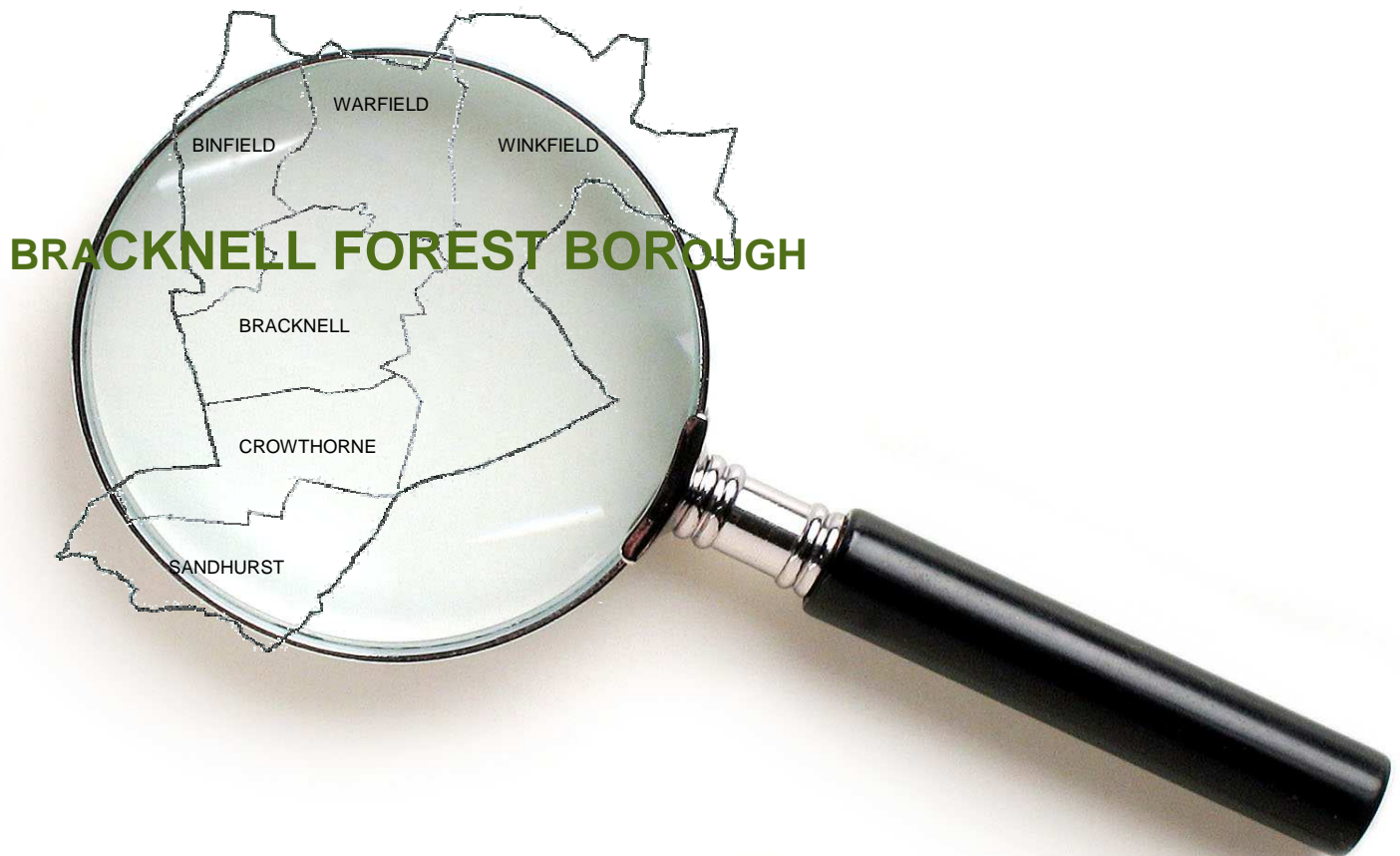


OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15



April 2015

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

	Page
Foreword	2
Introduction to Overview and Scrutiny	3
Overview and Scrutiny Commission	5
Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel	9
Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel	12
Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel	15
Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel	18
Developing Overview and Scrutiny	21
Overview and Scrutiny Membership 2014/15	23
Overview and Scrutiny Meetings 2014/15	25
External Contacts	25
Overview and Scrutiny Working Groups 2014/15	27
Overview and Scrutiny Reviews Completed	28
Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2015/16	32
Appendix 2 - Results of Feedback Questionnaires	39
How to Contact Us	40

FOREWORD

This report is the final one on the work of Overview and Scrutiny for the term of this Council. The past four years have been challenging ones for the borough and, indeed, local government in general. I believe that we have, in the main, met those challenges well, concentrating as we have on the 'overview' aspect of our work. Reports of the Commission, Scrutiny Panels and Working Groups have been well received and have added value to the Council's decision making processes.

While the past four years have been challenging, they are, I suspect but a shadow of what the next four years hold in-store for our successor Council. Whatever the outcome of the forthcoming elections, both national and local, local government will, I believe, face greater challenges than it has for the past 40 years. Those who succeed will be those that are innovative, forward thinking and have members who can both see and seize opportunities where others see only difficulties. I trust that our Council will be one of the former.

Our current system of Overview and Scrutiny has now operated, under the terms of the Council's Constitution, in the same way for over a decade. I now believe that the time has now come, especially in view of my comments in the preceding paragraph, for review in the way that we perform our work and the authorities that exist. I hope that the next Council will take action on these matters at the earliest opportunity.

I would, of course like to thank those members of the Commission, Panels and Working Groups who have done so much good work, not just this year, but over the whole term of this Council. That they have added value is beyond question and I am most grateful to them. Likewise our senior officers and directors have been a great source of help and information.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks, and that of all the members, to the officers of our all too small but highly efficient and effective scrutiny team. Richard Beaumont and Andrea Carr have done sterling work in supporting, helping and guiding us through what at times has been for them an unforgiving workload. We are fortunate to have such dedicated people.

Councillor Ian Leake

Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Commission

April 2015

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 an O&S Commission and 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 with Buckinghamshire 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 March 2013, and will reconvene in the event of a statutory consultation concerning National Health services in East Berkshire.

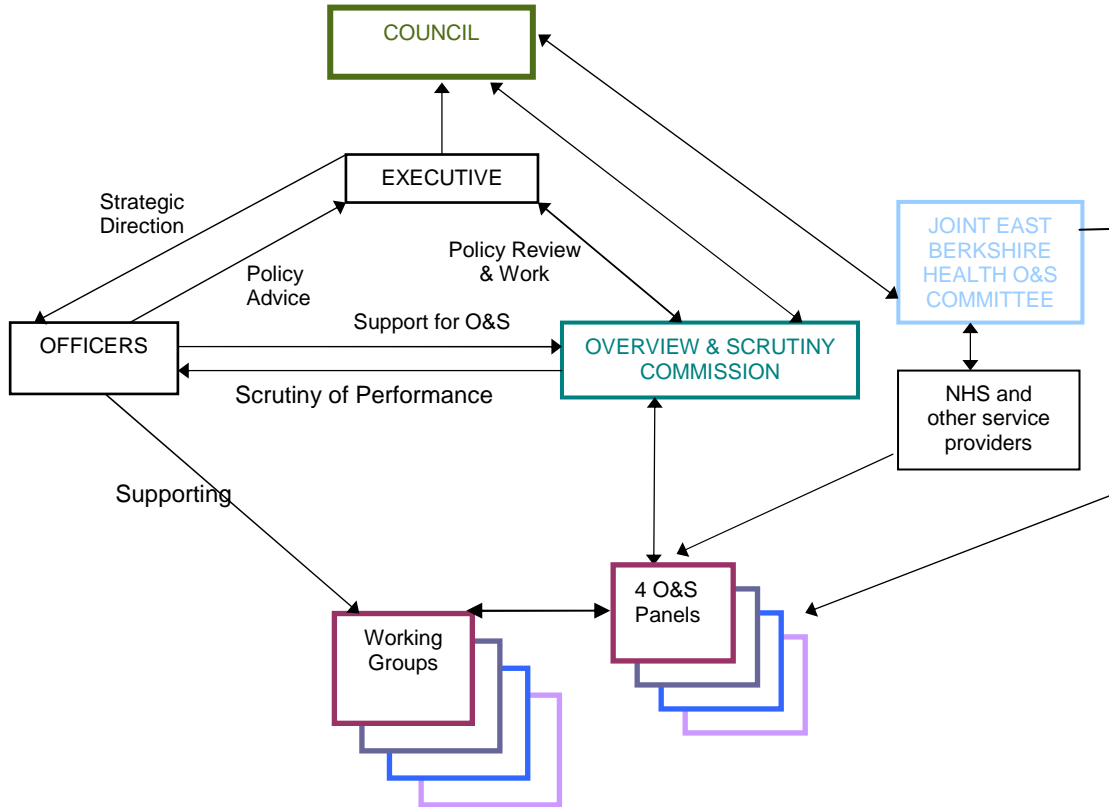


Diagram showing the structure of Overview and Scrutiny at Bracknell Forest Council

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 and independent research may be carried out.

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 usually 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, focussing on 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:

- Incidence of nuisance anti-social behaviour caused by fly-tipping
- The Council's business branding initiative
- The supply of ready to develop housing sites
- Increased homelessness
- The Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act inspection report from the Office of Surveillance Commissioners
- Customer services' telephony
- Economic development.

The Commission also gave particular attention to the outcome of the 2014 Residents' Survey.

The Commission 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 annual work programme for O&S. We supplemented that by receiving six monthly progress reports from officers on O&S activities across the board, and national developments in O&S.

6

Budget scrutiny

The O&S Commission, along with the O&S Panels, examined the Council's revenue and capital budget proposals for 2015/2016, together with the proposed fees and charges for Council Services. The Commission preceded this, in the Autumn, by discussing with the Executive Member for Transformation and Finance, also the Borough Treasurer, 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.

The Borough Treasurer updated the Commission on changes to the budget since it was first published. Although the Local Government Finance Settlement would result in further loss of central government grant of £195,000, the budget gap had fallen from approximately £4.7m to around £4m owing to savings. However, risks remained in several areas. The following points arose from the Commission's consideration of the budget proposals:

- Budget consultation responses received at the time of the Commission's deliberations had been limited but positive.
- There were funding constraints for young people post-16 with high needs and a Councillor had expressed concerns in this regard.
- A number of local authorities had started the budget consultation process earlier, before more detailed plans had been developed. The Council had chosen not to do this in the past but it could be considered.
- There was a need to ensure that information provided in consultations for the public was understandable and simplified wherever possible.
- There had been an anticipated increase in income at the Peel Centre in Bracknell, in which the Council had an interest, and received some income.
- Following changes to asbestos regulations, there would likely be a three year programme to survey council buildings which would commence with the schools in the Borough.
- An audit of the accessibility of public car parks in Bracknell to disabled people had been undertaken and minimal changes were expected.
- The Council used open source technology for its website and was looking into reducing costs in this area.

Holding the Executive to Account

There were no 'call-in' requests during 2014/15. The Commission has kept a watching brief on the Executive's decisions and reviewed relevant forthcoming Executive issues at each meeting.

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 devoted a significant amount of our time to this important area in 2014-15:

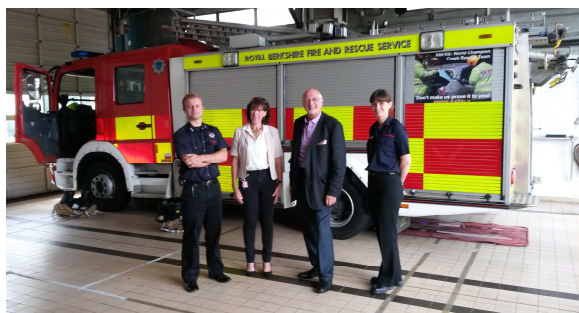
We monitored crime and disorder issues, including the periodic performance reports of progress against crime indicators and key actions for community safety. In May 2014, we met with the Assistant Chief Constable also the Chief Inspector from Bracknell Police Station, together with the Chairman of Bracknell Forest's Community Safety Partnership. The principal issues discussed were the 2013/14 annual crime figures, the partnership's performance and the new priorities in the Community Safety Plan. Arising

from our concerns about reports in the national media about under-recording of crime figures, we later visited Thames Valley Police's control centre and performance information team at Kidlington in June to discuss the issues in more detail.

We were concerned to learn that the West London Mental Health NHS Trust was proposing to partially replace the network of sirens surrounding Broadmoor Hospital, which have reached the end of their design life. Having explored the issues at a meeting with the Hospital's Director of Security at the Commission's meeting in July, we decided to set out our concerns in writing to the Trust's Chief Executive. We were not satisfied with the Chief Executive's response, so we held an extra meeting in public on the matter in October. In addition to the Trust's Chairman and Chief Executive, we also included in our meeting the Chairman of our Community Safety Partnership, and councillors from Wokingham Borough Council who had raised similar concerns to ours. We made clear to the Trust that their proposals were illogical, and at our request the Trust undertook to reconsider the way forward, in consultation with our Community Safety Partnership, and come back to us with their re-considered proposals regarding the sirens. Subsequently, we have heard from the Chief Executive that our representations have been accepted by the Trust and that all the sirens will remain operational until the new Broadmoor Hospital opens in 2019. We also identified inadequacies in the current arrangements for 'cascading' the alarm from Broadmoor Hospital to all the nearby schools. Safety of school children is of paramount importance, so we were pleased to see that the Council's Director of Children, Young People and Learning subsequently tightened up the cascade system in the light of our concerns.



We devoted one of our meetings to reviewing the services provided by Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, including a discussion about the Service's new policy direction, their performance, challenges and priorities. We preceded this with a visit to Bracknell Fire Station to meet front-line staff. The Commission was impressed by the Service's fire-prevention activities, and we expressed our thanks to the Service for all



their work, particularly during recent large incidents, including the flooding during the winter and the large fire in Swinley Forest. Having heard from the Chief Fire Officer about the value of sprinkler systems being built into the design of commercial buildings, we arranged for the Service to present on the topic to the Council Planning Committee, and that was very well received.

At our meeting in November, we explored the effect of the new national arrangements for the Probation Service with representatives of the Thames Valley Community Rehabilitation Company Limited and the Council's Community Safety team. Tackling re-offending is a very important means of reducing crime. We focussed on the effect of recent changes to the probation service; the effects on re-offending locally; and future plans and priorities. We also explored how the work of the Council and the Police on integrated offender management interacted with the work of the Probation Service. Future work will be needed in this area.

8

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 2014/15.

Input to Policy Development

The Commission actively participated in making an input to the Council's policy development in 2014/15. Our main endeavour was to form a Working Group of the Commission to carry out a review of Business Rates and in particular to explore whether the Council should take the opportunity of new statutory powers to introduce discretionary Business Rate relief. In its response the Executive recognised that the Working Group had spent considerable time on the review of a subject about which many local authorities were currently developing their thinking and formulating strategies and had made a number of pragmatic recommendations, the most significant of which sought to encourage small businesses to take on premises within the Borough which was a priority for the Council's Economic Development Strategy. The Executive agreed three of the recommendations and slightly refined the fourth one. The Executive Member for Corporate Services said about the report: *'I concur with Councillor Brunel-Walker - excellent report and my thanks to the working group for their diligence.'*

Membership

We bade farewell to Reverend Canon Nick Parish, as the Church of England representative. It is a statutory requirement for the Commission and the Children, Young People and Learning O&S Panel to include in their membership representatives of both the Church of England and the Catholic Church. Member Services periodically ask the two Dioceses concerned for replacement nominees.

Future Commission Work

It is anticipated that during the latter part of 2014/15 the Commission's work will include review of O&S activity against the Work programme, scheduled Executive decisions, and the quarter three Quarterly Service and Corporate Performance Overview reports; a briefing on the work of the Economic and Skills Development Partnership; and reviewing progress on implementing the Economic Development Strategy. It would, I feel, be a sensible step for the Commission formed by the new Council in May 2015, to review the way the O&S function operates and consider whether any changes need to be made.



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 2014/15 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:

- Analysis of complaints, comments and compliments;
- Library usage levels and IT management system;
- Additional funding to repair highway potholes;
- Maintenance of footways;
- Coral Reef expansion and improvement proposals;
- Staff sickness recording;
- Additional planting at the Cemetery and Crematorium;
- The implications of recycling tonnage reducing owing to the use of lighter weight materials;
- Trial recycling collection of flexible packaging;
- The recycling incentive scheme;
- European Union Directives on waste and recycling; and
- The number of planning appeals dismissed.

10

Budget Scrutiny

The Panel was invited to comment on the Council's draft budget proposals for 2015/16 which had been agreed by the Executive at its meeting on 16 December 2014 as the basis for consultation with Overview and Scrutiny and other interested parties before recommending the budget to Council.

The key themes of the draft budget proposals for the Environment, Culture and Communities Department included the revenue budget, commitment budget, revenue budget pressures and savings proposals, proposed fees and charges, and proposed capital programme report, summary and schemes. Members noted details of the draft revenue budget pressures for the Department which totalled £424,000 and of the draft revenue budget savings proposals which amounted to £813,000. The capital programme totalled £13.852m.

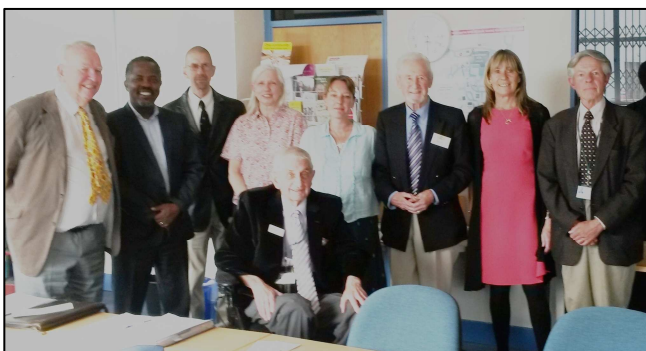
Panel Members asked numerous questions in relation to the budget proposals concerning matters including increases in fees and charges, charging under street work permits for over-running works, the level of funding for road resurfacing, the availability of Government grant for pothole repairs, the use of intelligent transport systems, timing and expenditure of Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy contributions, funding and arrangements for maintenance of footways and cycleways, and carry forward of funding for town centre highway works.

Overview and Policy Development

At its meetings in 2014/15 the Panel considered matters including the departmental Service Plan – Revised Key Actions and Indicators; a Residents' Parking Scheme, Draft Obligation Supplementary Planning Document; Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan updates; Supported Bus Service Contracts; public realm mobilisation progress; Enforcement Policy (Regulated Services); Parks and Open Spaces Quality Improvements; results of the trial Recycling Incentive Scheme; and 2015/16 Work Programme. The Panel also received bi-annual O&S progress reports and regular updates concerning the review work undertaken by its working groups.

Cultural Services Offering

The Panel established a new working group to review the Council's Cultural Services offering. The review commenced in January 2014 and concluded in August 2014 during which time the Working Group met on eight occasions. Issues covered included: receiving a briefing from officers in respect of the Council's cultural services; preliminary discussions with the Executive Member; considering and agreeing the scope of the review; providing comments on the Draft Cultural Statement 2013-2018; reviewing the terms of the South Hill Park Grant and the cultural services offered as a result of the grant; exploring future developments for libraries; being briefed on the cultural offering in the regenerated Bracknell town centre; researching external cultural activities and the wider Bracknell Forest Council cultural offering; and discussing the range of cultural activities throughout the Borough with voluntary sector representatives.



The Working Group on Cultural Services meeting representatives of the Voluntary Sector.
Left to right: Councillors Thompson and Gbadebo, Mr Andrew Radgick, Councillors Ms Brown and Finnie, Yvette Hockley, Maurice Alston, Janet Dean, Councillor Brossard.

The Working Group reported the outcome of its review which included 17 recommendations to the Panel at its meeting on 23 September 2014 for approval to send formally to the Executive. The Panel subsequently received the Executive's response which accepted 11 of the recommendations, partially accepted 3 of them and did not accept 3 of them. In his Executive Report to Council, the Leader wrote:

"5.9.1 The Executive would like to thank Overview and Scrutiny Members for their recent review of the Borough's cultural services offer and for the recommendations that it has made for the future development of the offer.

5.9.2 The Executive has agreed to implement the majority of the recommendations made by the Working Group although it was felt that a small number, such as establishing a heritage museum, were not practicable to implement at the current time."

Commercial Sponsorship Scheme

A Member Reference Group was established in 2011/12 to examine the issues and options around the potential for increasing income from commercial sponsorship and to provide views and advice to the Director of Environment, Culture and Communities on a prospective procurement of an agency service to attract commercial sponsorship income for Bracknell Forest. Arising from the Group's recommendations, an eighteen month commercial sponsorship trial with a company was pursued from May 2013 to test the financial viability of a scheme. Derived income has been broadly in line with expectations.

The Panel reconvened the Group in February 2015 in order to measure the success of the trial contract and advise whether a new contract should be procured.

Future Panel Work

It is anticipated that future work of the Panel during the latter part of 2014/15 will include review of scheduled Executive decisions and the quarter three Quarterly Service Report, receipt of an update in respect of the Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan, and consideration of the relevant Residents' Survey outcomes, the Schools' Annual Environmental Management Report for 2013/14 and the Street Works Permit Scheme.

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 2014/15.



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 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. Occasional 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 health activities.

In 2013-14, the Panel had devoted a lot of time scrutinising 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 (CQC). The Panel followed this up in 2014-15, meeting the Chief Executive of Frimley Park Hospital NHS Trust, with particular reference to the progress on the Trust's prospective acquisition of Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust, as well as the Trust's services to residents. Subsequently, we were very pleased to see the acquisition go ahead, which we regard to be the best means of achieving good hospital services for residents.

Other areas of focus for the Panel during 2014/15 included:

- Meeting the Director of Nursing of the Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group, regarding the quality of patient care at the main local hospitals, with reference to the results of the 2013 survey of adult inpatients.
 - Adopting a Protocol between the Health & Wellbeing Board, Healthwatch Bracknell Forest and the Health O&S Panel.
 - Attending the Annual General Meeting of Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group.
- Considering the latest survey responses given by patients of Bracknell Forest GP practices, also the results of the Care Quality Commission's 'Intelligent Monitoring' in discussion with representatives of NHS England's Thames Valley Team and of the Bracknell and Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group.
 - Receiving a presentation on the activities and performance of the Public Health team during 2031/14.

- Reviewing the Healthwatch Bracknell Forest Annual Report for 2013/14.
- Making an input to the 2013/14 'Quality Accounts' of some of the nearby NHS Trusts, which are annual reports to the public from providers of NHS healthcare services about the quality of services they provide.
- We reviewed the Council's budget proposals for Health in 2015/16.
- Receiving bi-annual progress reports on O&S activity across the board.

A major area of attention for the Panel in 2014-15 was mental health services, an important service which is often under-recognised nationally. This included meeting senior officers of the Berkshire Healthcare NHS Trust, with particular reference to their mental health services



to residents of Bracknell Forest. In preparation for that meeting, members of the Panel received a briefing on mental health, and visited the in-patient mental health facility at Prospect Park Hospital, to meet front line staff and patients.

Members of the Panel visiting Prospect Park Hospital, September 2014.
Left to right: Councillor Leake, Dr Norman, Councillors Miss Wilson, Mrs Angell, Thompson, Mrs McCracken, Virgo and Baily.

Working Groups

The Panel chose not to operate any Working Groups during 2014/15, instead we decided to devote our time to the activities described above, also in making a start in implementing the large number of recommendations from the Panel's 2013/14 Working Group concerning improvements to health O&S arising from the inquiry report by Robert Francis QC on the appalling failures at the Mid Staffordshire Hospital NHS Trust. In that connection, I would particularly like to thank our newly co-opted member, Dr David Norman, for his knowledgeable and energetic input to the Panel's work which continues to be very valuable.



The report of the Working Group on the Francis Report was a finalist in the Centre for Public Scrutiny's 'Good Scrutiny Awards' in June 2014.

Left to right: Jessica Crowe, Councillor Leake, Andrea Carr, Richard Beaumont, Melba Wilson

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:

- Monitoring important developments to the NHS both nationally and locally, in particular those deriving from the Better Care Fund.
- Raising concerns over patient comfort at the Urgent Care Centre in Bracknell.

14

- Monitoring the activities of the Health and Wellbeing Board and observing some of its meetings.

Budget Scrutiny

The Panel received a report setting out the draft budget proposals for 2015/16 and noted that the Public Health budget was almost entirely funded through a ring-fenced grant of £3.049m with an additional contribution of £100,000 from the NHS Money for Social Care Transfer. Members acknowledged that in a change from previous years, the Drug and Alcohol Action Team would be fully funded from the Public Health Grant in 2015/16, however, the amount of the Team's budget would remain unchanged. The Panel noted the budget proposals.

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 2014/15.

Other Panel Work

Representatives of the Health O&S Panel participated in:

- A visit to attend the formal opening of the Royal Berkshire Bracknell Clinic (the Bracknell 'Healthspace').
- A meeting of Surrey County Council's Health O&S Committee, concerning Frimley Park Hospital.
- A trial run of the newly designed induction training for members engaged in health O&S, delivered jointly by Adult Social Care, Health and Housing, also O&S officers.
- A seminar at Wexham Park Hospital to discuss the future of the Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals NHS Trust at the invitation of the Care Quality Commission.



The regular six weekly meetings previously held for Panel Members were discontinued to enable more resources to be directed towards implementing the improvements to health O&S arising from the recommendations of the Panel's Working Group which reviewed the Francis Report.

Future Panel Work

It is anticipated that future work of the Panel during the latter part of 2014/15 will include review of scheduled Executive decisions and departmental performance; receipt of updates regarding the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and the Health and Wellbeing Strategy; discussing the performance of the Royal Berkshire NHS Foundation Trust with its Chief Executive; and receipt of a reprise of the Panel's work over the past four years.

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 care 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 2014/15. This was undertaken principally through review of its Quarterly Service Reports (QSRs), the 2013/14 Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer service, the Children's Social Care Statutory Complaints and Compliments 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 the outcome of Ofsted inspections of Bracknell Forest schools, the 2014 school admissions process, the Family Focus (troubled families) initiative, 'closing the gap' in attainment, validated 'A' Level results, teacher recruitment, and the number of children looked after and in child protection. This resulted in a number of questions and requests for additional information in areas including:

- The percentage of successful Family Focus interventions;
- Prosecution for school non-attendance due to term time holidays;
- Monitoring any suspicion of child sexual exploitation in the Borough;
- The increase in volume and complexity of requests for Children's Social Care records; and
- School performance and improvement.

Budget Scrutiny

Budget scrutiny by the Panel focused on consideration of the Council's draft budget proposals for 2015/16 which the Executive agreed in December 2014 as the basis for consultation with Overview and Scrutiny and other interested parties before recommending the budget to Council.

By way of information and background to assist with consideration of the Children, Young People and Learning Department budget proposals, the Panel received relevant extracts of the 2015/16 Revenue Budget and Capital Programme reports which comprised the revenue budget, commitment budget, proposed revenue budget pressures and savings, fees and charges proposals, and planned capital programme summary and schemes.

Members were advised that the Department was subject to budget pressures of approximately £140,000 which were due to the education psychology service, pupil transport, the Early Intervention Hub and quality assurance and data access. In addition the Department was proposing savings and economies of £494,000. The capital programme totalled £10,930,000.

Panel Members asked numerous questions in relation to the budget proposals concerning matters including increased support in the areas of the Independent Reviewing Officer function, the Common Assessment Framework process, and Special Educational Needs (SEN) where legislative changes and fluctuating numbers of young people with SEN returning to education had made an impact. The nationally set rate of adoption fees and the Pupil Premium grant were also the subject of questions. The Panel noticed a discrepancy in the reported amount of saving associated with the Aiming High short breaks programme and requested that this be corrected.

Overview and Policy Development

During 2014/15 the Panel received the minutes of meetings of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel and considered matters including the implications of the Children and Families Act 2014; the updated Joint Strategic Plan for Children, Young people and Families 2014-17; the 2013/14 Annual Report of the Independent Reviewing Officer service; actions being taken to reduce incidences of bullying; the Common Assessment Framework Annual Report 2013/14; effective use of the Pupil Premium grant for Looked After Children; the Development Plan for Community Learning 2014-17; the Pan Berkshire Shared Adoption Service; the Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report 13/14; the Annual Report on the Statutory Roles and Responsibilities of the Director and Lead Member for Children's Social Care 2013/14; the Annual Report of Children's Social Care Complaints and Compliments 2013/14; and the proposed Work Programme 2015/16.

The Panel agreed the report of the review of school places 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 substance misuse by, and impacting on, children and young people and their families.



The Panel met members of Bracknell Forest Youth Council to learn about their recent activities and future plans.

School Places

A review of the Council's arrangements for planning and providing places for children in Bracknell Forest's schools, including the school admissions process and national comparisons, was completed in early 2014/15. The review found that the Council has a robust school admissions process in place and meets its statutory obligation to provide sufficient school places for Bracknell Forest often in challenging circumstances such as new residential development resulting in increasing pupil numbers and the displacement of pupils from neighbouring local authorities into Bracknell Forest schools. The Panel agreed the report of the review in June 2014 and subsequently received the Executive's favourable response to the report which accepted all eight of the recommendations included.

Substance Misuse

A Working Group of the Panel was established in September 2014 to undertake a review of substance misuse by, and impacting on, children and young people and their families.

The Working Group met on seven occasions. It received an introductory briefing from officers and considered the scope of the review at its first meeting. Members finalised and agreed the scope and prepared a programme of work at their second meeting. Further meetings featured information gathering discussions with the Head of Drug and Alcohol Services, an Alcohol and Substance Misuse Worker, the Head of Children's Safeguarding Services, the Alcohol and Substance Misuse Youth Worker, the Public Health Consultant and representatives of Thames Valley Police, the Substance Misuse Arrest and Referral Team and the Youth Offending Service. In addition, the Working Group undertook research and analysed substance misuse related data collected by Children's Social Care and the Drug and Alcohol Action Team.

The findings of the completed review will be reported to the Panel for approval and sending formally to the Executive early in 2015/16.

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 2014/15.

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. Following the resignation of the Church of England representative in November 2014, a replacement representative has been sought from the Diocese. There is also a vacancy for a Roman Catholic representative and the nomination of a replacement by that Diocese is awaited.

Future Panel Work

It is anticipated that future work of the Panel during 2014/15 will include review of scheduled Executive decisions, the quarter three QSR and the minutes of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel; briefings in respect of the operation of the Pupil Premium grant and the Children and Families Act 2014; and consideration of the Virtual Schools Annual Report 2013/14 and the School Places Plan 2014-2019. Other further work that the Panel is going to look at is Child Sexual Exploitation working with the police, focus on school performance and review of Looked After Children placements.

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 2014/15 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 Annual Report / Account for Adult Social Care 2013/14, the Annual Complaints Reports for Adult Social Care and for Housing 2013/14, and the Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Annual Report 2013/14.

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

- The number of, and reasons for, people and families presenting as homeless;
- Electronic monitoring of domiciliary care and electronic telephone call monitoring;
- The outsourcing of dementia care services;
- The amount of Council staff vacancies and redeployment opportunities;
- The Supreme Court judgement to widen the definition of the Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS) to include people receiving home care and a greater number of people in residential care, nursing homes and hospitals;
- Individuals' responsibility for their own health and wellbeing including prevention and management of conditions; and
- The take up of dementia awareness training by retailers.

Budget Scrutiny

In December 2014 the Executive agreed the Council's draft budget proposals for 2015/16 as the basis for consultation with Overview and Scrutiny and other interested parties before recommending the final budget to Council for approval. The proposals comprised the revenue budget, commitment budget, proposed revenue budget pressures and savings, fees and charges proposals, and planned capital programme summary and schemes. Budget scrutiny by the Panel focused on these proposals and Members received information and background details to assist with their deliberations.

Draft revenue budget pressures, which were unavoidable and arose mainly from demographic trends such as an increase in the number of people needing care, totalled £838,000. Savings and economies, which featured changes to commissioning of services for people with learning disabilities, amounted to £698,000. A capital programme of £2,383,000 which included some funding from external sources was proposed.

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

- National statistics were used when looking at the demography of the Borough. There were increasing numbers of residents in Bracknell Forest, mostly due to the older population growing by approximately 1-2%. Although Bracknell might have previously had a slightly more accelerating growth in the older population than other areas due to the number and age of people who moved to the area in the 1960s, this was thought to be slowing now.
- There was assistance available to prevent people from needing to enter residential care. The aim was to find ordinary accommodation such as a person's own home and provide more support to enable them to live there.
- A new care home in the Borough was outside the Council's remit and it was unlikely that it would place residents there owing to the high cost of placements.

Overview and Policy Development

During 2014/15 the Panel considered matters including the Community Strategy for Adults with Long Term Conditions, the developing Homeless Strategy, the Alcohol Brief Intervention in Adult Social Care, changes to the regulation and inspection of Adult Social Care, the Joint Commissioning Strategy for adults with autism, the Carers' Strategy consultations outcomes, plans for implementing the Care Act 2014 and the Care Quality Commission's (CQC's) State of Care Annual Report 2013/14.

Regular bi-annual O&S progress reports and updates on the review work undertaken by its Working Group reviewing the Council's role in regulated Adult Social Care services were received by the Panel which also considered its work programme for 2015/16.

The Council's Role in Regulated Adult Social Care Services

The tragic abuse of vulnerable adults at Winterbourne View raised the question nationally as to the role of local authorities when a care home fails to care for its residents properly. Owing to the importance of care governance and managing safeguarding in regulated Adult Social Care services, the Panel formed a working group to review the Council's role in these areas. Regulated services are those which are registered with the CQC, which is the regulatory body, and are mostly those provided at residential care homes, nursing homes or domiciliary care.

20

During the course of the review the Working Group gathered information and evidence from many sources in order to appraise the Council's role in regulated Adult Social Care services. These sources included research in areas such as the Health and Social Care Information Centre, CQC inspection criteria and its reports of inspections of local care and nursing homes, examples of the Council's spot contracts and individual purchase orders, the support offered to care providers needing to improve, the Council's developing Quality Assurance Framework and the outcomes of the most recent Carers' Survey. Members also had discussions with Council officers who provided pertinent background information, data and knowledge. Regard was had to relevant documents including the Social Care Institute for Excellence's definition of excellence in Adult Social Care services, the operation of DoLS and CQC strategies for raising care quality standards.

The Working Group found that the Council fulfils its duty of care to people in need of care and robustly undertakes its care governance and safeguarding roles in regulated Adult Social Care services seeking to identify and eradicate poor care whilst supporting providers to improve the quality and safety of their services. The Working Group submitted the report of its review to the Executive which accepted two of the four recommendations and partly accepted a third.

In the Executive Report to Council on 21 January 2015, the Executive reported that:

"5.2.1 The Executive has agreed its response to the recommendations made by an Overview and Scrutiny Working Group which reviewed the Council's role in regulated Adult Social Care Services.

