

NOTICE OF MEETING

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Thursday 24 September 2009, 7.30 pm

Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House, Bracknell

To: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Councillor Edger (Chairman), Councillor McLean (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Mrs Birch, Finnie, Harrison, Leake, Mrs McCracken, Mrs Shillcock, Turrell, Virgo, Ms Whitbread and Worrall

Church Representative Members (Voting in respect of Education matters only)

Mr G S Anderson and One Vacancy

Parent Governor Representative Members (Voting in respect of Education matters only)

Dr P Josepchs-Franks and One Vacancy

cc: Substitute Members of the Commission

Councillors Baily, Mrs Beadsley, Beadsley, Dudley, Mrs Pile, Wade and One Vacancy

ALISON SANDERS
Director of Corporate Services

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If you require further information, please contact: Sue Hills
Telephone: (01344) 352060
Email: sue.hills@bracknell-forest.gov.uk
Published: 15 September 2009



**Overview and Scrutiny Commission
Thursday 24 September 2009, 7.30 pm
Council Chamber, Fourth Floor, Easthampstead House,
Bracknell**

AGENDA

Page No

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

To receive apologies for absence and to note the attendance of any substitute members.

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission held on 16 July 2009.

1 - 6

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND PARTY WHIP

Members are asked to declare any personal or prejudicial interest and the nature of that interest, including the existence and nature of the party whip, in respect of any matter to be considered at this meeting.

4. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

Any other items which, pursuant to Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, the Chairman decides are urgent.

5. APPOINTMENT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEMBERS

To appoint councillors to fill the vacant position on the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the vacant position on the Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

7 - 8

HOLDING THE EXECUTIVE TO ACCOUNT

6. EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO THE REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

To consider the response by the Executive Member to the Overview and Scrutiny report on the Review of the Implementation of the Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan.

9 - 14

7. EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN

Forthcoming items on the Executive Forward Plan of a corporate nature are attached for consideration.

15 - 22

PERFORMANCE MONITORING

8. ANNUAL REPORT ON PROCUREMENT

To consider the Annual Report on Procurement for 2008/09, presented by the Head of Procurement. 23 - 44

9. PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORTS (PMR)

To consider the Performance Monitoring Reports for quarter one (April to June) 2009/10 for : Previously Circulated

- Chief Executive's Office
- Corporate Services Department

OVERVIEW AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

10. GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON "STRENGTHENING LOCAL DEMOCRACY"

To determine the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's response to the consultation by the Department for Communities and Local Government "Strengthening Local Democracy". 45 - 50

11. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

To note the Quarterly Progress Report of the Assistant Chief Executive. 51 - 64

12. UPDATES FROM PANEL CHAIRMEN

To receive verbal updates from Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairmen and the Vice-Chairman of the Joint East Berkshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION
16 JULY 2009
7.30 - 9.20 PM**

Present:

Councillors Edger (Chairman), Finnie, Harrison, Leake, Mrs Shillcock, Turrell, Virgo, Ms Whitbread and Worrall
Mr G S Anderson

Apologies for absence were received from:

Councillors McLean, Mrs Birch and Mrs McCracken
Dr P Josephs-Franks

In Attendance:

Alison Sanders, Director of Corporate Services
Victor Nicholls, Assistant Chief Executive
Richard Beaumont, Head of Overview and Scrutiny
Sue Hills, Democratic Services Officer

17. Minutes and Matters Arising

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Commission held on 11 June 2009 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Matters arising –

Minute 7, Review of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Theme Partnership (CDRP) – the Chairman and Head of Overview and Scrutiny had met the Community Safety Manager to discuss how the Commission could effectively scrutinise the CDRP.

Minute 9, Executive Forward Plan – a further training session on finance scrutiny had been scheduled on Monday 2 November. The Borough Treasurer's response to the request for more detail on the financial impact of each decision had been forwarded to members. This matter would be discussed at Corporate Management Team.

Minute 12, Council's Older People's Strategy, Bracknell Train Station – the Head of Overview and Scrutiny had written about the delays and costs of the lifts at the rail station but had not to date received a reply. He would follow up and send a Freedom of Information request if necessary.

Minute 13, Waste and Recycling Working Group – the report had been sent to the Executive Member for Environment.

Minute 16, Update re Joint East Berkshire Health O&S Committee – the question of £800,000 income from the Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospital NHS Trust car parks was raised at a meeting of the Joint Committee but a satisfactory response was not received. The matter was being pursued by Councillors Leake and Virgo and, if a satisfactory response was not received, Bracknell Forest's Health O&S Panel may wish to investigate.

The Head of Overview and Scrutiny appraised the Commission of delays in the administrative support to the Joint Committee, a function now sitting with Slough Council.

18. Declarations of Interest and Party Whip

There were no declarations of interest relating to any agenda items or indications that members would be participating whilst under the party whip.

19. Executive Response to the Review of the Council's Older People's Strategy

The Commission noted the response of the Executive to the review of the Council's Older People's Strategy. There had been a wide and thorough consultation in respect of the Strategy and many of the issues raised by the O&S Working Group responding to the Strategy had been agreed and incorporated into the Strategy which would be monitored by the Director Designate of Adult Social Care.

The Assistant Chief Executive responded to questions about the consultation.

20. Executive Response to the Review of Children's Centres and Extended Schools Services

The Commission noted the response of the Executive to the review of the Children's Centres and Extended Services in and around schools in Bracknell Forest which would be considered by the Children's Services and Learning O&S Panel in September.

Councillor Leake commented that the emphasis of the Working Group had been to identify weak points and ensure outcomes were properly monitored. Realistic targets and outputs were to be agreed and followed through.

The Chairman referred to funding concerns raised in paragraphs 5.7 and 5.11. The Executive response had been that Area Steering Groups' budgets (ASG) budgets had been sufficient in recent years to fund local aspirations but Councillor Leake's view was that aspirations had been limited to fit the funding available. Councillor Mrs Shillcock commented that the two groups with which she was involved were limited by staff time not funding issues.

The Commission noted that Councillors Dr Barnard and Kendall had been asked to attend the Scrutiny Panel in September. The Commission agreed that the Panel be asked to refer this issue to them and to seek an update on the current position of extended schools with particular regard to paragraph 5.12 concerning the number of schools yet to achieve fully extended status and the latest budgetary position including how ASGs were prioritising matters.

