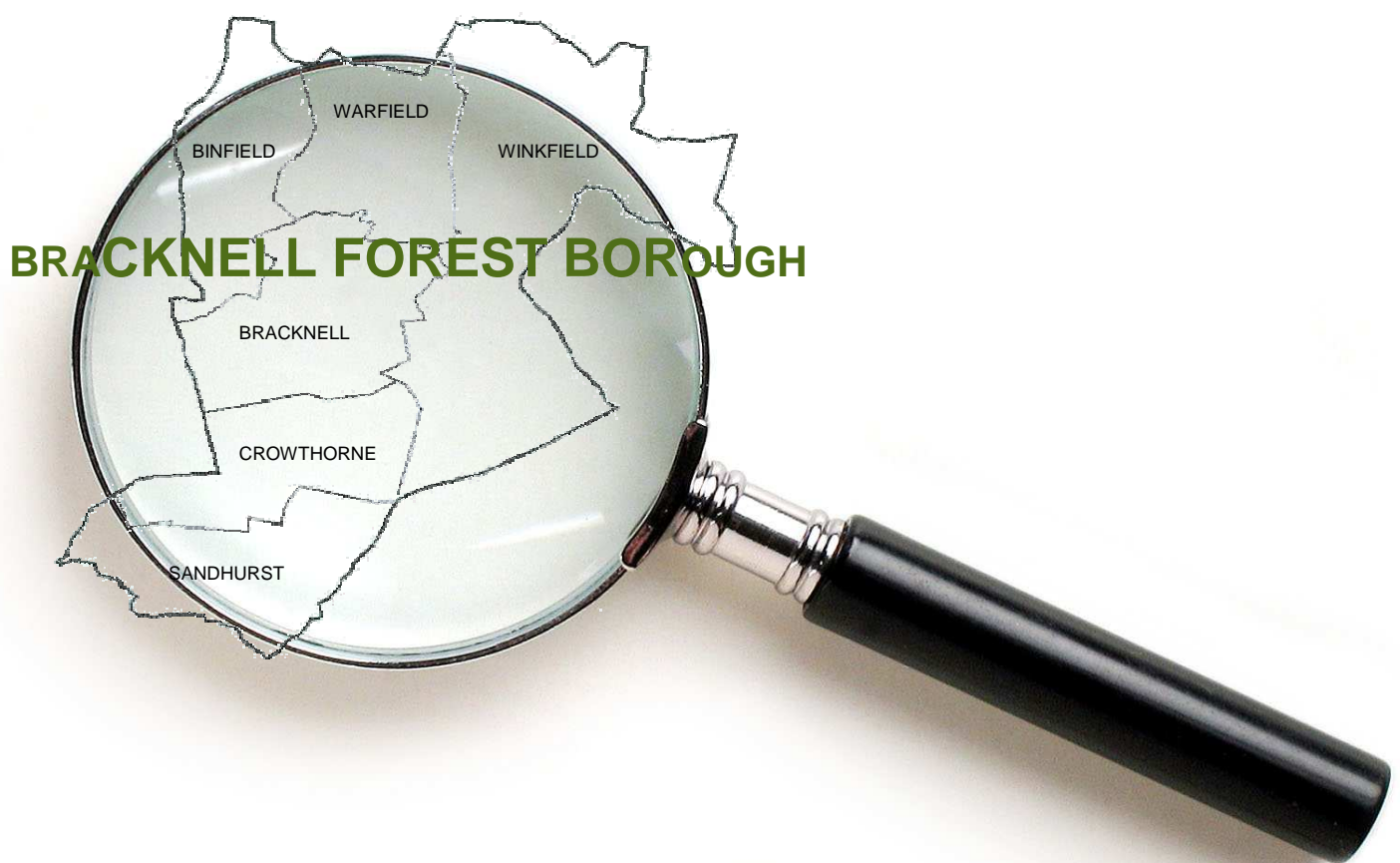


OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT

2013/14



April 2014

**Helping to make Bracknell Forest a place where all people can thrive: living,
learning and working in a clean, safe and healthy environment**

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FOREWORD

In my Foreword last year, I drew attention to the importance in concentrating on the 'Overview' aspect of our work. I believe that that has been shown to have paid dividends in the quality and importance of the Reports that the Commission and Panels have made to the Executive. Virtually all the recommendations that were made have been accepted and residents of our Borough have been advantaged by those decisions. That focus has continued this year and I anticipate similar benefits.

It was especially pleasing to see our work complemented in the Local Government Association Peer Review as '*... There is a strong and effective overview and scrutiny function.*' This is especially so in the increasingly challenging financial times that we are in.

I would also like to draw attention to the provision that the Commission and the Panels have for public speaking. Use of this facility allows residents of the Borough to raise relevant matters of concern directly with the Commission or its Scrutiny Panels. Details are available on the Borough Council's website at <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/attendorspeakatanoverviewandscrutinymeeting>

I encourage members of the public to use it.

Again, I need to express my thanks for the dedication and work of all the Commission and Panel Members: it is a pity that the vast amount of work that they do goes unseen by the public. The various Directors of the Council, along with their officers, also deserve thanks for their assistance and fortitude in dealing with Members' often persistent and detailed questioning.

It would be remiss of me if I did not express the most unqualified thanks to our now too small a team of Scrutiny Officers. They do sterling work – often in difficult circumstances. A point has now been reached where the work of the Commission and Panels is being seriously hindered and restricted by a lack of this vital resource.

As fiscal pressures increase, our work, for the benefit of residents, is becoming more vital. I am confident that with the right resources we can meet that challenge.

Councillor Ian Leake

Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Commission

April 2014

INTRODUCTION TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

What is Overview and Scrutiny?

Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) is a principal way of achieving open, democratic accountability for the provision of public services. The aim of O&S is to improve public services and quality of life for local residents. Its main value is in holding the Council and other service providers to account, rigorously monitoring performance and in its capacity to inform and influence the actions of the Council and its partners. O&S is a legal requirement which was introduced by the Local Government Act 2000; it was extended in later legislation, and was consolidated in the Localism Act of 2011. O&S allows Councillors to examine, question and evaluate various functions of the Council and other providers of public services on behalf of the public in an open and effective way.

Overview and Scrutiny has five broad functions:

- Holding the Council's Executive and its statutory partners to account in the public interest. This enables more transparent and effective decision making. This includes the power to 'call-in' a decision made by the Executive that has not yet been implemented. This effectively freezes the decision and allows the Commission and the Panels to consider the decision further and then to make recommendations, if appropriate, to the Executive.
- Supporting the development of effective policies and initiatives which have a beneficial impact on the community through policy review and development.
- Contributing to continuous improvement in services through monitoring quarterly departmental performance reports and the implementation of improvement plans.
- Having a positive impact on the work and outcomes of external agencies and providers of public services.
- Aiding Councillors in engaging with their communities and playing the role of community representatives and leaders.

The Structure of Overview and Scrutiny at Bracknell Forest

Overview and Scrutiny in Bracknell Forest is carried out by four Panels, which in law are sub-committees of the co-ordinating O&S Commission. The co-ordination role of the Commission includes overview of forthcoming Executive decisions, developing a work programme of O&S reviews and policy development projects and, with Council approval, appointing a number of O&S Panels. The Panels match the Council's departmental structure, except for an additional Panel for Health issues, and this structure is kept under review to ensure it remains efficient.

Each of the Panels and the Commission is made up of elected non-Executive Members of the Council (full details of O&S Membership can be seen on pages 23-24). As well as Council Members, some of the Panels include other representatives such as Church, Parent Governor and Teacher Representatives. Residents are encouraged to contribute ideas and concerns to the meetings of the O&S Commission and the Panels.

In addition, the Council is a member of the Joint East Berkshire Health O&S Committee in conjunction with Slough Borough Council and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. This Committee, which looks at health issues across East Berkshire, was suspended in 2011, and will reconvene in the event of a statutory consultation concerning National Health services in East Berkshire.

