

TO: COUNCIL
27 APRIL 2016

2015/16 ANNUAL REPORT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The Council's Constitution requires the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to submit an annual report to the Council on overview and scrutiny activities and their outcomes. The attached report informs Members of progress made in respect of the operation and development of overview and scrutiny in Bracknell Forest during 2015/16 and outlines proposed future activities. The Commission recommends that Council adopts the report.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That the 2015/16 Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission be adopted; and**
- 2.2 **That the commitment, role and value of the overview and scrutiny function be acknowledged and that non-executive Members continue to be supported in their role.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To meet the requirements of the Constitution.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Not applicable.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

5.1 Structure of Overview and Scrutiny

The structure of Overview and Scrutiny was unchanged in 2015/16.

5.2 Activities

The activities of Overview and Scrutiny in 2015/16 are summarised in the Annual Report. The Commission and the four Panels have all met regularly. Much of the detailed Overview and Scrutiny work was conducted in Working Groups.

5.3 Outcomes

The main outcomes in 2015/16 are summarised in the Annual Report and have covered a wide range of reviews, leading to recommendations to the Executive, contributing to policy development and performance improvement. In addition, the Commission and Panels have maintained a rolling coverage of various matters including budget scrutiny and rigorously monitoring the performance of all Council Departments.

Future Developments

- 5.4 The Annual Report includes a programme of Overview and Scrutiny work for the 2016/17 municipal year, which has been the subject of consultation with the Corporate Management Team and the Executive.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Statutory Scrutiny Officer

- 6.1 The Annual Report demonstrates the depth and breadth of the work of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Panels and highlights the outcomes of this work. Overview and Scrutiny has exercised its functions in order to support the development of policy within the Council; to scrutinise the Council's financial proposals; and to improve services the Council and its partners provide with the overarching objective of seeking to benefit local communities.

Borough Solicitor

- 6.2 The Scrutiny function has an important role to play in providing local accountability and transparency in decision-making. It was introduced by the Local Government Act 2000 primarily to serve as a check and balance on Executive powers. Subsequent legislation has conferred on Councils the responsibility for scrutinising local NHS Trusts, the work of Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, and other partners, such as the Environment Agency. It sits alongside the Council's Standards regime in delivering the accountability that constitutes one of the Seven Principles of Public Life.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.3 There are no additional financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report. The finally agreed work programme will need to be managed within the existing resources.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.4 This report has no impact on equalities issues.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.5 This report has no impact on strategic risk management issues.

Other Officers

- 6.6 Not applicable.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 Overview and Scrutiny Commission and Corporate Management Team.

Method of Consultation

Unrestricted

7.2 Through correspondence and at meetings to consider the draft report.

Representations Received

7.3 None.

Background Papers

Agendas, Minutes and papers of meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, and Panels in 2015/16.

Contact for further information

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