5.2.2 The Executive would like to thank the Working Group for its thorough consideration of a particularly complex area involving a range of agencies. Due to the multi-agency nature of the service, the Council does not have the power to implement two of the recommendations. However, all other recommendations that relate to the Council were agreed."

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 2014/15.

Future Panel Work

Further work by the Panel during the latter part of 2014/15 is expected to include review of scheduled Executive decisions and the quarter three QSR; and consideration of the Joint Commissioning Strategy for Carers, the implementation of the Older People's Accommodation and Support Services Strategy, and the redevelopment of a Council-owned site to provide low cost home ownership residential accommodation and a youth arts centre / hub.



Bracknell Forest's residential home and day care service at Heathlands

DEVELOPING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

This part of the report outlines the main developments in Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) at Bracknell Forest in 2014/15, and it looks ahead to future developments, including the proposed work programme for O&S for 2015/16 (see Appendix 1).

Legislation and Government Guidance

The Council's O&S arrangements must comply with legislation and government guidance, which are summarised on the Council's website.

The only notable national development in O&S in 2014/15 was the change to Health O&S arising from the Department of Health's guidance relating to *The Local Authority (Public Health, Health and Wellbeing Boards and Health Scrutiny) Regulations 2013*. The main point to be addressed is that if a council decides to delegate its health scrutiny powers and duties to a health scrutiny committee, it need not delegate *all* of its health scrutiny functions to that committee (i.e. it could retain some functions itself). Officer recommendations that the power to refer to the Secretary of State concerns over consultations regarding substantial development or variation in health services is reserved for Council decision were prepared for consideration by the Governance and Audit Committee, as changes to the Constitution were envisaged. The Committee agreed the recommendations which were then referred to Council for approval. The Council agreed the recommendations at its meeting held on 25 February 2015.

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 2014/15. For example, we have:

- Worked collaboratively with other councils as the need arose, for example, representatives of Wokingham Borough Council participated in an O&S Commission meeting as they had a shared interest in the Broadmoor sirens issue.
- 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 (CfPS) events. The Head of O&S continued to represent South East councils' O&S interests on the National O&S Forum, run by the CfPS, though due to pressure on the CfPS's resources, the CfPS decided in 2014 to suspend meetings of that forum until later in 2015.

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:

22

- 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 focussing O&S work towards issues of greatest public interest and which offer prospects of adding value.
- Learning from the feedback on the quality of O&S reviews from the officers in the area reviewed. The feedback scores have been consistently positive, with an average score of 90% overall (see Appendix 2).
- Induction training for new Members and specialised training for Members on Health O&S.

We continue to look for ways to measure the effectiveness of O&S. As mentioned in the section on the Health O&S Panel, the Council's entry, *'Transforming the effectiveness of health scrutiny by applying the lessons of the Francis Report'*, was a finalist for the 2014 'Good Scrutiny Awards' by the Centre for Public Scrutiny.

The Council also measures the effectiveness of O&S and the support given by officers through a biennial survey of all Bracknell Forest councillors. The Members survey results in August 2014 included the following responses relating to O&S:

- 75% net satisfaction with support for O&S.
- 84% net satisfaction with support by O&S officers.
- 82% net satisfaction with support by Council departments.
- 58% regarded O&S to be effective in terms of holding decision makers to account, and in contributing to policy development.

Managing the Work of Overview and Scrutiny

We set out in Appendix 1 the proposed work programme for O&S in 2015/16 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 2014/15

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

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

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Panel Members:	Councillors Harrison (Chairman), Allen (Vice-Chairman), Blatchford, Brossard, Finch, Mrs McCracken, Mrs Temperton, Virgo and Ms Wilson
Substitute Members:	Councillors Mrs Barnard, Ms Brown, Dudley and Kensall

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Panel Members:	Councillors Mrs Birch (Chairman), Brossard (Vice-Chairman), Allen, Gbadebo, Ms Hayes, Heydon, Kensall, Mrs McCracken and Mrs Temperton
Teachers' Representative	Miss V Richardson
Church Representatives:	Reverend Canon N Parish (to November 2014) <i>One vacancy</i>
Parent Governor Representatives:	Mr R Briscoe (Primary) Mrs L Wellsted (Secondary)
Social Care Representative	Miss 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, Angell, Finch, Mrs McCracken and Mrs Temperton

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

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

Co-opted Member Dr D Norman

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 2014/15 MEETINGS

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

- 14 May 2014
- 4 September 2014
- 20 November 2014
- 19 March 2015
- 10 July 2014
- 22 October 2014
- 29 January 2015

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

- 17 June 2014
- 20 January 2015
- 16 September 2014
- 24 March 2015

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

- 11 June 2014
- 12 January 2015
- 10 September 2014
- 4 March 2015

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

- 24 June 2014
- 13 January 2015
- 23 September 2014
- 17 March 2015

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

- 3 July 2014
- 15 January 2015
- 2 October 2014
- 12 March 2015

Meetings in 2015/16

Dates for O&S meetings in 2015/16 are published on the Council's website and are available from the O&S officer team.

External Contacts in 2014/15

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.

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

- Thames Valley Police Headquarters, Kidlington



O&S Commission members visited Thames Valley Police's control centre and performance information team at Kidlington following concerns in the media nationally over the recording by the police of reported crimes.

- London Borough of Croydon Council
- Bracknell Fire Station
- Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action
- New Hope drug and alcohol treatment centre, Bracknell
- Prospect Park Hospital, Reading
- Royal Berkshire Bracknell Healthspace

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:

- Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust
- Bracknell & Ascot Clinical Commissioning Group
- Members of the public using the public participation scheme for O&S
- Economic and Skills Development Partnership
- Frimley Park Hospital NHS Foundation Trust
- Healthwatch Bracknell Forest
- NHS England
- Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service
- Thames Valley Police
- Bracknell Forest Youth Council
- Thames Valley Community Rehabilitation Company Limited
- West London Mental Health Trust
- Wokingham Borough Council

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Working Group	Members
Business Rates	Councillors Angell (Lead), Heydon, Leake and Virgo

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 Places	Mr Briscoe (PGR) (Lead), Mrs Birch, Kensall and Mrs Temperton
Substance Misuse – Children and Young People	Mrs Birch (Lead), Mrs Temperton, Mr Briscoe and Mrs Wellsted (PGRs), and Miss Richardson (Teacher rep.)

ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Working Group	Members
Cultural Services Offering	Councillors Finnie (Lead), Brossard, Ms Brown, Gbadebo and Thompson

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

Title	Date Completed
Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2013/14	April 2014
NHS Trust Quality Accounts 2013/14 (letters submitted to two Trusts)	April 2014
Review of School Places	June 2014
Review of Cultural Services	September 2014
The Council's Role in Regulated Adult Social Care Services	October 2014
Review of Business Rates and Discretionary Relief	February 2015
Review of Substance Misuse Involving Children and Young People	March 2015

APPENDIX 1

PROPOSED OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME 2015/16

The proposed work programme for O&S in 2015/16 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 2016/17 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 receive an introductory briefing on the roles of the Chief Executive's Office and the Corporate Services Department, with reference to their service plans for 2015/16.</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, particularly the Local Economic Framework and Strategy.</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>2016/17 Budget Scrutiny</p> <p>To review the Council's budget proposals for the Chief Executive's Office and the Corporate Services Department for 2016/17, and plans for future years. To include a discussion with the Borough Treasurer during 2015 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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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 receive an introductory briefing on the role of the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Department, with reference to their service plan for 2015/16.</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 progress of any significant developments (such as the Care Act).</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. To include forming a Working Group to make an input to the preparation of the new Housing Strategy.</p>
3.	<p>2016/17 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 receive an introductory briefing on the role of the Children, Young People and Learning Department, with reference to their service plan for 2015/16.</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 creation of the 'Learning Village' in Binfield • 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</p>

	consideration by the Executive.
3.	<p>2016/17 Budget Scrutiny</p> <p>To review the Council's Children, Young People and Learning budget proposals for 2016/17, and plans for future years.</p>

ENVIRONMENT CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

1.	<p>Monitoring the performance of the Environment, Culture and Communities Department</p> <p>To receive an introductory briefing on the role of the Environment, Culture and Communities Department, with reference to their service plan for 2015/16.</p> <p>To include on-going review of the Quarterly Service Reports; the performance of the Department, 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, particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The works at Coral Reef • The Local Development Framework • The potential extended uses of the Council's E+ Smartcard.
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>2016/17 Budget Scrutiny</p> <p>To review the Council's Environment, Culture and Communities budget proposals for 2016/17, and plans for future years.</p>

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

1.	<p>Monitoring the performance of the Local NHS Organisations and the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Department in relation to health</p> <p>To receive an introductory briefing on the Council's role in relation to Health, with reference to the service plan for 2015/16.</p> <p>To include on-going review of the Quarterly Service Reports and monitoring significant developments, particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Better Care Fund • The Care Act • Improvements at Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals following the acquisition by Frimley Park Hospital Trust • Provision of sufficient GP surgeries to match long-term growth in the
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	Borough's population.
2.	<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.</p>
3.	<p>2016/17 Budget Scrutiny</p> <p>To review the Council's budget proposals for public health in 2016/17, and plans for future years.</p>
4.	<p>Responding to NHS Quality Accounts and 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>

2015/16 WORKING GROUPS	
O&S Commission	<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>
Adult Social Care and Housing O&S Panel	<p>Older People's Housing / or Affordable Housing</p> <p>A review of a substantive housing issue, the review topic to be chosen following the input to the update of the Housing Strategy (see above). Possible topics might be either Older People's Housing (with the Clement House development as a possible case study) or the provision of Affordable Housing.</p>
Children, Young People and Learning O&S Panel	<p>Child Sexual Exploitation</p> <p>To review the Council's response to the risks of Child Sexual Exploitation, delivered in concert with Community safety partner organisations.</p>
Environment, Culture and Communities O&S Panel	<p>Parks and Countryside Services</p> <p>To review the Council's parks and countryside service offering.</p>

FUTURE POSSIBLE REVIEWS (Unlikely to be resourced until 2016/17 or later)	
<u>Overview and Scrutiny Commission</u>	
1.	Learning and Development To review the Learning and Development functions for officers, with an emphasis on E-Learning activities.
2.	Procurement – Contract Management To review the Council's arrangements for effective management of significant contracts.
3.	Bracknell Town Centre – Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour To review the crime and anti-social behaviour issues arising from the growth in the night-time economy in the regenerated Bracknell Town centre.
<u>Adult Social Care and Housing</u>	
1.	Forestcare A review of the lifeline alarms and other services provided under Forestcare.
2.	Housing Supply 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.
<u>Children, Young People and Learning</u>	
1.	Early Intervention Services To review the effectiveness of early intervention services for families and children, for example parenting skills and crime prevention.
2.	Supporting Disadvantaged Children and Families To review the impact of the Council's 'Family Focus' programme.
<u>Environment, Culture and Communities</u>	
1.	Regulatory Services To review the performance of Trading Standards and other key regulatory

	services.
<u>Health</u>	
1.	<p>Public Health</p> <p>To review the operation and effectiveness of the pan-Berkshire public health arrangements with other local authorities.</p> <p>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.</p>
2.	<p>The Royal Berkshire Bracknell Healthspace</p> <p>To review the services offered at The Royal Berkshire Bracknell Healthspace (Brants Bridge), including cancer and renal facilities, the Urgent Care Centre and the GP Out of Hours service.</p>

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 23 Reviews ¹
PLANNING Were you given sufficient notice of the review?	2.9
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?	2.8
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?	2.6
Were the recommendations relevant and practical?	2.5
How useful was this review in terms of improving the Council's performance?	2.5
Overall average score	2.7 (90%)

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, Delegated Authorities, Applying the Lessons of the Francis Report, School Places, Cultural Services, and Business Rates.

40 HOW TO CONTACT US

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.