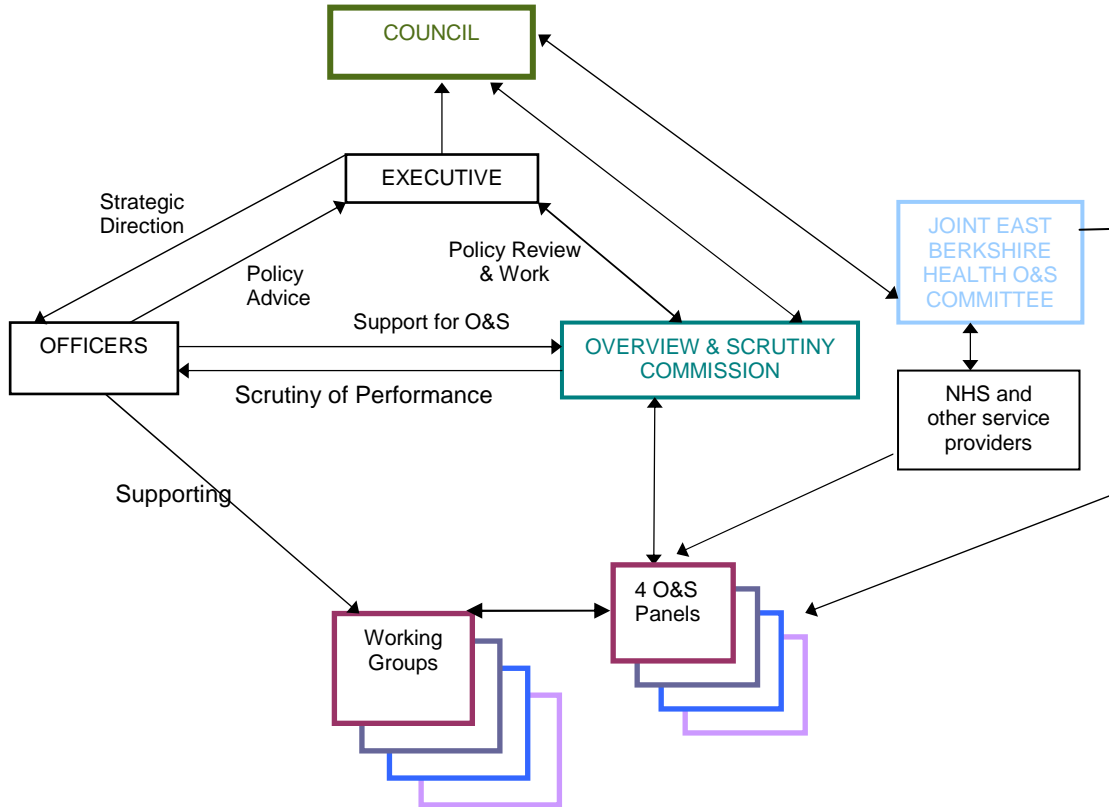


Diagram showing the structure of Overview and Scrutiny at Bracknell Forest Council

Much of the detailed O&S work is carried out by Working Groups. Some of these groups are formed to provide an input to policy development, and other groups carry out investigations and then produce a report on the specific issue. Council officers, expert witnesses, partner organisations and service users participate in these O&S reviews. Site visits may be carried out and independent research may be considered.

Organisation of Overview and Scrutiny Work

In addition to its co-ordination and general role, the O&S Commission specifically concentrates on holding to account the Council's Chief Executive's Office and the Corporate Services Department, with the same functions as the Panels below; it undertakes its own cross-cutting reviews when required; and it is the Council's statutory 'Crime and Disorder Committee'.

The work of the Commission and Panels is steered by a work programme which is agreed by the Commission at the beginning of each Municipal year in consultation with the Executive and Corporate Management Team. The work programme features policy reviews and performance monitoring in relation to policy objectives, performance targets and particular service areas through regular performance reports and budget consultation and monitoring. The work programme is flexible, allowing the addition of new reviews as the need arises. The Commission usually meet every two months, and the Panels meet quarterly.

Legislation requires every local authority in England with Executive/O&S arrangements to designate one of its officers as the Scrutiny Officer with statutory duties to promote the role of the authority's O&S, and to provide support and guidance on that function. This statutory Scrutiny Officer role is fulfilled by the Council's Director of Corporate Services, who is also the Deputy Chief Executive. Day to day officer support is provided by a dedicated O&S officer team reporting to the Assistant Chief Executive in the Chief Executive's Office.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION



Councillor Ian Leake

Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Commission

The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Commission co-ordinates the work of the O&S Panels and reviews corporate issues concerning the whole Council, holding the Executive to account. The co-ordination role includes appointing Panel Members, programming O&S reviews, developing the O&S processes and monitoring Panels' activities. Regularly scrutinised items include the quarterly Corporate Performance Overview Reports, and the Quarterly Service Reports for the Chief Executive's Office and the Corporate Services Department. A wide range of matters is reviewed, such as important new policy proposals, and progress on improving services for residents. The Commission regularly monitors the forthcoming decisions of the Council's Executive. The Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection routinely attends the Commission's meetings, and other Executive Members are required to attend as necessary.

Performance Monitoring

O&S continues to make an important contribution to the Council's very effective performance management arrangements. Our on-going review of the Quarterly Service Reports for the Chief Executive's Office, the Corporate Services Department and the Council as a whole enabled us to hold Executive Members and officers to account for the performance against service plan objectives and performance targets.

These activities resulted in the raising of a number of questions and requests for additional information and clarification including:

- Measuring the effectiveness of work undertaken to tackle domestic abuse
- The speed of answering telephone calls to the Customer Contact Centre
- The use of temporary housing
- Staff turnover
- Funding of superfast broadband
- Performance against the target for the number of Special Educational Needs Statements issued within 26 weeks
- The impact of incorporating crimes committed at Broadmoor Hospital into the overall crime figures for Bracknell Forest

The Commission also gave particular attention to:

- The Council's Commercial Property Portfolio, where we received a presentation and we raised a number of questions around that activity.
- The action plan devised to address areas of improvement identified from the results of the Residents' Survey in 2012.

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- Progress on the strategies for Customer Contact Channels and office accommodation.
- Implementation of the Information and Communications Technology Strategy.
- The recommendations of the Health O&S Panel's Working Group on the Francis report. The worthwhile improvements identified in that report for Health scrutiny could have a wider application to the Commission and the Panels: this will be considered further.

The Commission also monitored the progress of all O&S work by receiving regular 'traffic light indicators' from the Chairmen of the Commission and all four Panels on their progress against the agreed work programme, in addition to overall six monthly progress reports from officers.

Budget scrutiny

The O&S Commission, along with the O&S Panels, examined the Council's revenue and capital budget proposals for 2014/2015, along with the proposed fees and charges for Council Services. The Commission preceded this, in the Autumn, with a discussion with the Borough Treasurer on the main issues influencing the design of the budget. Our views on the budget proposals, incorporating those of the O&S Panels, were reported to the Executive as part of the open consultation on the budget.

Holding the Executive to Account

There was one 'call-in' during 2013/14, relating to an Executive Member's decision to introduce a traffic restriction at the junction of London Road and Beehive Road. The Commission has kept a watching brief on the Executive's decisions and reviewed relevant forthcoming Executive issues at each meeting. This gave rise to some questions including the use of bailiff services in Revenue Services.

Crime and Disorder

The Commission has continued to discharge the Council's 'Crime and Disorder Committee' requirements emanating from the Police and Justice Act, and the related statutory guidance from the Home Office on the O&S of Crime and Disorder. We have monitored crime and disorder issues, including the periodic performance reports of progress against crime indicators and key actions for community safety. On 2 May 2013, we met with the Assistant Chief Constable also the Chief Inspector from Bracknell Police Station, together with the Chairman of Bracknell Forest's Community Safety Partnership. The principal issues discussed were the 2012/13 annual crime figures, the partnership's performance and the new priorities in the Community Safety Plan.

Councillor and Community Calls For Action

From April 2009, the legal provision for the 'Councillor Call for Action' also the 'Community Call for Action' came into effect, giving Members the opportunity to ask for discussions at O&S committees on unresolved issues. There have been no Community or Councillor Calls for Action at Bracknell Forest Council in 2013/14.

Input to Policy Development

The Commission actively participated in making an input to the Council's policy development in 2013/14:

- A Working Group of the Commission completed a review of delegated authorities, which covered the scheme of delegation and the extent of powers delegated to officers. The Executive accepted all the Working Group's recommendations and commended the thoroughness of the review. The Deputy Leader said about the report: *'I find the document detailed and comprehensive and an excellent piece of scrutiny work'*.
- We made an input to the consultation on the new Community Engagement strategy.
- Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) – The Executive accepted most of the recommendations of the Commission's Working Group which reviewed the Council's preparations for this important new levy, aimed at obtaining contributions from property developers towards school buildings and other infrastructure. The Commission continued to be briefed on progress towards introducing the CIL.

At the Council meeting on 24 April 2013, the Leader said that the O&S review of CIL had been extremely valuable and comprehensive. It had a real impact on the approach being adopted, and he very much welcomed continuing O&S involvement in CIL.



The Commission met the newly appointed Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley, Anthony Stansfeld, in March 2013
Left to right: Cllr Iain McCracken, Mr Stansfeld, Cllr Ian Leake

Membership

We welcomed Reverend Canon Nick Parish to the Commission, as the newly appointed Church of England representative. The Commission currently has a vacancy for a representative of secondary school Parent Governors, also a Catholic Church representative where we have asked the Diocese to provide a nominee.

Future Commission Work

It is anticipated that during the latter part of 2013/14 the Commission will review the latest information on crime rates with representatives of Thames Valley Police and the Community Safety Partnership. A review may also take place into the public concern expressed about the reliability of 'reported crime' statistics. Quarter 3 performance reports, a briefing on the work of the Economic and Skills Development Partnership, and progress on implementing the Economic Development Strategy will also take place. National changes on the re-localisation of Business Rates will also be reviewed, and it is likely that further work on the CIL will have to take place.

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Councillor Jim Finnie

Chairman, Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Panel

The Environment, Culture and Communities O&S Panel undertakes the Council's O&S function in relation to its Environment, Culture and Communities Department which provides environment and public protection, leisure, culture and library, and planning and transport services. The work of the Panel consists of monitoring the Department's performance, scrutinising its budget and exercising pre-decision scrutiny by reference to scheduled Executive key and non-key decisions. The relevant Executive portfolio holders regularly attend Panel meetings. The Panel assists with policy review and development by establishing working groups to undertake policy reviews, the outcomes and recommendations of which are submitted to the Executive for adoption and the Panel receives the Executive's response. The work programme of the Panel identifies other areas of work to be undertaken by the Panel.

Performance Monitoring

During 2013/14 the Environment, Culture and Communities O&S Panel has continued to monitor the performance of the Environment, Culture and Communities Department mainly through review of its Quarterly Service Reports (QSRs). The QSRs enabled the Panel to question Executive Members and officers in detail regarding the trends, pressures and priorities for this major service area. This resulted in a number of questions and requests for additional information in areas including:

- The total liability in relation to land charges provision for claimed personal searches;
- Possible improvements to Coral Reef to enhance disabled access and allow the use of rubber rings;
- Library usage figures indicated in the Residents' Survey 2012;
- Insourcing of traffic management to secure greater control in preparation for the town centre redevelopment;
- Wheeled bin ownership and fees and charges;
- Recycling incentive scheme leisure services redemptions;
- Maintenance of the public realm;
- Establishing a system to record service compliments in addition to complaints;
- Car parking penalties;
- Town planning staff resources and enforcement procedures; and
- Town centre highway access improvements.

Budget Scrutiny

In preparation for the scrutiny of the 2014/15 budget proposals, the Panel discussed the evolving departmental budgetary position and considered the Council's medium term financial plans 2014/15 - 2016/17. These addressed the underlying principles of the budget strategy, budget planning assumptions and incremental funding gaps. The focus on the 2014/15 budget described the starting point, the budget gap, bridging the gap and the budget preparation timetable.

The Panel then examined the 2014/15 draft budget proposals for the Environment, Culture and Communities Department as part of the Council's budget consultation process. The key themes included the revenue budget, commitment budget, revenue pressures and savings, fees and charges, and proposed capital programme schemes. Members noted details of the draft revenue budget pressures for the Department which totalled £276,000 and the draft revenue budget savings proposals which amounted to £1,066,000.

Panel Members asked numerous questions in relation to the budget proposals concerning matters including car park charges, the Community Infrastructure Levy, staffing reductions, the E+ Smartcard, road safety staffing and campaigns, leisure concession rates, take up of the Disabled Facilities Grant, town centre highway works, highway and car park maintenance, cremation services, building regulations, maintenance of Coral Reef, the quality improvement programme for parks and open spaces, and flood defences and land drainage.

Members were satisfied that the 'Glide Path' savings suggested in the budget proposals would not have a major impact on services or significantly increase the impact of ongoing pressures on services and commented that the Council's efforts to maintain and improve its assets at a time of financial pressure were worthy of note.

Overview and Policy Development

At its meetings in 2013/14 the Panel considered matters including its work programme; the Local Development Framework; the outcomes of the 2012 Residents' Survey; the Schools' Environmental Management Report 2011/12; the proposed Residents' Parking Scheme; sustainable modes of transport; neighbourhood planning; and the Revised Statement of Community Involvement. The Panel also received bi-annual O&S progress reports and regular updates concerning the review work undertaken by its working groups. In addition, the Panel invited representatives of Thames Water and the Environment Agency to one of its meetings to discuss flood risk management in the Borough.

An example of the effectiveness of the Panel's work was the Member Reference Group we ran in 2012, to examine the issues and options around the potential for increasing income from more commercial sponsorship in the Borough. Arising from our recommendations, a contract was placed putting the operation of the scheme with an external operator, with the Council sharing half the net revenues obtained. This has been successful in various ways, including promoting local businesses, and the annual income for the Council from sponsorships (mainly of roundabouts) is now estimated to be some £66,000.

Bus Strategy Working Group

Further to its earlier review of proposed reductions to public transport subsidies and concessionary fare support, a Working Group of the Panel, with the addition of one new Member, was re-constituted to guide the Borough's emerging Bus Strategy for implementation in April 2014.

A work programme of three Working Group sessions was designed. The first session, which consisted of an introduction to buses and bus networks, the Council's role and responsibility in relation to buses, and the bus service priorities for Bracknell Forest, took place in February 2013. The second session followed in early April 2013 when the Working Group received an introduction to the Borough's bus network and history and considered priorities for Bracknell Forest together with a critique of network strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. A third session took place in late April 2013 when, informed by the first two sessions, the Working Group was invited to consider and reach agreement on priorities, concrete principals and specific targets for the Bus Strategy.

A final meeting of the Working Group took place in October 2013 when Members received a briefing in respect of the responses to the public consultation regarding the Bus Strategy and commented on the Strategy in advance of its finalisation and before its approval by the Executive.

Cultural Services Offering

Following the completion of the work contributing to the development of the Bracknell Forest Bus Strategy, the Panel established a new working group to review the Council's Cultural Services offering. The first meeting of the Working Group, which took place in January 2014, concentrated on receiving a briefing from officers in respect of the Council's Cultural Services and considering the scope of the review. At the second meeting the scope and way forward was agreed. Subsequent meetings and activities of the Working Group will focus, for example, on undertaking a stocktake of cultural activities across the Borough and the range of services provided by the Leisure and Culture division of the Council. The Working Group will also be expressing views on the Bracknell Forest Cultural Statement prior to its approval by the Executive.

Future Panel Work

It is anticipated that future work of the Panel during the latter part of 2013/14 will include review of scheduled Executive decisions, an update on Working Group activity, and consideration of a Recycling Incentive Scheme progress update, the Schools' Annual Environmental Management Report for 2012/13, a Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan update, the 2013/14 Integrated Transport Plan and Highway Maintenance Programme, and the quarter three Quarterly Service Report.

Holding the Executive to Account

The Panel has kept a watching brief on relevant scheduled Executive key and non-key decisions which have been reviewed at each meeting. It has not had occasion to make or review any 'call-ins' during 2013/14.



Councillor Tony Virgo

Chairman, Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel

The Health Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Panel has a wide statutory remit to review the plans and performance of National Health Service organisations, and NHS-funded organisations providing health services to residents of Bracknell Forest. This includes responding to consultations concerning proposed major changes in service provision. The Panel also reviews the Council's Public Health functions and other activities that contribute to health improvements in the Borough. The Council's Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing regularly attends meetings of the Panel. Working groups of the Panel undertake focussed work, with a view to improving services, and the resulting findings and recommendations are submitted to the Executive of the organisations concerned for action.

Performance Monitoring

The Panel continued to take a close interest in the performance of National Health Service organisations serving Bracknell Forest residents. The Panel also reviewed the Quarterly Service Reports of the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing department relating to Public Health activities.

A major area of activity, to which we devoted two additional meetings of the Panel in August 2013 and February 2014, was the action planned and taken by Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust in response to highly critical inspection reports issued on them by the Care Quality Commission. The Panel welcomed the improvements which were made by the Trust during the year, and we remain supportive of the Trust's endeavours to improve their services to patients. Nevertheless, as representatives of Bracknell Forest residents, we concluded that the inadequate care of patients was unacceptable, and we did not have sufficient confidence that the Trust would make fast enough progress towards remedying the various failures found by the inspectors. We decided to draw our concerns to the attention of NHS England, the Care Quality Commission, and Monitor (the regulatory body for NHS Foundation Trusts).

Other areas of focus for the Panel during 2013/14 included:

- Receiving a report and discussing with representatives of South Central Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust, their performance on two issues that had been identified by the Panel as being of interest and concern: out of hospital cardiac survival rates and ambulance response times.
- Receiving regular updates on putting into place the Government's 2013 NHS reforms, specifically: implementing and developing the Public Health functions transferred to the local authority; the operation of the Health and Wellbeing Board; and the work of the General Practitioner Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) for Bracknell Forest and Ascot.