The Commission referred to the need to continue a dialogue with ASGs, to keep appraised of what they were doing and to ascertain their needs.

21. Executive Forward Plan

The Commission noted the Executive Forward Plan and that the decision date for the Bracknell Town Centre Regeneration Strategy was likely to be deferred until 2010.

The Chairman indicated that the Commission would like to see the strategy and be involved in any consultation process.

22. Corporate Performance Overview Report

The Assistant Chief Executive reported the highlights of the Corporate Performance Overview Report for the fourth quarter 2008/09, making particular reference to –

- The introduction of the National Indicator Set was being gradually completed.
- The new corporate performance management IT system was being rolled out.
- 6 indicators out of 80 had a red status, meaning the outturn was at least 5% adrift of target. Those areas were –
 - NI 117 not in education, employment or training (NEET)
 - NI 020 assault with criminal injury
 - NI 123 stopping smoking
 - NI 056 obesity in primary school children
 - NI 112 under 18 conception rate
 - NI 120 mortality rate in males

It was acknowledged that these would be difficult to improve as they were issues around people's behaviour.

- Of 294 detailed actions in support of the ten medium term objectives 90.8% had been achieved or were on target to be completed by their due date and 16, mostly relating to the Town Centre, were in need of some remedial action.

The Director of Corporate Services and the Assistant Chief Executive responded to members' questions on childhood obesity, the Town Centre redevelopment, NEET, education maintenance allowance (EMA), Grow Our Own initiative, unavailable Primary Care Trust data and the measurability of targets. Members questioned why the unsuccessful bid to the Big Lottery Fund to commission new youth facilities (action 6.5.1) had achieved a positive performance indicator and the Commission agreed that the matter would be taken up with the Social Care and Learning Department.

The Commission was pleased to note

- the 60% reduction of households in bed and breakfast
- the achievement of the target for adults with disabilities in employment
- the £380k saving in landfill tax

Arising from the questions, the Commission agreed that the Social Care and Learning Department be asked to advise on possible solutions to the delays in receiving EMA and that checks be made to ensure that the saving in landfill tax and other achievements had been publicised.

The Assistant Chief Executive was asked to include 'good news items' in future reports.

23. Home Office Guidance on Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Matters

The Head of Overview and Scrutiny drew attention to the fact that for this agenda item the Commission was meeting as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee. The report presented the new statutory guidance issued by the Home Office.

The Crime and Disorder Committee noted the new statutory guidance issued by the Home Office in May 2009 on the scrutiny of crime and disorder matters. The Committee felt that the guidance did not recognise pre-existing situations nor acknowledge the work of the Neighbourhood Action Groups. Advice on 'public meetings' was unclear – this Committee already met in public.

Gordon Anderson appraised the Committee of his personal view, both as a magistrate and Chairman of the Magistrates' Association in Berkshire, of Home Office encouragement to the police to make significant use of 'Out of Court Disposals' as punishment for offenders. These meant offenders were given cautions or were fined for significant numbers of crimes, some serious, rather than being taken to court. Figures available showed that there were thousands being used in the Thames Valley area. A recent development was a Community Justice Programme being piloted in Slough, again to reduce the number of cases being taken to court. It was the view of the Magistrates' Association that this was not proper justice nor would it materially prevent or reduce re-offending. The Committee expressed some concern at this information and thanked Mr Anderson for bringing it to their attention. The Committee was concerned that fines and cautions for serious crimes would not be reported in the crime statistics. However, presumably figures were obtainable on the offences being punished by the police.

In relation to specific proposals in the guidance, set out in paragraph 3.4 of the report, the Crime and Disorder Committee agreed

- (i) to co-operate with other Crime and Disorder Committees in the Thames Valley Police area by providing the published papers and minutes of Bracknell Forest's Crime and Disorder Committee to those other Councils, for information;
- (ii) to defer co-opting community representatives onto the Committee and holding public meetings;
- (iii) to determine not to initiate a protocol which would lay down the mutual expectations of scrutiny and community safety partners; and
- (iv) to involve the Thames Valley Police Authority in work undertaken by the Crime and Disorder Committee by co-opting a Police Authority member onto the Committee when policing matters were being considered.

24. Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Improvement Plan

The Commission noted the previously agreed report of the review of the Implementation of the Housing and Council Tax Benefit Improvement Plan undertaken by a working group of the Environment, Culture and Communities O&S Panel. The report was sent formally to the Executive Member on 3 July and would be considered at Executive on 15 September.

25. **Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme for 2009/10**

The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2009/10 was presented for approval. The earlier indicative programme had been amended to take account of the O&S Panels' consideration of their parts of the programme.

The Commission agreed to –

- (i) adopt the 2009/10 work programme attached to the report as appendix 1;
- (ii) consult the Corporate Management Team and the Executive on the work programme; and
- (iii) commence the working group on sustaining economic prosperity.

26. **Overview and Scrutiny - Centre for Public Scrutiny Self Evaluation**

The self evaluation framework for local authorities was circulated with the agenda papers. It was a mechanism to demonstrate the effectiveness of overview and scrutiny and to identify areas for improvement.

The Commission noted that the Chairman would undertake this self assessment, with the help of the officers, to produce a self evaluation for the information of members of the Commission.

27. **Updates from Panel Chairmen**

Adult Social Care – Councillor Turrell reported that the Panel had not met since the last Commission meeting. Work was in progress on a programme of visits to Adult Social Care services and centres and initial Transforming Social Care review work would be pursued through all-Panel workshops.

Environment, Culture and Communities – Councillor Finnie reported that

- most of the recommendations contained within the Strategic Housing report had been accepted by the Executive.
- the Highway Maintenance Working Group would soon commence work and would involve representatives of the Town and Parish Councils.

Childrens' Services and Learning – Councillor Ms Whitbread had nothing to report.

Health – Councillor Leake reported that

- the Working Group on Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies was up and running.
- the Working Group on the Healthspace for Bracknell had met three times and had identified a number of issues which would be taken forward. It was hoped to produce an interim report in September/October 2009 and a final report in Spring 2010.
- When one of the above working groups had concluded steps would be taken to look at monitoring the implementation of the borough's health and well-being strategy.

28. **Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 24 September 2009

CHAIRMAN

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION 24 SEPTEMBER 2009

APPOINTMENT OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL MEMBERS Assistant Chief Executive

1 INTRODUCTION

A number of vacancies have arisen on Committees and external organisations following the untimely death of Councillor Browne. The vacant committee seats are allocated to the Conservative Group and should be filled on their nomination. This report invites the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Commission to appoint Councillors to fill the vacant position on the Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel and the vacant position on the Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission confirms any appointments proposed by the Conservative Group in respect of the following vacancies on Overview and Scrutiny Panels (one seat in each instance):-
- Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel
 - Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Officers are required to report to the Council or the relevant Committee when vacancies arise on committees and external organisations.
- 3.2 Part 3, Section 2 of the Council's Constitution states that Council appoint the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, and that the Commission appoint O&S Panel Members. At its meeting on 23 September, Council is being asked to confirm those appointments within its remit, including the appointments to the O&S Commission and the Joint East Berkshire Health O&S Committees. The current vacancies where appointments are made by the O&S Commission are set out in section 2 above. The O&S Commission is invited to consider any nominations put forward for these vacancies. In the case of the Panel vacancies in 2.1, these seats have been allocated by the Council to the Conservative Group and appointments should be made in accordance with the wishes of that Group.

Background Papers
Constitution

Contact for further information
Richard Beaumont – 01344 352283
e-mail: richard.beaumont@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION 24 SEPTEMBER 2009

EXECUTIVE RESPONSE TO THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFITS IMPROVEMENT PLAN

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Executive is meeting on 15 September 2009 to consider the attached proposed response to the Overview and Scrutiny review of the implementation of the Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan, undertaken by a working group of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel. The Commission will be updated verbally on the Executive's decision.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

- 2.1 **That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission considers the response of the Executive to the review of the implementation of the Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan, undertaken by a working group of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel.**

Background Papers

Report of the O&S Working Group on the review of the Housing and Council Tax benefit Improvement Plan, June 2009.

Contact for further information

Richard Beaumont – 01344 352283
e-mail: richard.beaumont@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Doc. Ref

Alluse/O&S/2009-10/O&S Commission/24.9.09

TO: THE EXECUTIVE
15 SEPTEMBER 2009

**RESPONSE TO ENVIRONMENT, CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL WORKING GROUP REVIEW OF THE
HOUSING AND COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT IMPROVEMENT PLAN
Director of Environment , Culture and Communities**

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to respond to the report of the Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Working Group review of the Housing and Council Tax Benefit Improvement Plan.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That the members of the Environment, Culture and Communities (ECC) Overview and Scrutiny Panel Working Group be thanked for their report.**
- 2.2 **That the responses to the 11 recommendations made by the Working Group as detailed in paragraphs 5.2 to 5.12 be approved and the Scrutiny Commission advised accordingly.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1. On the 22 June Cllr Bob Edger Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission wrote to Cllr D. Birch the Executive member of Adult Care, Health and Housing asking for an Executive response to the report of the ECC Overview and Scrutiny Panel Working Party review of the Housing and Council Tax Benefit Improvement Plan.
- 3.2. This report proposes a response to the 11 recommendations of the report which is attached to this report as an appendix.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1. There is no alternative to responding to the EEC Overview and Scrutiny report.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

ECC review of Housing and Council Tax Benefit Improvement Plan

- 5.1 The ECC Overview and Scrutiny Working Party report made 11 recommendations to the Executive member for Adult Services, Health and Housing. The following paragraphs provide a response to each recommendation.
- 5.2 **The new Housing and Council Tax Benefit Improvement Plan should address communication issues.** There are nearly 100 letters that could be sent to customers. Most frequently sent letters have been reviewed and explanation provided in hard copy and on the web site. The new improvement plan detailed later in this report will contain actions to continue this work.

- 5.3. **Off site processing as effective means of addressing changes in workload.** The off site processing work has been re-tendered and an organisation has been appointed for three years with an option to extend for a further two years. The contract provides the equivalent of two benefit assessors in processing time on an on-going basis and the options to increase that resource if necessary.
- 5.4. **Addressing the potential increase in need for home visits especially for older residents.** Home visits can be costly in processing time and so a balance needs to be struck between undertaking visits at the expense of the claims taking longer to process. We are working closer with the Pensions Service who will home visit for older customers and they will verify and complete claims on our behalf.
- 5.5. **Working with external organisations to improve timely notification of changes of circumstances.** We have already provided a briefing session for landlords and letting agents who attended the last private rented sector forum. We will expand this work in the new improvement plan.
- 5.6. **Clarity of written information to be reviewed.** This work is on going and forms part of the new improvement plan. Housing Benefit staff are also part of the Departmental wide initiative to improve letter writing skills which forms part of an overall customer care plan.
- 5.7. **Information that includes technical terms in correspondence should be clearly explained.** We have already amended notification letters to address this issue and we will be investigating the best way to provide information to customers drawing on feedback from the customer satisfaction survey.
- 5.8. **Increase the awareness of Housing and Council Tax Benefit.** The use of targeted marketing based on the use of market segmentation databases such as MOSAIC will help in this respect. In addition the benefit customer satisfaction survey provides insight into the ways in which benefit customers are likely to receive information on the Benefit Service.
- 5.9. **The costs of the MOSAIC database should be shared.** The first year's costs of the MOSAIC database have been shared between the Forestcare, Leisure and the Benefit service. The success of the database in providing targeted marketing information will determine future potential to share costs or to seek alternative data sources.
- 5.10. **Link the Benefit Service to Registrar Service.** The intention is to provide an information pack to the Registrar for customers who register a birth or death so that changes of circumstances can be captured. Registrars will be given access to the benefit service appointment system so customers can visit the duty officer.
- 5.11. **Train external organisations to inform and identify potential customers of the benefit service.** This work with external organisations will be captured in the new improvement plan.
- 5.12. **The Benefit Service should continue to pursue best practice.** The service has submitted benchmark information and is awaiting the report on 2008/9 data. The service has already visited high performing local council's to gain an understanding of how they operate. This work will be captured in the new improvement plan.

2009/10 Benefit Improvement Plan

- 5.13. The current and next financial year will be challenging times for the Benefit Service due to the replacement of the Pericles benefit processing system. It will be important to improve service delivery in advance of the new system implementation so that the inevitable dip in performance when the new system is implemented is minimised as

much as possible. The Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing is due to approve a new improvement plan which will place the service in good stead to exploit any opportunities to share services in the future when the new system is in place and operating efficiently. The new improvement plan will reflect the actions detailed in the response to the report from the working group and is based around three new themes:

- Providing more Benefit Service
- Providing the right Benefit Service
- Providing the best Benefit Service

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

6.1 Nothing to add to this report.

Borough Treasurer

6.2 The recommendations themselves and the responses to them describe changes in practice on the whole and there are no responses which cannot be considered simply as ongoing service improvement with minimal or no additional resource requirement.

Equalities Impact Assessment

6.3 Equalities Impact Assessment is attached.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

6.4 There are no strategic risk management issues as a consequence of this report.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

7.1 None for this report

Method of Consultation

7.2 Not applicable

Representations Received

7.3 Not applicable

Background Papers

Report from the Working Group as attached as an annexe.

Contact for further information

Simon Hendey
Chief Officer: Housing

e-mail address: simon.hendey@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Direct dial tel. no. 01344 351879

Doc. Ref

[Insert name of document, folder etc]

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION 24 SEPTEMBER 2009

EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN ITEMS RELATING TO CORPORATE ISSUES Assistant Chief Executive

1 INTRODUCTION

This report presents current Executive Forward Plan items relating to corporate issues for the Commission's consideration.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

- 2.1 **That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission considers the current Executive Forward Plan items relating to corporate issues appended to this report.**

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Consideration of items on the Executive Forward Plan alerts the Commission to forthcoming Executive decisions and facilitates pre-decision scrutiny.
- 3.2 To achieve accountability and transparency of the decision making process, effective Overview and Scrutiny is essential. Overview and Scrutiny bodies are a key element of Executive arrangements and their roles include both developing and reviewing policy; and holding the Executive to account.
- 3.3 The power to hold the Executive to account is granted under Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 which states that Executive arrangements of a local authority must ensure that its Overview and Scrutiny bodies have power to review or scrutinise decisions made, or other action taken, in connection with the discharge of any functions which are the responsibility of the Executive. This includes the 'call in' power to review or scrutinise a decision made but not implemented and to recommend that the decision be reconsidered by the body / person that made it. This power does not relate solely to scrutiny of decisions and should therefore also be utilised to undertake pre-decision scrutiny.

Background Papers

Local Government Act 2000

Contact for further information

Richard Beaumont – 01344 352283
e-mail: richard.beaumont@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Andrea Carr – 01344 352122
e-mail: andrea.carr@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMISSION

EXECUTIVE WORK PROGRAMME

REFERENCE	I018131
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TITLE: Electronic Document Records Management System (EDRMS)

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To agree the use of Open Text EDRMS as the recommended solution for all new or replacement implementations of a document management system.

To formally sign the contract for Phase 1 implementation of Open Text in replacing the current unsupported document management system CareStore. This system is currently in use in use as part of the Electronic Social Care Record.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Within existing budget for phase 1

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection, Director of Corporate Services

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: None.

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: None

DATE OF DECISION: 21 Sep 2009

REFERENCE	I015724
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TITLE: Discretionary Rate Relief and Hardship Relief

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To consider new applications for discretionary rate relief and hardship relief.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Within existing budget

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: None.

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: None.

DATE OF DECISION: 30 Sep 2009

REFERENCE	I014589
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TITLE: Place Survey

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To inform the Executive of the Place Survey results for 2008.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: None

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Bracknell Forest residents

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: The survey itself was the bi-annual survey of residents for Bracknell Forest.

DATE OF DECISION: 20 Oct 2009

REFERENCE	I017940
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TITLE: Annual Report

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To endorse the Annual Report for 2008/09.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Contained within the report

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Corporate Management Team

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: Through reports and informal periodic updates

DATE OF DECISION: 20 Oct 2009

REFERENCE	I015593
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TITLE: Social Care and Community Transport Review

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To consider the review and recommendations emanating from this.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Revenue savings anticipated

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED:

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: Meeting with interested parties.
Postal survey of users.
Interviews with users and providers.
Focus Groups.

DATE OF DECISION: 20 Oct 2009

REFERENCE	I017797
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TITLE: 'All of Us' Community Cohesion Strategy and Equality Schemes Monitoring Report 2008-09

PURPOSE OF DECISION: Monitoring report on the implementation of the Council's 'All of Us' Community Cohesion Strategy and the Race, Gender and Disability Equality Schemes during 2008-09.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Within existing budget

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Council's Equality Sub-Group
Community Cohesion and Engagement Working Group

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: The document has been available for comment to the groups as listed.

DATE OF DECISION: 20 Oct 2009

REFERENCE	I018519
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TITLE: Calculation of Council Tax Base - 2010/11 Local Council Tax discounts - 2010/11

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To agree the calculation of the council tax base for 2010/11 and the level of local council tax discount offered for 2010/11.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: To be determined.

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Not applicable

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: None

DATE OF DECISION: 17 Nov 2009

REFERENCE	I018517
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TITLE: Customer Contact Strategy 2007-2010 Annual Update Report

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To provide an update to the Customer Contact Strategy for the Council.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Within existing budget.

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Not applicable.

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: None.

DATE OF DECISION: 15 Dec 2009

REFERENCE	I016144
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TITLE: Corporate Performance Overview Report

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To inform the Executive of the performance of the Council over the second quarter of 2009/10.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: No financial implications

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: N/A

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: N/A

DATE OF DECISION: 15 Dec 2009

REFERENCE	I015726
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TITLE: Discretionary Rate Relief and Hardship Relief

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To consider new applications for discretionary rate relief and hardship relief.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: Within existing budget

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive Member for Culture, Corporate Services and Public Protection

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: None.

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: None.

DATE OF DECISION: 31 Dec 2009

REFERENCE	I010993
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TITLE: Bracknell Town Centre Regeneration Strategy

PURPOSE OF DECISION: To confirm a strategy for the regeneration of Bracknell Town Centre.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: None

WHO WILL TAKE DECISION: Executive

PRINCIPAL GROUPS TO BE CONSULTED: Town Centre Stakeholders

METHOD OF CONSULTATION: External consultation

DATE OF DECISION: 16 Mar 2010

TO: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION
24 SEPTEMBER 2009

ANNUAL REPORT ON PROCUREMENT 2008-9 (Borough Treasurer)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Annual Report on Procurement 2008-9 reviews the expenditure analysis, the high spending areas, major procurement projects and achievements during the financial year.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

- 2.1 The Commission are asked to note the Annual Report on Procurement 2008-09.

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR07) required three per cent a year to be saved by the public sector up to 2010/11 to release £30 billion to frontline services. Local councils were assigned a target of £4.9 billion. It is anticipated that a large proportion of these savings will be achieved by procurement.
- 3.2 Within Bracknell Forest Council, the budget includes new annual procurement savings of £370,000 (£200,000 in 2008/09; a further £100,000 in 2009/10 and an additional £70,000 in 2010/11).
- 3.3 These savings are delivered through the efforts of a wide range of officers throughout the Council, with projects led or supported by the Corporate Procurement Team. Collaboration with other public sector bodies has continued through the use of frameworks and joint procurement.
- 3.4 This report, although backward looking, highlights the procurement achievements through corporate procurement projects and the increasing number of "advice cases" throughout the Council.

Background Papers

None

Contact for further information

Alan Nash, Corporate Services ☎ 01344 35 2180

alan.nash@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Jo Alderson, Corporate Services ☎ 01344 35 2191

jo.alderson@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

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ANNUAL REPORT ON PROCUREMENT 2008-9



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1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The last financial year proved to be particularly challenging from a procurement perspective. Whilst the emphasis on delivery of efficiencies and cashable savings remained, during the course of the year the focus shifted significantly towards support and advice to departments. The volume of work associated with this shift increased substantially and additional resources have been put into both the Corporate Procurement Team and the Environment, Culture and Communities department, on a short term basis, to deal with this peak in workload.
- 1.2 During the course of the year collaborative procurement initiatives continued to gain momentum. The work of the Berkshire Procurement and Shared Services Unit was re-aligned to ensure their focus was clearly on the delivery of cashable savings for all six Berkshire authorities. In addition, cross Berkshire working continued to improve with a work programme agreed by the Thames Valley Procurement Forum, which is designed to eliminate duplication of procurement effort wherever possible.
- 1.3 In view of these recent developments and coupled with the uncertainty around the future funding of the Berkshire Procurement and Shared Services Unit (BPSSU) a project has been added to the Council's Service Efficiency Strategy with the objective of establishing the role and purpose of the Council's Corporate Procurement Team in the medium term. Work on this is due to commence in November 2009 when, it is anticipated there will be increased certainty around the future funding of the BPSSU.
- 1.4 Despite these challenges this report highlights the considerable achievements of 2008-09 which arise as a result of the efforts of a wide range of officers throughout the Council, with projects led or supported by the Corporate Procurement Team, and increased collaboration with other Council's and agencies. Particular highlights include:
- Introduction of new Contract Standing Orders and a totally revised Procurement Manual.
 - Successful completion of a range of major contracts. The insurance services contract alone is saving the Council £170,000 p.a.
 - Integrating sustainability, equalities and support for the third sector within the Council's procurement activities.
 - The delivery of comprehensive training to a range of officers, including school bursars and governors.
 - Closer working with the BPSSU and other Berkshire councils ensuring work programmes are complementary and duplication is eliminated wherever possible.
 - The establishment of a collaborative approach to the purchase of gas and electricity utilising the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency framework. This approach reduced the impact of sharply rising energy prices, with cost avoidance of £600,000 achieved in a full year.

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 During 2008-9, the Corporate Procurement Team continued with three permanent staff, including the Head of Procurement (Jo Alderson), Principal Procurement Officer (Derek Fitz-Gibbon) and Senior Procurement Officer (Claire Seymour). A Procurement Assistant (Tanya Swain) was appointed in July 2009 and a second Principal Procurement Officer has recently been appointed (Abdul Razaq). Both the recent appointments are on fixed term contracts.
- 2.2 The Team have continued to contribute to the Council's savings. The procurement focus during the second half of the year significantly changed to support departments with a range of major procurements. The Council's Procurement Regulations were replaced with new Contract Standing Orders and the Procurement Manual has been totally revised, together with refreshing the intranet and external website. The Team are publishing reports on all supplier spend over £35k to the Corporate Management Team on a quarterly basis. In addition, briefing sessions have been provided to staff, bursars and Governors.
- 2.3 Collaborative work with other public sector bodies, within the South East and Thames Valley, has continued. The establishment of the Berkshire Efficiency Champions has helped to support further collaboration in the coming months (see section 4).

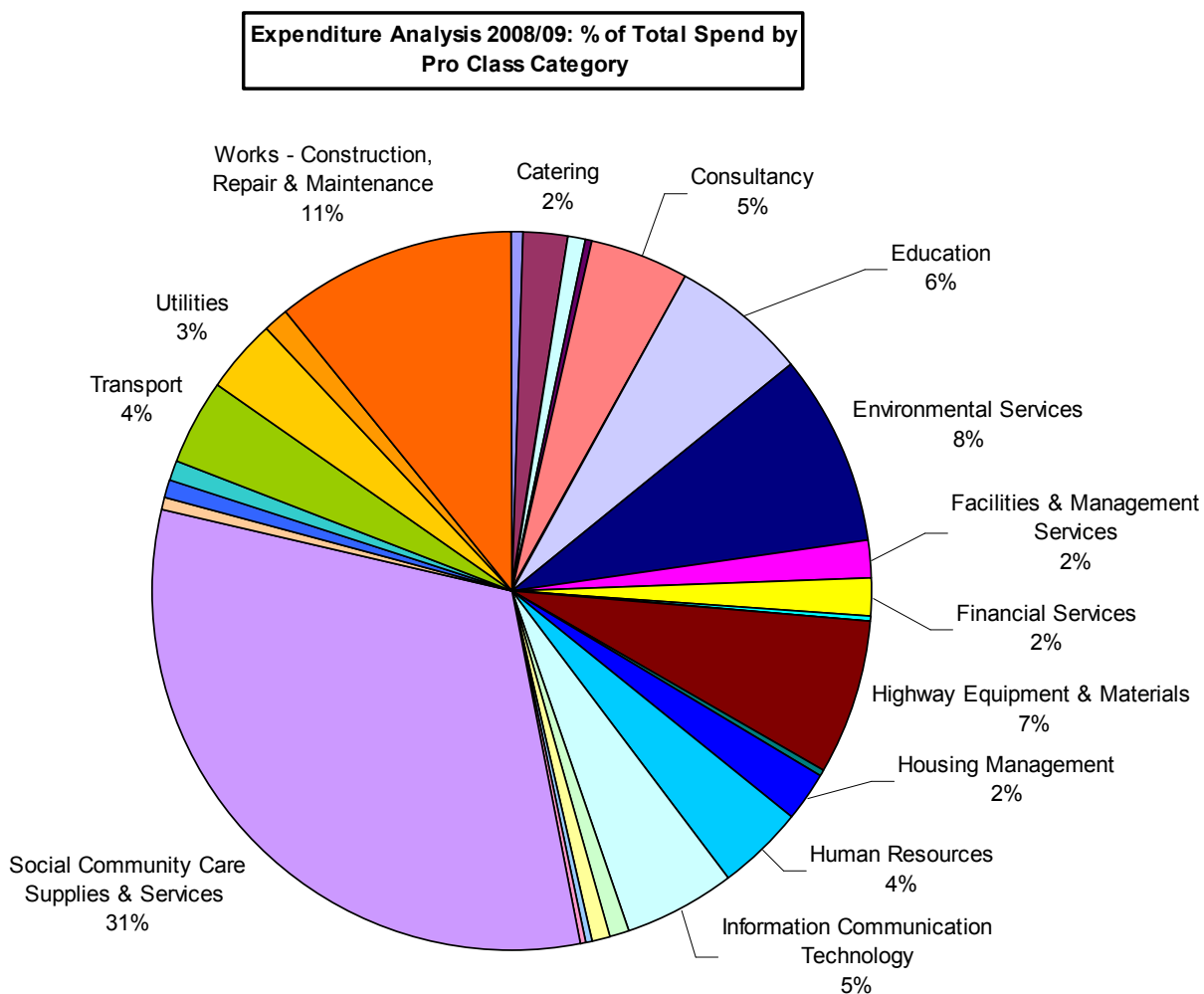
3 EXPENDITURE ANALYSIS

3.1 The Council’s expenditure on bought-in goods and services in 2008-9 was just over £96m. This compares with £102m identified for the previous financial year.

The expenditure for 2008-9 was analysed using “ProClass”, a standard procurement classification developed by the London Centre of Excellence and used on the South East Business Portal (SEBP). The 2008-9 expenditure includes analysis of Social Care payments made through the Swift finance module.

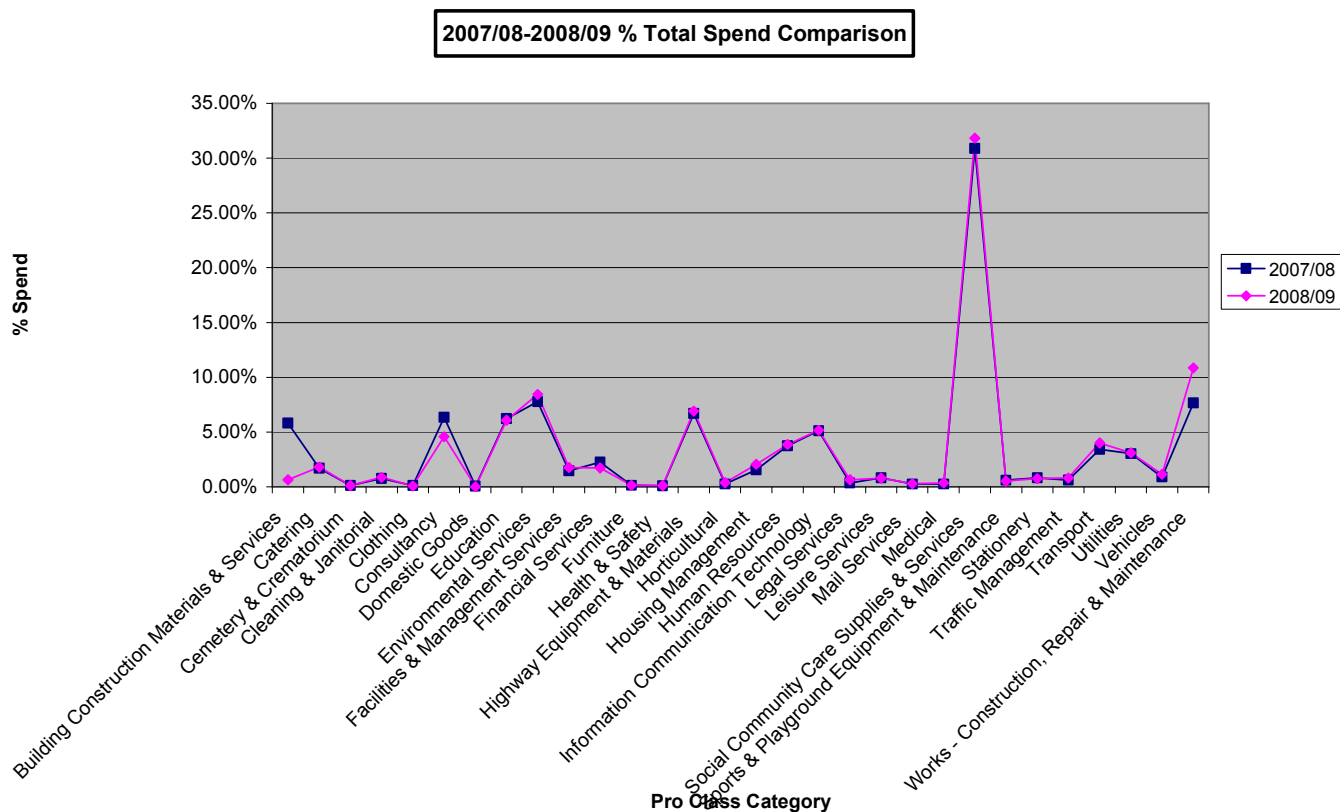
There has been movement between categories and suppliers with the majority of the £6m reduction due to the transfer of the Council’s housing stock to Bracknell Forest Homes and some underspend in, for example, Children’s Services.

The expenditure does not include schools except where the Council has, with their agreement, purchased on their behalf, for example on electricity.



3.2 The biggest spend areas remain Social Community Care (31%), Works and related maintenance services (11%), and Environmental Services (8%). Consultancy has further reduced (6% to 5%).

3.3 Comparison with 2007-8 shows a clear correlation:-



3.4 The most significant change has been in Building Construction, down from 6% to less than 1% (£5.3m). Investigation showed that a large majority of this movement can be attributed to Bracknell Forest Homes together with revised categorisation giving an increase in Works (8% to 11%).

3.5 The top 13 suppliers (over £1m) were:-

SUPPLIER	SERVICE AREA	EXPENDITURE	POSITION
1. RINGWAY HIGHWAY SERVICES LTD	Highways	£6,513,238.69	=
2. READING BOROUGH COUNCIL	Waste PFI	£4,041,039.52	↑ from 3
3. TURNSTONE SUPPORT	Adult Care	£3,624,878.14	↓ from 2
4. MACE PLUS LTD	Works	£2,748,230.70	New
5. DIMENSIONS (NSO) LTD	Adult Care	£2,399,268.97	↓ from 4
6. SITA	Waste	£2,380,083.12	↓ from 5
7. CLAUDE FENTON LTD	Works	£1,890,855.55	New
8. SOUTHERN COUNTIES CARE LTD	Adult Care	£1,254,765.60	↑ from 11
9. SOUTHERN ELECTRIC PLC	Utilities	£1,180,023.42	New
10. CONNEXIONS LTD	Young People	£1,177,015.17	↓ from 9
11. BALFOUR BEATTY INFRASTRUCTURE SERVICES	Highways	£1,149,027.54	New
12. FIRST BEELINE	Transport	£1,110,742.89	New
13. WILLIAM DAVIES LTD	Building Mtce	£1,081,102.73	=

The top three suppliers are unchanged although two have swapped places.

Five suppliers are no longer listed:-

- Anglian Windows and Travis Perkins contracts have moved to Bracknell Forest Homes.
- Zurich Municipal has been replaced by a new contract with Risk Management Partners.
- British Gas contract for electricity replaced with Southern Electric.
- Expenditure with Sol-Tec has nearly halved reflecting the reduction in IT hardware purchases.

Five new suppliers have appeared:-

- Mace Plus appointed on the Garth Hill College construction project.
- Claude Fenton appointed to provide works at Brakenhale Open Learning Centre.
- Southern Electric – as above
- Balfour Beatty expenditure increased due to new street lighting installations at Mill Lane.
- Expenditure with First Beeline was previously just under £1m in 2007/8 primarily due to payment timing.

- 3.6 Supplier spend over £35k per annum is being reported on a quarterly basis to the Corporate Management Team with Departments providing information on contracts identified. The information provided by Departments is being used to populate a register of contracts maintained by the Corporate Procurement Team.

The long term objective is that a new contracts database will be integral to the Council's financial system (Agresso) and that departments will be able to record their own contracts onto a Council-wide database. Agresso is due to be upgraded in 2010. This is a major project and the implementation of a contracts database will follow the successful completion of this exercise.

4 2008-9 ACHIEVEMENTS

- 4.1 Total cashable annual savings of £831k were achieved in year based on both new and previously established contracts (See Annex B for details). The target for new cashable savings in 2008-9 was £200k and this was achieved principally through the retendering of insurance services, which alone generated savings of £170k p.a. Non-cashable savings during the year totalled £326k. These savings are delivered through the efforts of a wide range of officers throughout the Council, with projects led or supported by the Corporate Procurement Team.
- 4.2 **Procurement Strategy** – New strategy for 2009-2011, see section 8 below.
- 4.3 **Ethical Procurement** - is the purchase of goods and services which are produced and delivered under conditions that do not involve the abuse or exploitation of any persons. The Ethical Trading Initiative (ETI) has written a Base Code which is straightforward, covering such things as not using child labour and safe working conditions. The Base Code was endorsed by the Council's Executive in April 2009 and incorporated into the new version of the Procurement Manual.
- 4.4 **Procurement Manual** - The first revision of the Bracknell Forest Procurement Manual was published in 2004. This was subsequently updated in early 2006 to reflect the requirement for a mandatory standstill period in EU procurements and

other minor changes. In March 2009, the Corporate Management Team endorsed the revised manual.

Changes to the Procurement Manual include the following:-

- To incorporate the new Procurement Strategy 2009-2011,
- To reflect changes in legislation and subsequent case law,
- To reflect changes in the new Contract Standing Orders,
- New section on Social Benefits,
- New section on Preparation.

The Procurement Manual will now be a live document, being updated on a regular basis, with the latest version published on the intranet (Boris).

4.5 Major contracts awarded during 2008-9, by or with the assistance of the Corporate Procurement Team included:

4.5.1 **Insurance Services** – This complex procurement was supported by external consultants and resulted in significant savings that contributed to the 2008/9 savings target. The estimated annual value is over £700k.

4.5.2 **Drug Services for Bracknell Forest** – the Council undertook a tender exercise to establish a contract for Drug Services. This consisted of 4 separate lots, one of which was for a joint requirement with Windsor and Maidenhead. The contract is now in operation with an estimated annual value of £275,000. The service is funded by a ring fenced grant and the savings delivered as a result of this procurement will be re-invested in additional staff to improve the overall service.

4.5.3 **Internal Audit** – the Council lead a tender exercise to establish a framework for the provision of audit services. This framework is open to other Berkshire authorities to use. The contract is has been in operation since 1st April 2009 with an estimated annual value of £200,000 for Bracknell Forest Council.

4.5.4 **Building & Engineering Repair and Maintenance Services** - Corporate Procurement assisted the Building Design & Surveying group with the appointment of a new contractor in June 2009. This procurement, started in September 2008, was carried out following a full European restricted procedure. The contract has been let for 2 years with optional extensions for a further 2 years with an estimated value of £600k per annum. Some savings are anticipated but are dependant on the amount of work required which is variable.

4.6 Other departmental projects partially supported by the Corporate Procurement Team in 2008-9 included:

- Information, Advice & Guidance Services for children and families
- Hosting & Maintenance Services to SmartConnect Site License Holders
- Jennetts Park School Design Management Services
- Employer's Agent for Garth Hill College
- Adult Social Care IT System
- Library stock – use of Central Buying Consortium frameworks
- Electronic Document Records Management System – mini-competition under OGC Buying Solutions framework

4.7 **Sustainability, Equalities and the Third Sector** – the Team has been working closely with other officers on these areas, as follows:-

- 4.7.1 The Climate Change Action Plan has been finalised and includes a section on Procurement together with an implementation plan. In November 2008, the Council's Corporate Management Team agreed to adopt the Defra "Quick Wins" minimum standards as Council policy and "best practice" standards as an aspirational goal, where feasible.
- 4.7.2 Work in the Equalities Sub Group has resulted in new guidance on Equalities Impact Assessments (EIAs) for Procurement projects which has been incorporated into the revised Procurement Manual. Procurement related staff have received specific EIA training which will help to promote equalities in procurement throughout the departments.
- 4.7.3 The Third Sector Compact was revised to include a new section on Procurement and this is now also incorporated into the Procurement Manual.
- 4.8 **Departmental Service Plans** – The Assistant Chief Executive's Office, together with Procurement, have developed a new Annex for the 2009/10 service plans. Departments have completed their service plans and this includes information on major expenditure proposals. This information is invaluable for identifying forthcoming procurement projects and resource requirements.
- 4.9 **Procurement Training** – Briefing sessions for key officers on the new Contract Standing Orders and the Procurement Manual were held through March to May 2009. This briefing was also provided for Bursars and Governors. A training programme is being finalised for managers, the Executive and Councillors for delivery during 2009/10.

