of Waste	Brunel-Walker (Lead), Mrs. Angell, Beadsley, Mrs. Ryder, Wade (Crowthorne), Allen (S'hurst & Ms Healy (Warfield)	Steve Loudoun / Janet Dowlman	Andrea Carr	√	√	√	√	Completed - The Executive response is due for consideration at the next Commission meeting in November.
Supporting People (SP)	Mrs. Shillcock (Lead) & Mrs. Fleming	Simon Hendey / Clare Dorning	Andrea Carr	√	07/08 √ (Annual monitoring)	07/08 √ (Annual monitoring)	N/A	The Working Group met on 30 September 2008 to monitor progress against implementation of the SP programme and reported its findings to the Panel on 18 December 2008. It will meet again later in 2009/10 to monitor progress.
Review of Highway	Mclean (Lead) Beadsley,	Steve Loudoun	Richard Beaumont	In draft				The second meeting is

Maintenance	Brossard, Leake and  Parish and Town Councillors: Edwards (Binfield) Kensall (Bracknell) Withers (Crowthorne) Mrs Cupper (Sandhurst) Young (Winkfield)		(Victoria Bale to support)					arranged for 16 November 2009.
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Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
NHS Core Standards	Virgo (Lead), Thompson, Mrs Angell,	N/A	Richard Beaumont	√	√	√	N/A	<u>Completed</u> – The Group met on 25 September and subsequently letters were sent to Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospital NHS Foundation

								Trust, Berkshire East PCT, and Berkshire Healthcare Trust.
Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies	Burrows (Lead), Mrs. Angell, Thompson. Mrs. Mattick,	David Steeds	Andrea Carr	√				The Group met in October with John Pullin, the PCT's Deputy Director of Commissioning . The Group's next meeting has been arranged for 26 November 2009 where they will meet the South Central Ambulance Service.
Bracknell Health Space	Virgo (lead) Mrs Angell, Baily, Leake, Mrs Shillcock	Glyn Jones/ Mary Purnell	Richard Beaumont	√	In draft			Ten meetings held to date with various visitors. Further meetings are arranged for November 2009. The key conclusions have been drafted.



**Joint East Berkshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Hospital Discharge Procedures	Baily, Coad (Slough BC), Napier (RB W&M)	N/A	Andrew Scott (RB W&M)	√	N/A	N/A	N/A	Working Group now disbanded.
Hospital Car Park Charges	Plimmer (Slough), Virgo, Endacott (RB W&M)  Jacky Flynn (LINK)	TBC	Sunita Sharma (Slough BC)					First meeting being arranged

**Children's Services and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel**

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
14-19 Years Education Provision	Mrs Birch (Lead) Dr Josephs-Franks, Kensall, Mrs McCracken, Mrs Ryder	Martin Surrell	Andrea Carr (Victoria Bale to support)	√				The Working Group has met on fifteen occasions to date. A visit to Garth Hill College is proposed for December and

								a questionnaire has been sent to local employers. The conclusions are soon to be drafted.
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## **Completed Reviews**

<b>Publication Date</b>	<b>Title</b>
December 2003	South Bracknell Schools Review
January 2004	Review of Adult Day Care Services in Bracknell Forest (Johnstone Court Day Centre & Downside Resource Centre)
May 2004	Review of Community & Voluntary Sector Grants
July 2004	Review of Community Transport Provision
April 2005	Review of Members' Information Needs
November 2005	The Management of Coronary Heart Disease
February 2006	Review of School Transfers and Performance
March 2006	Review of School Exclusions and Pupil Behaviour Policy
August 2006	Report of Tree Policy Review Group
November 2006	Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) – Review of the ASB Strategy Implementation
January 2007	Review of Youth Provision
February 2007	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2006
February 2007	Review of Library Provision
July 2007	Review of Healthcare Funding
November 2007	Review of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy

<b>Publication Date</b>	<b>Title</b>
December 2007	Review of the Council's Medium Term Objectives
March 2008	2007 Annual Health Check Response to the Healthcare Commission
April 2008	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2007/08
May 2008	Road Traffic Casualties
August 2008	Caring for Carers
September 2008	Scrutiny of Local Area Agreement
October 2008	Street Cleaning
October 2008	English as an Additional Language in Bracknell Forest Schools
April 2009	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2008/09
April 2009	Healthcare Commission's Annual Health Check 2008/09 (letters submitted)
April 2009	Children's Centres and Extended Services in and Around Schools in Bracknell Forest
April 2009	Older People's Strategy
April 2009	Services for People with Learning Disabilities
May 2009	Housing Strategy
July 2009	Review of Waste and Recycling
July 2009	Review of Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan

### **Results of Feedback Questionnaires on Overview and Scrutiny Reports**

Note – Departmental Link officers on each review were asked to score the key aspects of each O&S review on a scale of 0 (Unsatisfactory) to 3 (Excellent)

	Average score for previous 10 Reviews <sup>1</sup>
<b>PLANNING</b>	<b>2.8</b>
Were you given sufficient notice of the review?	
Were your comments invited on the scope of the review, and was the purpose of the review explained to you?	<b>2.9</b>
<b>CONDUCT OF REVIEW</b>	<b>2.7</b>
Was the review carried out in a professional and objective manner with minimum disruption?	
Was there adequate communication between O&S and the department throughout?	<b>2.7</b>
Did the review get to the heart of the issue?	<b>2.6</b>
<b>REPORTING</b>	<b>2.9</b>
Did you have an opportunity to comment on the draft report?	
Did the report give a clear and fair presentation of the facts?	<b>2.5</b>
Were the recommendations relevant and practical?	<b>2.5</b>
How useful was this review in terms of improving the Council's performance?	<b>2.6</b>

<sup>1</sup> Road Traffic Casualties, Review of the Local Area Agreement, Support for Carers, Street Cleaning, Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities, English as an Additional Language in Schools, Children's Centres and Extended Services, Waste and Recycling, Older People's Strategy, and Review of Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan.