

**TO: ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
24 APRIL 2012**

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

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report highlights:

- (i) Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) activity during the period September 2011 to February 2012.
- (ii) Significant national and local developments in O&S.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 To note Overview and Scrutiny activity over the period September 2011 to February 2012, set out in section 5 and Appendices 1 and 2.

2.2 To note the developments in Overview & Scrutiny set out in section 6.

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The Chief Executive has asked for a six monthly report to be produced on O&S activity.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

4.1 None.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Health Scrutiny

5.1 Health Scrutiny Chairmen from the three East Berkshire councils together with Buckinghamshire County Council are considering resuming the Joint East Berkshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which has been formally suspended since February 2011; this would be to receive a prospective formal consultation by the Primary Care Trust (PCT) later in 2012, regarding prospectively significant changes to health services.

Overview and Scrutiny Membership

5.2 The membership of the O&S Commission and Panels was last set by Council and the Commission respectively at their annual meetings on 25 May 2011. Subsequently, the two Parent Governor and Catholic Diocese vacancies have been filled, and the vacancy of the Church of England representative remains to be filled.

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

5.3 The programme continues the increased focus on contributing to policy development and pre-decision scrutiny, through short reviews; with fewer major reviews reviewing important

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topics in depth, over several months. The table at Appendix 1 sets out the current status of the O&S Working Groups, along with the list of completed reviews. Work is well underway to refresh the work programme for the coming civic year.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

- 5.4 The O&S Commission met on 15 September, the main items being: to review the progress of a number of O&S Working Groups and their reports; the responses received to an O&S report; the quarterly performance reports; and considering the work programme and the approach to budget scrutiny. An additional meeting was arranged on 21 September to consider the Call-In of an Executive decision relating to land at Binfield. At the Commission's meeting on 24 November the main items were a presentation on the work of the Economic and Skills Development Partnership, considering the Executive responses to two O&S reports, and to review the progress of the Commission's various Working Groups. At its last meeting on 26 January, the main items included: appointment of Mrs Carol Murray as new Parent Governor Representative; considering the draft budget for 2012-13; reviewing the latest performance reports; receiving a report on Superfast Broadband; and considering the progress of Panels, Working Groups and the future O&S work programme.
- 5.5 The O&S Commission's next meeting is on 29 March. Meanwhile, the Commission is running two Working Groups, as described in Appendix 1. The Commission's working groups which have concluded, listed in Appendix 1, included the review of the new Medium Term Objectives; on that review the Council's Leader's letter of 21 Sept, accepting many of the recommended changes by the O&SC Working Group, said *'Executive colleagues, senior officers and I have certainly found the Working Group's views positive in helping to sharpen the document'*.

Environment, Culture and Communities O&S Panel

- 5.6 The Panel met on 18 October and 10 January. The main items considered at the meetings included: Quarterly Service Reports for the relevant quarters; the 2012/13 budget proposals; the Supporting People Strategy; relevant Executive Forward Plan items; briefings in respect of the Community Infrastructure Levy and the impact of the Localism Act 2011; and progress updates concerning the Borough's Local Development Framework, the re-surfacing of the A322 Bagshot Road, the energy management of the Borough's schools, proposed highway works, winter preparations and monitoring the progress of the Panel's working groups (see Appendix 1). The Panel's next meeting is on 24 April.

Health O&S Panel

- 5.7 The Panel met on 3 November and 2 February. The main items considered at those meetings included: receiving the views of the Member of Parliament for Bracknell on secondary health services in the locality; reviewing progress on the establishment of the new Clinical Commissioning Group; receiving presentations from the Chief Executives of South Central Ambulance Service and Frimley Park Hospital on the work of their NHS Trusts; meeting the Chief Executive of NHS Berkshire PCT on progress on the reforms to health arising from the Government's Health and Social Care Bill and the 'Shaping the Future' programme for health services in East Berkshire; monitoring the Bracknell Healthspace project; receiving briefings on the transfer of public health functions to the Council; and monitoring the progress of the Panel's Working Groups (see Appendix 1). The Panel's next meeting is on 26 April.
- 5.8 The work outside formal panel meetings has included the Panel Chairman attending the Royal opening of the Royal Berkshire Hospital's Brants Bridge Clinic, visiting Frimley Park Hospital, and attending various NHS seminars.