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- Monitoring the activation by the CCG of the 'Shaping the future' decisions by the former Primary Care Trust, and particularly the creation of the Urgent Care Centre at Brants Bridge, the commencement of which was delayed due to – unsuccessful - judicial review and other proceedings by another council.
- Meeting Healthwatch Bracknell Forest and discussing with them their progress in fulfilling their role, with specific reference to engaging with NHS patients and working arrangements with the Health O&S Panel. We entered into a formal protocol with Healthwatch Bracknell Forest and they accepted our invitation to attend our Panel meetings as an official observer.
- Monitoring the performance of major providers of NHS services to residents in Bracknell Forest. This has included making an input to the 2012/13 'Quality Accounts' of nearby NHS Trusts, which are annual reports to the public from providers of NHS healthcare services about the quality of services they provide.

An example of the effectiveness of the Panel's work was the response we made in 2012/13 to a statutory NHS consultation affecting health services in East Berkshire. The proposed response – supporting the creation of the Urgent Care Centre in Bracknell and other changes - was debated and agreed by full Council, and the NHS subsequently decided to go ahead with all the changes. Another council then asked the Secretary of State to intervene to stop the service changes, but this was rejected, and the grounds for that decision referred to the positive support from Bracknell Forest's O&S. The new Urgent Care Centre is due to open during 2014.

Working Groups

The Panel operated one Working Group during 2013/14. This concentrated on reviewing what has been and can be learnt locally from the inquiry report by Robert Francis QC on the appalling failures at the Mid Staffordshire Hospital NHS Trust. The Working Group reviewed the application of the lessons of Francis to the nearby NHS Trusts, also what improvements we needed to make to our Health O&S arrangements if the weaknesses in Mid Staffordshire were not to be repeated in Bracknell Forest. The Working Group's report included many recommendations, and it was adopted by the Panel in January 2014. The Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing commented, *'This is another excellent piece of work led by Councillor Mrs McCracken and the O&S team on a very difficult and complex subject, and I congratulate all concerned.'* Implementation of the report's recommendations will take some time, but the Panel has made a good start by:

- The O&S Commission appointing a retired GP, Dr David Norman, to the Panel to bring NHS knowledge and medical expertise to our work.
- Each Panel Member taking individual responsibility to carry out detailed scrutiny work on a designated area of the NHS, so as to add depth to all of the Panel's work.
- The Panel receiving a regular report containing the current information on 'the patient experience' from the NHS Choices website for the NHS Foundation Trusts providing most secondary NHS services to Bracknell Forest residents.



Members of the Working Group on the Francis Report.

Left to right: Councillors Angell, Mrs Angell, Kensall, Baily, Mrs Temperton and Mrs McCracken. Councillor Virgo.

Overview and Policy Development

The Panel has kept an on-going interest in the developing healthcare scene, asking for information as necessary and contributing our views. Our main areas of interest included:

- Considering the latest survey responses given by patients of Bracknell Forest GP practices, in discussion with representatives of NHS England's Thames Valley Team and of the Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group.
- Monitoring important developments to the NHS both nationally and locally, in particular those deriving from the Care Bill, 'Integrated Care and Support: Our Shared Commitment', which requires that local areas must develop integrated health and social care services over the next five years.

The Panel also received bi-annual progress reports on O&S activity across the board, and updates on the work of its Working Group reviewing the lessons from the Francis Report.

Finance Scrutiny

The Panel continued to monitor the local NHS financial position, particularly in the context of increasing demand for services and financial pressure on all NHS organisations. We also formally reviewed the Council's budget proposals for Public Health in 2014/15. We paid close attention to the financial settlement for the Council's new Public Health responsibilities.

Holding the Executive to Account

The Panel has kept a watching brief on relevant scheduled Executive key and non-key decisions which have been reviewed at each meeting. It has not had occasion to make or review any 'call-ins' during 2013/14.

Other Panel Work

Representatives of the Health O&S Panel participated in:

- A visit to the emergency operations call centre for the South Central Ambulance Service
- A 'Listening event' for patients of Frimley Park Hospital, as part of a Care Quality Commission inspection
- Visits to the Royal Berkshire and Wexham Park Hospitals, to enquire about their procedures for dealing with patients' complaints
- A Health scrutiny networking event for councils in the Thames Valley, run by the Centre for Public Scrutiny
- A discussion on the local availability of defibrillators.

Future Panel Work

It is anticipated that future work of the Panel during the latter part of 2013/14 will include: meeting representatives of SEAP Complaints Advocacy Service on their role and activities; considering the responses of the Executive and the NHS Trusts to the recommendations of the Panel's Working Group on the Francis Report; considering the parts of the Quarter 3 2013/14 (October to December) Quarterly Service Report relating to Public Health; making an input to the 'Quality Accounts' for each of the principal NHS organisations serving Bracknell Forest residents; and monitoring the prospective merger of two Hospital Trusts nearby.

Joint East Berkshire with Buckinghamshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

This Committee came into being following the creation of the Primary Care Trust (PCT) for East Berkshire, in 2006. The Committee's role was to carry out health scrutiny reviews and consider health issues across the whole of the NHS Berkshire East PCT's area. On occasions and as necessary, the Committee was expanded to include Health Scrutiny Councillors from Buckinghamshire County Council. The Committee was chaired on a rotational basis annually, with Bracknell Forest Council last chairing it and providing officer support during 2010/11.

In 2011, the O&S Commission decided to end the Council's involvement in the Committee, unless there was a need to respond to a statutory consultation affecting health services in East Berkshire. The Commission agreed to reactivate the Committee in 2012, in order to respond jointly with other councils to a statutory consultation concerning changes to health services in East Berkshire. With the end of that consultation, and the abolition of the PCTs, the last meeting of the Committee was held in March 2013, since when it has remained suspended.

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL



Councillor Mrs Gill Birch

Chairman, Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Panel

The role of the Children, Young People and Learning O&S Panel is to overview and scrutinise the work of Bracknell Forest's Children, Young People and Learning Department which provides education and social services for children and young people in the Borough and lifelong community learning services to all residents. The Panel monitors the performance of the Department and holds the Council's Executive to account by reviewing relevant scheduled Executive decisions. The Council's Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning regularly attends meetings of the Panel. Working groups of the Panel undertake policy reviews with a view to developing and improving services and the resulting findings and recommendations are submitted to the Executive for adoption. The Panel is consulted on the Council's budget each year and looks at other matters of interest in addition to reviewing statutory reports, performance assessments, inspection outcomes, annual service reports and other plans.

Performance Monitoring

The Children, Young People and Learning O&S Panel has regularly monitored the performance of the Children, Young People and Learning Department throughout 2013/14. This was undertaken principally through review of its Quarterly Service Reports (QSRs), the Service Plan Key Actions and Indicators, the Children's Social Care Statutory Compliments and Complaints Annual Report 2013/14 and the Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 2013/14.

The QSRs enabled the Panel to question the Executive Member and officers in detail about the trends, pressures and priorities for this significant service area. At recent Panel meetings specific areas have been identified for particular attention and these have included school admissions in 2013/14, the outcome of Ofsted inspections of Bracknell Forest schools, take up of Youth Service provision, capital project building works and the recruitment of foster carers. This resulted in a number of questions and requests for additional information in areas including:

- The European Social Fund Project;
- The speed at which complaints were resolved;
- Performance against indicators regarding foster care and adoption placements;
- The success of bids made under the Schools Capital Programme;
- Links between entitlement to claim benefits and free school meals; and
- Examination and test performance in Bracknell Forest schools in the 2012/13 academic year.

Budget Scrutiny

The Panel considered the evolving departmental budgetary position in preparation for scrutiny of the 2014/15 budget proposals. This featured the Council's medium term financial plans 2014/15 - 2016/17 which addressed the underlying principles of the budget strategy, budget planning assumptions and incremental funding gaps. The focus on the 2014/15 budget described the starting point, the budget gap, bridging the gap and the budget preparation timetable.

Subsequently, as part of the Council's budget consultation process, the Panel considered the 2014/15 draft budget proposals relating to the Children, Young People and Learning Department. Members had regard to the priorities for the Department and the outlined key budgetary themes which included draft budget pressures, draft budget savings, draft budget net position, capital spend, staffing implications, fees and charges and other income.

Members were advised that the Department was subject to budget pressures of approximately £790,000 which were due in part to a rise in the number of looked after children and a recent case law change which had conferred a duty on local authorities to fund the cost of education to the age of 25 for young people who had previously been supported by the local authority as a looked after child and who had no recourse to public funds to complete their education. In addition the Department was proposing savings of approximately £537,000 in 2014/15.

The Panel noted that a separate consultation on the Aiming High budget would take place and expressed the view that reducing funding for Home Start could impact adversely on the Council's early intervention work.

Overview and Policy Development

During 2013/14 the Panel considered matters including a review of the Common Assessment Framework process in schools; the Adoption and Foster Care Services' Annual Reports; the Annual Review of the Children and Young People's Plan; the Annual Report on the Work of the Virtual School; the Life Chances Team's work; the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel; activities of Bracknell Forest Youth Council; the approach to the engagement of young people; the role and protocol of the Local Healthwatch; the new Ofsted inspection framework; the annual report and self-assessment of how the Director and Executive Member for Children, Young People and Learning were meeting their statutory roles and responsibilities; the Child Poverty Strategy; and the School Improvement Plan self-assessment. The Panel agreed the report of the review of school governance undertaken by one of its Working Groups and subsequently received a favourable response from the Executive. It also received bi-annual O&S progress reports and updates on the work of its Working Group reviewing the provision of school places in the Borough.

School Governance

The Panel's Working Group reviewed school governance in Bracknell Forest's schools with a view to identifying areas for improvement in the light of the new Ofsted framework which places greater emphasis on the role of school governors and governance arrangements.

The review commenced with an introductory briefing from officers, discussion on extracts from Ofsted inspections of the Borough's schools relating to governance and consideration of the scope of the review. The Working Group subsequently prepared questionnaires to gain the views of link, parent and chairmen of governors on matters including skills gaps in governing bodies, the self-evaluation toolkit and succession planning for chairmen. Governors' views were also gathered at the Link Governors Forum and at arranged meetings

with parent and chairmen of governors. In addition, the Working Group attended the annual Governors' Conference. Having considered the outcomes of meetings with governors and their responses to the questionnaires and the effect of new legislation on governing bodies, the Working Group discussed the best approach to undertaking a skills audit of governors. Information concerning the structure and composition of full governing bodies of local schools, including the structure review frequency and headteachers' views on the effectiveness of the structures, was gathered. The review was concluded with identification of best governor practice and formulation of review conclusions and recommendations prior to preparing a report of the review. In its report to Council in November 2013, the Executive thanked the Working Group for their report and time spent considering the issues. The Executive said they fully endorsed the recommendations from the O&S Working Group, which would enable improvement, and help strengthen school governance in the Borough.

School Places

A further Working Group of the Panel was established to undertake a review of the Council's arrangements for planning and providing places for children in Bracknell Forest's schools, to include the school admissions process and national comparisons.

The Working Group has met on three occasions to date. It received an introductory briefing and considered the scope of the review at its first meeting. The school admissions process was considered at the second meeting and the capital programme, new housing developments and demographic trends were addressed at the third meeting.

Future work will include school place planning anomalies and the timescales, processes, issues and learning associated with amending designated school areas.

Holding the Executive to Account

The Panel has kept a watching brief on relevant scheduled Executive key and non-key decisions which have been reviewed at each meeting. It has not had occasion to make or review any 'call-ins' during 2013/14.

Co-option

The external membership of the Panel includes statutory diocesan and parent governor representatives with voting rights in respect of education matters, a non-voting teacher representative and a non-voting children's social care representative. Reverend Canon N Parish was appointed to the Panel as Church of England representative in July 2013 and Mrs C Barrett was appointed to the Panel as children's social care representative in March 2014. There are currently vacancies for a Roman Catholic representative and a secondary parent governor representative. Steps to fill the parent governor vacancy are nearing completion and the nomination of a replacement Roman Catholic representative by the relevant Diocese is awaited.

Future Panel Work

It is anticipated that further work of the Panel during 2013/14 will include review of scheduled Executive decisions and the quarter three QSR; and consideration of the Strategy for narrowing the performance gap between children eligible for the pupil premium and their peers, the revised policy for local arrangements for children missing education, the Education Transport Policy 2015/16 and support provided to children and young people with English as an additional language. Updates in respect of the Panel's Working Group reviewing school places will be received and, when complete, this will be followed by a future review of substance misuse and the effects it has on children and families.

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL



Councillor John Harrison

Chairman, Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Panel

The role of the Adult Social Care and Housing O&S Panel is to overview and scrutinise the work of the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Department in delivering housing services and all aspects of adult social care including safeguarding adults, providing services for older people and for people with learning disabilities, mental health needs and long term conditions. The Department also liaises with NHS partners in respect of health service provision. The Panel monitors performance of the Department and holds the Council's Executive to account, reviewing relevant scheduled Executive decisions. The Council's Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing regularly attends meetings of the Panel. Working groups of the Panel undertake policy reviews with a view to developing and improving services and the resulting findings and recommendations are submitted to the Executive for response, adoption and implementation. The Panel is consulted on the Council's budget each year and looks at other matters of interest in addition to reviewing statutory reports and performance judgements, inspection outcomes, annual complaints reports and other strategies and plans.

Performance Monitoring

During 2013/14 the Adult Social Care and Housing O&S Panel has regularly monitored the performance of the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Department largely through review of its Quarterly Service Reports (QSRs), the Adult Social Care Annual Complaints Report and the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Annual Report.

The QSRs enabled the Panel to question the Executive Member and officers in detail around the trends, pressures and priorities for this important service area. This resulted in a number of questions and requests for additional information in areas including:

- Performance indicators and benchmarking;
- Budget underspends and savings;
- The number of people with mental health conditions supported by the Council;
- Personal care budgets;
- Electronic monitoring of home care provision;
- Fixed Civil Penalties for the overpayment of Benefits;
- Changes and improvements to Housing Benefit systems;
- 40 Winks respite carers scheme;
- Commissioning of care for people with dementia;
- The Learning Disabilities Commissioning Strategy;
- Staff sickness levels; and
- Outcomes of Public Health initiatives.

Budget Scrutiny

In preparation for the scrutiny of the 2014/15 budget proposals, the Panel discussed the Council's medium term financial plans 2014/15 - 2016/17 in the autumn. These addressed the underlying principles of the budget strategy, budget planning assumptions and incremental funding gaps. The focus on the 2014/15 budget described the starting point, the budget gap, bridging the gap and the budget preparation timetable.

Subsequently, the Panel considered key themes and priorities for Adult Social Care and Housing as outlined in the Council's Draft Budget Proposals for 2014/15, including consideration of housing capital for assistance to buy schemes.

Draft Revenue Budget Pressures, which arose mainly from demographics, learning disabilities, mental health in young people and Autistic Spectrum Disorders, totalled £890,000. There were numerous draft Revenue Budget Savings including 'Glide Path' savings totalling £891,000. The estimated financial impact of changes and areas where there would be no service implications were noted.

In response to Members' questions, the following points were made:

- The demand for services in Adult Social Care could vary each year depending on the number of people needing support.
- Further information would be provided on investments in Icelandic banks and the impact of the return of monies to the Council.
- Any overpayment of benefits over £500 would be investigated and £30,000 could be saved in the first year of correcting overpayments, then £10,000 per year for 2015/16 and 2016/17.
- Mental health was a growing issue and there were two teams supporting sufferers, one for the 18 to 65 years age group and the other for people over 65 years, for example, with dementia. Treatment needs were difficult to predict as it was not known who would present for support in this area. There were different cohorts of people with varying conditions and levels of severity.
- Figures would be provided on the number of people with mental health issues supported by Adult Social Care Services.
- The Council was inspected by the Care Quality Commission before Christmas 2013 in relation to sectioning or detaining people with mental health issues. There was an aim to fill the gaps in local mental health service provision and four beds would be commissioned across Berkshire to provide Tier 4 support. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service was responsible for children and young people's mental health. The criteria for accessing children's mental health services differed from that for accessing adult mental health services and children's mental health issues should be considered separately from adults' mental health issues. The service at Prospect Park in Reading was geared towards adults.

The Panel thanked officers for their work in preparing the budget proposals under difficult financial circumstances.

Overview and Policy Development

During 2013/14 the Panel considered matters including the 2012/13 Annual Complaints Reports for Adult Social Care and for Housing; the Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Annual Report 2012/13; the Adult Social Care and Health Draft Local Account 2012/13; Community Based Support Services and Joint Commissioning Strategy for people with a Learning Disability; the Commissioning Strategy for Adults with Long Term Conditions;

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Benefit Services; modernising and transforming Older People's services; 2012/13 Carers' Survey outcomes; and the Local Healthwatch role and protocol.

Regular bi-annual O&S progress reports and updates on the review work undertaken by its Working Groups were received by the Panel which also considered its work programme for 2014/15.