Children, Young People and Learning O&S Panel

- 5.9 Meetings of the Panel were held on 5 October and 18 January when it: viewed a domestic violence DVD created by the Bracknell Forest Youth Council; received the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel; was briefed on school places and the school admissions process, the Education Act 2011 and a Serious Case Review; and considered relevant Executive Forward Plan items, its work programme, Quarterly Service Reports for the relevant quarters, the 2012/13 budget proposals, the report of the O&S review of the Common Assessment Framework, and the 2010/11 annual reports of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, of School and Children's Centre Inspections, of the Ofsted Assessment of Children's Services and of the Independent Reviewing Officer for Children's Social Care. Future review work is described in Appendix 1. The Panel's next meeting is on 18 April.
- 5.10 The work outside formal Panel meetings has included some Panel members and an O&S officer meeting with OFSTED inspectors in November 2011 on the role and activities of the Panel and its working groups. OFSTED and the Care Quality Commission were inspecting safeguarding and looked after children services in Bracknell Forest and subsequently commented on O&S in the report¹ of their Inspection. The inspectors said:

'The council's overview and scrutiny process is outstanding and has led to a thorough and comprehensive review of safeguarding in 2011 with clear and measurable recommendations.'

'The internal scrutiny of performance is outstanding, with strong evidence of senior managers being held to account for service quality, performance and the actions to be taken in order to meet specific targets.'

Additionally, following the issuing of a press release on the report of the Working Group which reviewed the Common Assessment framework, a local radio station interviewed the Lead Member of the Working Group.

Adult Social Care O&S Panel

- 5.11 The Panel met on 11 October and 17 January. The main items considered at the meetings included: the 2010/11 Adult Safeguarding Annual Report; the Adult Social Care and Health Local Account for 2010/11; Quarterly Service Reports for the relevant quarters; the 2012/13 budget proposals; the Panel's work programme, relevant Executive Forward Plan items; briefings in respect of the Emergency Duty Team, Carers' Conference outcomes, substance misuse and Blue Badge disabled parking scheme reforms; and progress updates regarding the personalisation of Adult Social Care and the Older People's Partnership. The Panel also received a petition with 973 signatories asking for Ladybank Residential Care Home to remain open and updates on its working groups (see Appendix 1). The Panel's next meeting is on 17 April.

Other Overview and Scrutiny Issues

- 5.12 The O&S Annual Report for 2011-12 is being produced, and this is planned for presentation to Council on 25 April.
- 5.13 Responses to the feedback questionnaires on the quality of O&S reviews are summarised in Appendix 2, showing a consistently high score across the various questions posed.

¹ The report was published on 16 December 2011 and can be seen at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/local-authorities/bracknell-forest>

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- 5.14 Quarterly review and agenda setting meetings between O&S Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen, Executive Members and Directors are taking place regularly for the Panels (every two months for the O&S Commission).
- 5.15 The O&S Commission Chairmen and Vice Chairmen are meeting on a regular basis to consider cross-cutting O&S issues. Their next meeting is planned for 16 April.
- 5.16 External networking on O&S in the last six months has included an O&S officer attending the South East Employers Local Democracy and Accountability network events; Members and an O&S officer attending an O&S public health conference; and an O&S officer attending a Home Office conference on the new Police and Crime Panels scrutiny arrangements.

6 Developments in O&S

- 6.1 The Government's Health and Social Care Bill, currently going through its Parliamentary stages contains some proposed changes to strengthen Health O&S provisions, and is being monitored. The governance implications of the Localism Act relating to scrutiny are under consideration by members.
- 6.2 Council approved the introduction of a Public Participation scheme for O&S, and this is now a standard item for all O&S meetings in public.
- 6.3 Member training on O&S in the period included three training events delivered by the Centre for Public Scrutiny on questioning skills, and on leadership of O&S.
- 6.4 The O&S Officer team pursued a number of developments, including adding O&S questions to the all-Member survey in January 2012. Of the applicable answers from respondents, 96% said they were satisfied with the support provided by officers, and 81% said they were satisfied with the training provided to members on O&S. Other development work by the O&S team included regularly delivering Corporate Induction Training on O&S; and improving the O&S pages on the Council's website. Also, the Head of O&S met the Youth Council on 26 September, at the initiative of the Executive Member for Children and Young People, to explain the role of O&S, and to explore whether the Youth Council would like to become involved.

7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Statutory Scrutiny Officer

- 7.1 The monitoring of this function is carried out by the Statutory Scrutiny Officer on a quarterly basis. Good progress has been made on the agreed programme of work by Overview and Scrutiny for 2011/12. Scrutiny Panels have continued to focus on areas of importance to local residents, and the quality of the work done continues to be high.

Borough Solicitor

- 7.2 Nothing to add to the report.

Borough Treasurer

- 7.3 There are no additional financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.4 Not applicable. The report does not contain any recommendations impacting on equalities issues.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 7.5 Not applicable. The report does not contain any recommendations impacting on strategic risk management issues.

Workforce Implications

- 7.6 Not applicable. The report does not contain any new recommendations impacting on workforce implications.

Other Officers

- 7.7 Directors and lead officers are consulted on the scope of each O&S review before its commencement, and on draft O&S reports before publication.

8 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 8.1 None.

Method of Consultation

- 8.2 Not applicable.

Representations Received

- 8.3 None.