The Council's Role in Regulated Adult Social Care Services

The Panel established this Working Group to review the Council's role with regard to care governance and managing safeguarding in regulated Adult Social Care services. Regulated services are those which are registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC), which is the regulatory body, and are mostly those provided at residential care homes, nursing homes or domiciliary care.

The Working Group has met on two occasions to date. It received an introductory briefing and considered the scope of the review at its first meeting. The scope was agreed at the second meeting when the Working Group considered and discussed a selection of CQC inspection reports of the best and worst performing services for evaluation and comparison purposes, explored the inspection criteria utilised by the CQC, and considered examples of spot contracts and individual purchase orders relating to regulated Adult Social Care services.

Local Council Tax Benefit Scheme

Although the Panel intended to form a Working Group to undertake an annual review of the Local Council Tax Benefit Scheme, as it was operating smoothly and funds remained available it was decided that a review was unnecessary.

Holding the Executive to Account

The Panel has kept a watching brief on relevant scheduled Executive key and non-key decisions which have been reviewed at each meeting. The Panel has not had occasion to make or review any 'call-ins' during 2013/14.

Future Panel Work

Further work by the Panel during the latter part of 2013/14 is expected to include review of scheduled Executive decisions, an update on Working Group activity, and consideration of the Department's Service Plan 2014/15, the integration of health and social care, the Learning Disabilities Commissioning Strategy 2014-19, the Dementia Strategy 2014-19 and the quarter three QSR.

Membership Changes

Councillor Chris Turrell, former Chairman of the Panel, left the Panel during 2013/14 to assume the role of Executive Member for Planning and Transport. Councillors John Harrison and Nick Allen were subsequently elected as Chairman and Vice Chairman, respectively, and Councillor Mrs Susie Phillips was appointed to the Panel as a replacement Member.

DEVELOPING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

This part of the report outlines the main developments in Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) at Bracknell Forest in 2013/14, and it looks ahead to future developments, including the proposed work programme for O&S for 2014/15 (see Appendix 1).

Legislation and Government Guidance

The Council's O&S arrangements must comply with legislation and government guidance. There have been no new requirements relating to O&S in 2013/14.

The O&S Commission continues to respond to government consultations over, and to monitor significant developments in, the statutory framework to ensure that Bracknell Forest is well placed to implement new requirements relating to O&S.

Working in Partnership

Partnership working is a strength in Bracknell Forest, and O&S has contributed to this by maintaining its own partnership work in 2013/14. For example, we have:

- Worked collaboratively with other councils as the need arose, for example, representatives of the Health O&S Panel participated in a scrutiny meeting of Surrey County Council when they were reviewing Frimley Park Hospital; and we joined in a Health scrutiny networking event for councils in the Thames Valley, run by the Centre for Public Scrutiny.
- Within the Council, we have maintained good collaborative working through measures such as: Lead Members on O&S reviews personally presenting O&S reports to the Executive; thorough consultation on our work programme; producing periodic progress reports on O&S for the Corporate Management Team and for the O&S Commission and Panels; and holding regular quarterly review meetings between O&S Chairmen, Vice Chairmen, Executive Members and Directors.
- Maintaining our external networking on O&S, including participating in Centre for Public Scrutiny and South East Employers events. The Head of O&S continued to represent South East England councils on the National O&S Forum, run by the Centre for Public Scrutiny.

Public Participation and Engagement

As a main purpose of O&S is to act on behalf of residents in holding decision makers to account, it is important that we work to engage with the public. We have maintained our arrangements for:

- The Public Participation scheme for O&S, which gives residents an opportunity to raise issues of concern to them, at O&S meetings in public.
- Continuing to include residents in the membership of the O&S Commission, some of our O&S Panels and Working Groups.
- Keeping the O&S pages on the Council's website informative and user-friendly.
- Continuing to invite suggestions from residents for issues to be reviewed by O&S.

- Continuing to hold the great majority of O&S meetings in public.

Improving the Quality of Overview and Scrutiny

We have maintained and aimed to improve the quality of O&S, for example through:

- Continuing the trend of moving the focus of O&S work towards a larger number of short, fast and focussed pieces of work on policy development and on pre-decision scrutiny, with fewer large reviews of major topics in depth, over several months.
- Learning from the feedback on the quality of O&S reviews from the officers in the area reviewed (see Appendix 2).
- Induction training for new Members and planning specialised training for Members on Health O&S.

We continue to look for ways to measure the effectiveness of O&S. One way of testing the quality and effectiveness of O&S is through external reviews of the Council. The Local Government Association Peer Challenge report of May 2013 said in relation to O&S:

'There is a strong and effective overview and scrutiny function. This is a role that stretches beyond routine monitoring and holding to account, with an increased emphasis on pre-decision involvement and contribution to policy development. Work programmes are determined by scrutiny members in conjunction with lead officers and members, and taking account of the Executive's Forward Plan. This helps Overview and Scrutiny Panels make a relevant and timely contribution to policy development. There are several examples of this, such as the work on localisation of council tax benefits, early intervention, and the Community Infrastructure Levy.'

Managing the Work of Overview and Scrutiny

We set out in Appendix 1 the proposed work programme for O&S in 2014/15 on which we have consulted the Council's Executive and Corporate Management Team, as required by the Constitution. The programme continues the revised focus since 2011 on contributing more to policy development and on pre-decision scrutiny, through short reviews, with fewer large reviews.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEMBERSHIP 2013/14

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

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|----------------------------------|--|
| Commission Members: | Councillors Leake (Chairman), Angell (Vice-Chairman), Baily, Mrs Birch, Ms Brown, Finnie, Gbadebo, Harrison, Heydon, Mrs McCracken (from January 2014), McLean, Sargeant (from November 2013), Turrell (to October 2013) and Virgo |
| Church Representatives: | Reverend Canon N Parish (from July 2013) <i>One vacancy</i> |
| Parent Governor Representatives: | Mr R Briscoe (Primary) <i>One vacancy</i> (Secondary) |
| Substitute Members: | Councillors Allen, Kensall, Mrs McCracken (to January 2014), Ms Miller, Mrs Pile (from November 2013), Mrs Temperton and Worrall |

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| Panel Members: | Councillors Turrell (Chairman, to October 2013) Harrison (Chairman, from January 2014), Allen (Vice-Chairman, from January 2014), Blatchford, Brossard, Mrs McCracken, Mrs Phillips (from January 2014), Mrs Temperton, Virgo and Ms Wilson |
| Substitute Members: | Councillors Mrs Barnard, Ms Brown, Finch and Kensall |

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

| | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Panel Members: | Councillors Mrs Birch (Chairman), Mrs Hamilton (Vice-Chairman), Brossard, Gbadebo, Ms Hayes, Heydon, Kensall, Mrs McCracken and Mrs Temperton |
| Teachers' Representative | Miss V Richardson |
| Church Representatives: | Reverend Canon N Parish <i>One vacancy</i> |
| Parent Governor Representatives: | Mr R Briscoe (Primary) <i>One vacancy</i> (Secondary) |
| Social Care Representative | Mrs C Barrett (from March 2014) |
| Substitute Members: | Councillors Allen, Ms Brown, Dudley, Thompson and Virgo |

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Panel Members: Councillors Finnie (Chairman), McLean (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Barnard, Brossard, Ms Brown, Gbadebo, Harrison, Ms Miller and Porter

Substitute Members: Councillors Allen, Angel, Finch, Mrs McCracken and Mrs Temperton

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Panel Members: Councillors Virgo (Chairman), Mrs McCracken (Vice-Chairman), Mrs Angell, Baily, Finch, Kensall, Mrs Temperton, Thompson and Ms Wilson

Co-opted Member Dr D Norman (from January 2014)

Substitute Members: Councillors Allen, Brossard, Ms Brown, Davison and Heydon

Note – Healthwatch Bracknell Forest are an official observer at meetings of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY 2013/14 MEETINGS 25

The agenda and papers for each overview and scrutiny meeting are published on the Council's website one week before each meeting, and are available in hard copy on request. Meetings, which are usually held in Easthampstead House, are open to the public and residents are encouraged to attend and see local democratic accountability in action.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

- 2nd May 2013
- 5th September 2013
- 30th January 2014
- 20th March 2014
- 1st July 2013
- 21st November 2013
- 17th March 2014
- 1st May 2014

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

- 18th June 2013
- 14th January 2014
- 17th September 2013
- 25th March 2014

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

- 3rd July 2013
- 15th January 2014
- 11th September 2013
- 5th March 2014

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

- 25th June 2013
- 21st January 2014
- 24th September 2013
- 18th March 2014

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

- 11th July 2013
- 3rd October 2013
- 4th February 2014
- 19th August 2013
- 7th January 2014
- 13th March 2014

Meetings in 2014/15

Dates for O&S meetings in 2014/15 are published on the Council's website and are available from the O&S officer team.

External Contacts in 2013/14

When conducting reviews, Members become involved in a number of ways of obtaining information. Throughout the year the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and the Panels have worked with many different people and organisations across the Council, Bracknell Forest and further afield to enable Members to gain first hand information and allow detailed consideration of a topic, and we were appreciative of their input to our work.

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Last year the Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Panels visited a number of organisations including:

- South Central Ambulance Service, Bicester
- Surrey County Council, Kingston on Thames
- A 'Listening event' for patients of Frimley Park Hospital, as part of a Care Quality Commission inspection
- The Royal Berkshire Hospital, Reading
- Wexham Park Hospital, Slough

As well as external visits, Members of Overview and Scrutiny heard evidence from officers within the Council and from a variety of individuals and organisations including:

- Bracknell & Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group
- Care Quality Commission
- Centre for Public Scrutiny
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Economic and Skills Development Partnership
- Environment Agency
- Frimley Park Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust
- Healthwatch Bracknell Forest
- Local Safeguarding Children Board
- NHS England
- South Central Ambulance Service NHS Trust
- Thames Valley Police
- Thames Water
- The Youth Council

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

| Working Group | Members |
|-----------------------|---|
| Delegated Authorities | Councillors Angell (Lead), Mrs Birch, Finnie, Gbadebo and Leake |

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

| Working Group | Members |
|--|--|
| The Council's Role in Regulated Adult Social Care Services | Councillors Harrison (Lead), Mrs McCracken, Mrs Temperton and Thompson |

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

| Working Group | Members |
|-------------------|--|
| School Governance | Councillors Mrs Temperton (Lead), Mrs Birch, Ms Hayes, Mrs McCracken, Mrs Cauchi (former PGR) & Mr Jackson (Kerith Centre) |
| School Places | Mr Briscoe (PGR) (Lead), Mrs Birch, Kensall and Mrs Temperton |

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

| Working Group | Members |
|----------------------------|---|
| Cultural Services Offering | Councillors Finnie (Lead), Brossard, Ms Brown, Gbadebo and Thompson |
| Bus Strategy | Councillors Finnie (Lead), Brossard, Ms Brown, Gbadebo and Leake |

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

| Working Group | Members |
|--|---|
| Francis Report on NHS Mid Staffordshire Hospital | Councillors Mrs McCracken (Lead), Angell, Mrs Angell, Baily, Kensall, Mrs Temperton and Virgo |

28 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEWS COMPLETED

| Title | Date Completed |
|---|-----------------------|
| South Bracknell School Review | December 2003 |
| Review of Adult Day Care Services in Bracknell Forest (Johnstone Court Day Centre & Downside Resource Centre) | January 2004 |
| Review of Community and Voluntary Sector Grants | May 2004 |
| Review of Community Transport Provision | July 2004 |
| Review of Members' Information Needs | April 2005 |
| The Management of Coronary Heart Disease | November 2005 |
| Review of Schools Transfers and Performance | February 2006 |
| Review of School Exclusions and Pupil Behaviour Policy | March 2006 |
| Report of Trees Policy Review Group | August 2006 |
| Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) – Review of the ASB Strategy Implementation | November 2006 |
| Review of Youth Provision | January 2007 |
| Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2006 | February 2007 |
| Review of Library Provision | February 2007 |
| Review of Healthcare Funding | July 2007 |
| Review of the Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy | November 2007 |
| Review of the Council's Medium Term Objectives | December 2007 |
| 2007 Annual Health Check response to the Healthcare Commission | March 2008 |
| Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2007/08 | April 2008 |
| Road Traffic Casualties | May 2008 |
| Scrutiny of Local Area Agreement | September 2008 |
| Review of Support Services for Carers | September 2008 |
| Review of Street Cleaning | October 2008 |
| Review of English as an Additional Language in Bracknell Forest Schools | November 2008 |

| Title | Date Completed |
|--|------------------------------|
| 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 | April 2009 |
| Housing Strategy | May 2009 |
| Review of Waste and Recycling | July 2009 |
| Review of Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan | July 2009 |
| NHS Core Standards (letters submitted) | December 2009 |
| Review of the Council's Key Objectives | January 2010 |
| Bracknell Healthspace | Publication deferred to 2011 |
| 14-19 Years Education Entitlement | February 2010 |
| Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2009/10 | April 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 | July 2010 |
| Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults in the Context of Personalisation | October 2010 |
| Review of Partnership Scrutiny | October 2010 |
| Hospital Car Parking Charges | December 2010 |
| Safeguarding Children and Young People | January 2011 |
| Review of the Bracknell Healthspace (Addendum) | March 2011 |
| Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010/11 | April 2011 |
| Office Accommodation Strategy | June 2011 |

| Title | Date Completed |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Plans for Sustaining Economic Prosperity | June 2011 |
| Review of Highway Maintenance (Interim Report) | July 2011 |
| Performance Management Framework | September 2011 |
| Review of the Council's Medium Term Objectives | September 2011 |
| Plans for Neighbourhood Engagement | October 2011 |
| Regulation of Investigatory Powers | October 2011 |
| Site Allocations Development Plan Document | October 2011 |
| Common Assessment Framework | January 2012 |
| Information and Communications Technology Strategy | February 2012 |
| NHS Trusts Quality Accounts 2011/12 (letters submitted to five Trusts) | April 2012 |
| Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2011/12 | April 2012 |
| Commercial Sponsorship | June 2012 |
| Communications Strategy | July 2012 |
| Modernisation of Older People's Services | November 2012 |
| Proposed Reductions to Public Transport Subsidies & Concessionary Fare Support, leading to review of the Bus Strategy | November 2012 October 2013 |
| Preparations for the Community Infrastructure Levy | January 2013 |
| 'Shaping the Future' of Health Services in East Berkshire | February 2013 |
| Substance Misuse | February 2013 |
| Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2012/13 | April 2013 |
| NHS Trust Quality Accounts 2011/12 (letter submitted to three Trusts) | April 2013 |
| School Governance | July 2013 |
| A Review of Delegated Authorities | September 2013 |
| Applying the Lessons of the Francis Report to Health Overview and Scrutiny | January 2014 |

PROPOSED OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2014/15

The proposed work programme for O&S in 2014/15 is shown on the following pages. The programme is aimed at maintaining a strategic and co-ordinated work programme based on major areas of Council and partner organisations' activity. The review topics take account of what is likely to be timely, relevant, and to add value. The programme incorporates the routine, on-going work of O&S and the completion of reviews currently underway.

The O&S Commission has consulted the O&S Panels, the Council's Corporate Management Team and the Executive on the work programme, as required by the Council's Constitution.

The work programme will necessarily be subject to continual refinement and updating. The 'future possible reviews' are those which are unlikely to be resourced until 2015/16 or later.

| OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION | |
|---|---|
| 1. | <p>Co-ordination of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels</p> <p>This will include reviewing progress reports on the work of each Panel against the agreed work programme, and promoting consistency in the approach to budget scrutiny and other cross-cutting issues.</p> |
| 2. | <p>Routine monitoring of the performance of the Council's corporate functions</p> <p>To include: the Corporate Performance Overview Reports; the Quarterly Service Reports of the Chief Executive's Office and the Corporate Services Department; and on-going monitoring of departmental performance and expenditure.</p> <p>To receive periodic briefings on the implementation of key strategies.</p> |
| 3. | <p>Exercising pre-decision scrutiny by reference to the Executive Forward Plan</p> <p>To selectively contribute to the formulation of new policies in advance of their consideration by the Executive.</p> |
| 4. | <p>2015/16 Budget Scrutiny</p> <p>To review the Council's budget proposals for the Chief Executive's Office and the Corporate Services Department for 2015/16, and plans for future years. To include a discussion with the Borough Treasurer during 2014 on the evolving budgetary position. Overview and Scrutiny Panels will also scrutinise the budget proposals in their departmental areas.</p> |
| 5. | <p>Crime and Disorder Committee</p> <p>To carry out the role of statutory 'Crime and Disorder Committee', to include an annual meeting with representatives of the Community Safety Partnership.</p> |