Background Papers

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

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY CURRENT WORKING GROUPS – 2011/12

Position at 23 February 2012

Overview and Scrutiny Commission								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
ICT Strategy	Heydon (Lead) Angell, Ms Brown, Brunel-Walker and Gbadebo	Pat Keane	Richard Beaumont	√	Completed	√ Views given at meeting on 22 February 2012		Final strategy awaited (Note: 15 March strategy submitted)
Community Infrastructure Levy	Leake (Lead), Angell, Mrs Birch, Heydon, Virgo and Worrall	Bev Hindle	Richard Beaumont	Being drafted				First meeting held on 23 February

Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
New Health and Well-being Strategy	Virgo (Lead), Finch, Mrs Temperton, and Baily. Mr Pearce	Glyn Jones	Richard Beaumont	Under development	Information gathering underway			Two meetings held to date
Implementation of the major NHS reforms	Finch (Lead), Virgo, Mrs Angell and Mrs Barnard	Glyn Jones	Richard Beaumont	√	Started. On- hold pending legislation			Two meetings held to date

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Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Review of Highway Maintenance	McLean (Lead), Mrs Angell, Brossard, Leake and Parish & Town Councillors: Mrs Cupper (Sandhurst), Mrs Doyle (Binfield), Kensall (Bracknell), Paxton (Winkfield) and Price (Crowthorne)	Steve Loudoun	Andrea Carr	√	Around 80% completed	Interim report issued	Response received to interim report	The working group has resumed to complete the review and will be next considering the Highways Asset Management Plan.
Member Reference Group – Commercial Sponsorship	Finnie (Lead), Brossard, Dudley, Gbadebo and Ward	Vincent Paliczka	Andrea Carr	√	Around 60% completed			To provide views and advice on prospective commercial sponsorship income.
Site Allocations Development Plan Document (SADPD)	Finnie (Lead), Mrs Angell, Brossard, Finch and McLean	Bev Hindle / Max Baker	Andrea Carr	√	Completed	Views submitted to the Executive as part of the DPD consultation.	Not applicable	Work completed and no further meetings proposed.

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Public Transport Subsidies & Concessionary Fare Support	Brossard, Finnie, Gbadebo and Leake	Bev Hindle / Sue Cuthbert	Andrea Carr	Scope drafted	The first meeting will take place on 29 February 2012			Review requested as part of the 2012/13 budget proposals.
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Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Common Assessment Framework	Mrs Birch (Lead), Mrs McCracken, Ms Hayes and Mrs Temperton. Mrs Mitchell	Sandra Davies	Richard Beaumont	√	Completed	√		Executive response awaited. Group re-forming to provide input to the Early Intervention Strategy.

Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Substance Misuse	Virgo (Lead), Blatchford and Brossard	Jillian Hunt / Mira Haynes	Andrea Carr	√	Third meeting is being arranged.			Information and evidence gathering.
Modernisation of Older People's Services	Allen (Lead), Brossard, Harrison and Mrs Temperton	Mira Haynes	Andrea Carr	√	Second meeting taking place on 20 March.			Information and evidence gathering.

Completed Reviews

Publication Date	Title
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
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

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Publication Date	Title
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
December 2009	NHS Core Standards
January 2010	Medium Term Objectives 2010/11
January 2010	Review of the Bracknell Healthspace (publication withheld to 2011)
January 2010	14-19 Years Education Provision
April 2010	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2009/10
July 2010	Review of Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan (Update)
July 2010	The Council's Response to the Severe Winter Weather
July 2010	Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies
October 2010	Safeguarding Adults in the context of Personalisation
October 2010	Review of Partnership Scrutiny
December 2010	Hospital Car Parking Charges
January 2011	Safeguarding Children and Young People
March 2011	Review of the Bracknell Healthspace (Addendum)
April 2011	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010/11
June 2011	Office Accommodation Strategy
June 2011	Plans for Sustaining Economic Prosperity
July 2011	Review of Highway Maintenance (Interim report)
September 2011	Performance Management Framework

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Publication Date	Title
October 2011	Plans for Neighbourhood Engagement
October 2011	Regulation of Investigatory Powers

Results of Feedback Questionnaires on Overview and Scrutiny Reports

Note – Departmental Link officers on each major Overview and Scrutiny review are asked to score the key aspects of each substantive review on a scale of 0 (Unsatisfactory) to 3 (Excellent)

	Average score for previous 15 Reviews ²
PLANNING	2.8
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?	2.9
CONDUCT OF REVIEW	2.7
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?	2.7
Did the review get to the heart of the issue?	2.7
REPORTING	2.9
Did you have an opportunity to comment on the draft report?	
Did the report give a clear and fair presentation of the facts?	2.5
Were the recommendations relevant and practical?	2.5
How useful was this review in terms of improving the Council's performance?	2.6

² 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, Review of Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan, 14-19 Education, Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies, Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Adults, and the Common Assessment Framework.