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| 6. | <p>Other Policy Development</p> <p>To make an input to the review of the <u>Economic Development Strategy</u>.</p> |
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| ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL | |
|--|---|
| 1. | <p>Monitoring the performance of the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Department</p> <p>To include on-going review of the Quarterly Service Reports, receiving statutory plans and reports (such as the annual reports on complaints received), monitoring the action taken by the Executive to earlier reports by the Panel, and being briefed on the implications of new legislation, including the Government's Care Bill.</p> |
| 2. | <p>Exercising pre-decision scrutiny by reference to the Executive Forward Plan</p> <p>To selectively contribute to the formulation of new policies in advance of their consideration by the Executive.</p> |
| 3. | <p>2015/16 Budget Scrutiny</p> <p>To review the Council's Adult Social Care and Housing budget proposals for 2015/16, and plans for future years.</p> |

| CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL | |
|--|---|
| 1. | <p>Monitoring the performance of the Children, Young People and Learning Department</p> <p>To include on-going review of the Quarterly Service Reports, receiving statutory plans and reports (such as the annual reports of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and on complaints received). Monitoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of Looked After Children, and the implications for service delivery and resources; • Schools' performance, particularly secondary schools; • The action taken by the Executive to earlier reports by the Panel |
| 2. | <p>Exercising pre-decision scrutiny by reference to the Executive Forward Plan</p> <p>To selectively contribute to the formulation of new policies in advance of their consideration by the Executive.</p> |

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| 3. | <p>2015/16 Budget Scrutiny</p> <p>To review the Council's Children, Young People and Learning budget proposals for 2015/16, and plans for future years.</p> |
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ENVIRONMENT CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

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| 1. | <p>Monitoring the performance of the Environment, Culture and Communities Department</p> <p>To include on-going review of the Quarterly Service Reports; the performance of the Leisure operations, review of any inspection reports or self-evaluations; monitoring the action taken by the Executive to earlier reports by the Panel, and monitoring significant departmental developments.</p> |
| 2. | <p>Exercising pre-decision scrutiny by reference to the Executive Forward Plan</p> <p>To selectively contribute to the formulation of new policies in advance of their consideration by the Executive.</p> |
| 3. | <p>2015/16 Budget Scrutiny</p> <p>To review the Council's Environment, Culture and Communities budget proposals for 2015/16, and plans for future years.</p> |

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

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| 1. | <p>Implementing the new Approach to Health Scrutiny</p> <p>To deliver the new approach to health scrutiny as recommended by the Panel's Working Group on the Francis report. The numerous changes include a specialist member approach and strategically monitoring the performance of the NHS trusts and Clinical Commissioning Group serving Bracknell Forest, with enhanced reference to key information flows. This might in due course lead to a focussed review in 2014/15 or later years; possible topics might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health services; • The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment; • The treatment of Alzheimer's disease, and other forms of dementia; • An aspect of Primary Care services. |
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| 2. | <p>2015/16 Budget Scrutiny</p> <p>To review the Council's budget proposals for public health in 2015/16, and plans for future years.</p> |
| 3. | <p>Responding to NHS Consultations</p> <p>The Health O&S Panel customarily provides comments on the annual Quality Accounts produced by the NHS Trusts nearby, and the Panel is a statutory consultee for any substantial variation in NHS services affecting the Borough.</p> |

| 2014/15 WORKING GROUPS | |
|---|---|
| O&S Commission | <p>Business Rates</p> <p>To review the impact of Re-Localisation of Business Rates, and the connection with economic development initiatives.</p> |
| Adult Social Care and Housing O&S Panel | <p>The Council's Role In Regulated Adult Social Care Services</p> <p>To complete the review of the Council's role in regard to care governance and managing safeguarding in regulated services.</p> |
| Adult Social Care and Housing O&S Panel | <p>Forestcare</p> <p>A review of the lifeline alarms and other services provided under Forestcare.</p> |
| Children, Young People and Learning O&S Panel | <p>The Provision of School Places</p> <p>To complete the review of the Council's arrangements for planning and providing places for children in Bracknell Forest's schools.</p> |
| Children, Young People and Learning O&S Panel | <p>Substance Misuse</p> <p>Further to the 2012-13 review by the Adult Social Care and Housing O&S Panel, to review actions to minimise substance misuse by children and young people.</p> |
| Environment, Culture and Communities O&S Panel | <p>Cultural Services</p> <p>To complete the review of the Council's cultural services offering, in the context of pressure on public finance, with particular reference to libraries and assistance for South Hill Park.</p> |

| FUTURE POSSIBLE REVIEWS (Unlikely to be resourced until 2015/16 or later) | |
|---|---|
| <u>Overview and Scrutiny Commission</u> | |
| 1. | <p>Learning and Development</p> <p>To review the Learning and Development functions for officers, with an emphasis on E-Learning activities.</p> |
| 2. | <p>Category Strategy</p> <p>To review the impact of Category Strategies on procurement, and possible future developments.</p> |
| 3. | <p>Medium Term Objectives</p> <p>To contribute to the review of the Council's Medium Term Objectives following local government elections in May 2015.</p> |
| 4. | <p>Economic Development</p> <p>To review the implementation and outcomes of the Local Economic Development Strategy.</p> |
| 5. | <p>Bracknell Town Centre – Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour</p> <p>To review the crime and anti-social behaviour issues arising from the growth in the night-time economy in the regenerated Bracknell Town centre.</p> |
| <u>Adult Social Care and Housing</u> | |
| 1. | <p>Implications of the Government's Care Bill</p> <p>To review the impact of the legislative changes under the forthcoming Care Act, particularly with regard to greater integration of Council and NHS services.</p> |
| 2. | <p>Housing Benefits</p> <p>To review the implementation of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Government's Housing Benefit reforms; and • The re-design of the Council's housing and benefits services. |
| 3. | <p>Housing Supply</p> <p>To review the response by the Council and its partners to increasing pressure in the housing market, particularly in regard to assisting home ownership, and the provision of affordable housing.</p> |

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| 4. | <p>Homelessness</p> <p>To review the Council's arrangements and performance in relation to dealing with homelessness. To include arrangements for adults with learning disabilities, also itinerant and temporary informal lodgers.</p> |
| <p><u>Children, Young People and Learning</u></p> | |
| 1. | <p>Youth Offending Service</p> <p>To review the plans and achievements of the Youth Offending Service, as part of a wider review of crime prevention activities.</p> |
| 2. | <p>Supporting Disadvantaged Children and Families</p> <p>To review the implementation of the Child Poverty Strategy, together with the Council's arrangements for the Government's initiative on 'Troubled Families'.</p> |
| 3. | <p>Early Intervention Services</p> <p>To review the effectiveness of early intervention services for families and children, for example parenting skills and crime prevention.</p> |
| <p><u>Environment, Culture and Communities</u></p> | |
| 1. | <p>Regulatory Services</p> <p>To review the performance of Trading Standards and other key regulatory services, with particular reference to the implementation of the new organisational structure.</p> |
| 2. | <p>Parks and Countryside Services</p> <p>To review the Council's parks and countryside service offering, with particular reference to the Ranger service.</p> |
| 3. | <p>E+ Smartcard</p> <p>To explore the potential extended uses of the Council's E+ Smartcard.</p> |
| 4. | <p>Public Realm</p> <p>To review the arrangements for ensuring a co-ordinated operational approach to the public realm.</p> |

| <u>Health</u> | |
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| 1. | Public Health To carry out a joint review with other O&S Panels, on the Council's wider actions on the transferred public health (PH) responsibilities. To include the immunisations programme, also integration of the PH function with other council services - such as measures to prevent ill-health and to promote good health, so as to achieve the best overall impact for residents. |
| 2. | The Royal Berkshire Bracknell Healthspace Forming a Working Group to review the services offered at The Royal Berkshire Bracknell Healthspace (Brants Bridge), including cancer and renal facilities, and the newly created Urgent Care Centre. |

APPENDIX 2

RESULTS OF FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRES

Results of Feedback Questionnaires on Overview and Scrutiny Reviews

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 19 Reviews¹ |
|--|--|
| PLANNING Were you given sufficient notice of the review? | 2.8 |
| 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 Was the review carried out in a professional and objective manner with minimum disruption? | 2.7 |
| Was there adequate communication between O&S and the department throughout? | 2.8 |
| Did the review get to the heart of the issue? | 2.6 |
| REPORTING Did you have an opportunity to comment on the draft report? | 2.8 |
| 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 |
| Overall average score | 2.7 |

¹ 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, the Common Assessment Framework, Modernisation of Older People's Services, Community Infrastructure Levy, School Governance, and Delegated Authorities.

For further information on the work of Overview and Scrutiny in Bracknell Forest or for copies of any reports or reviews mentioned in this annual report, please visit our website on <http://www.bracknell-forest.gov.uk/scrutiny> or contact:

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If you have any views on this report or a specific topic you think Overview and Scrutiny should consider please contact us at Overview and Scrutiny, Chief Executive's Office, Bracknell Forest Council, Easthampstead House, Town Square, Bracknell, Berkshire, RG12 1AQ, or email us at overview.scrutiny@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Please note that Overview and Scrutiny does not deal with individual complaints. If you are in any doubt about whether your concern is relevant to Overview and Scrutiny please contact us and we will be happy to offer you advice.