5 COLLABORATION

- 5.1 **Improvement & Efficiency South East (IESE)** – previously known as the South East Centre for Excellence (SECE). Direct contact with IESE has reduced following the establishment of the BPSSU below. The Garth Hill College project utilised the IESE major works framework. The Head of Building Surveyors and Head of Procurement are joint representatives on the Steering Group for this framework.
- 5.2 The South East Business Portal is run by IESE and the Corporate Procurement Team continues to advertise opportunities on it. The Team also uses the portal as a contracts database that can be viewed by suppliers and other interested parties thereby reducing Freedom of Information requests. The Head of Procurement represents the Thames Valley Procurement Forum (TVPF) on the Portal User Group. Increased usage of the Portal helps support the Council's objective to sustain economic prosperity by ensuring visibility of opportunities to local businesses.
- 5.3 **Berkshire Efficiency Champions** are senior officers predominately from Finance, with a rotating chairman. The prime objective of this group is to facilitate the delivery of cashable savings through collaborative procurement by the BPSSU and TVPF officers.
- 5.4 **Berkshire Procurement Shared Services Unit (BPSSU)** projects affecting Bracknell Forest in 2008-9 included:
- Learning Disabilities Initiative – secured savings on BFC residential placements totalling £96k in year (of which £74k relates to placements funded by the PCT under S 28A of the 1999 Health Act). However, agreements concluded towards the end of the year will result in higher savings for 2009-10. The accommodation and support arrangements for the individuals concerned are currently under

review. It should be noted that these savings relate specifically to registered residential care homes.

- Dementia Nursing Home Frameworks - agreements now concluded with four providers
- Fleet procurement – report published
- Personal Transport Shared Service (Phase 1)

5.5 **Thames Valley Procurement Forum (TVPF)**, chaired by RBWM, has continued to the development of strategic and collaborative procurement. The group supports the sharing of procurement best practice and continued development of Berkshire standard procurement documentation. The TVPF recently agreed a programme of procurements to be led by one authority on behalf of the others. This approach will avoid duplication of effort and has the potential to deliver further cashable savings by aggregating demand across Berkshire.

6 PROCUREMENT PROJECTS

The high expenditure areas are currently being addressed as follows:

6.1 **Social Community Care – Adult Social Care** - Continues to implement a full range of support provision under cost and volume, spot and block contracts.

A tendering process to establish frameworks for learning disability community support services has been completed, with a commencement date of July 2009.

Adult Social Care is leading on a collaborative procurement for Tier 3 drug and alcohol services with Slough and Windsor and Maidenhead. The new contract should be in place by early 2010.

A number of other projects are planned to commence during the summer of 2009. These are for framework agreements for community based support to help people to live independently at home and will replace the existing domiciliary and domestic support services and the meals on wheels service.

Commissioning Strategies for people with Dementia and people with Sensory Impairments have been approved by the Executive. The strategies are underpinned by sound quantitative and qualitative needs analysis reflecting the needs and wishes of people in the borough.

6.2 **Social Community Care - Children's Services** - The contract management role is still being covered by departmental Finance. A dedicated officer has been appointed but the role is in transition.

A second collaborative procurement, lead by Wokingham BC, has been completed to establish frameworks for Independent Foster Agency (IFA) Services. The joint procurement is expected to provide some savings through competitive pricing although this is dependant on usage.

6.3 **Works** – A number of projects, mostly for schools, continue to be competitively tendered as required. The contract for building repairs and maintenance was re-tendered, see above.

The IESE framework agreement for Major Works, managed by Hampshire County Council, was utilised during 2008-9 for the Garth Hill College One School Pathfinder project. Mace Plus was appointed and construction has now started. The final

contract price achieved efficiency savings estimated at 8% (or £240,000) in 2008/09. The tender for the IT equipment is in progress.

The Berkshire Unitary Authorities, led by West Berkshire, are undertaking a competitive tender to form a framework agreement for Minor Works valued between £25,000 and £1m. Bracknell Forest is represented on the project team by the Building Surveyors. The framework is planned to be in place for use during 2009/10.

6.4 **Environmental Services**

Waste and cleansing services - the Re3 project involves this Council in a 25 year PFI partnership with Wokingham and Reading Councils for the disposal of our household waste and recyclables in order to achieve cost and recycling targets. The build stage of the project will be complete by the middle of 2009. In the meantime, all Councils are able to report good progress with recycling through the delivery of this contract. Rates are expected to continue to improve next year when all targets should be exceeded.

A new post of Performance and Projects Manager has been created to support the procurement work in Environment Culture & Communities.

The South Hill Park renovation project, funded by National Lottery grant, has commenced with the procurement of a lead consultant utilising an English Partnerships framework. Work has commenced on the procurement of the main landscaping works.

6.5 **Consultancy** – Consultancy spending has reduced to 5% with the Procurement Team more frequently involved in the procurement process. Consultancy includes a wide range of activities, many of which support the delivery of the Council's key services. During the year the most significant areas of spend were construction (project managing Garth Hill College) and highways (bridge assessment, strengthening, management and maintenance; traffic monitoring and engineering work associated with London Road, John Nike Way).

6.6 **Utilities** - In collaboration with other Berkshire unitary authorities, the Council's gas and electricity supply migrated to the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (PASA) framework suppliers in the autumn of 2008. The significant market price increases meant that there were no cashable savings but non-cashable savings are estimated at £600k, with £326k in 2008/9. This amount is based on comparison with the market price should the Council have tendered independently. The framework prices are refreshed in April based on PASA procurement in the futures market throughout the preceding 12 months. The April 2009 prices have increased but continue to secure significant cost avoidance for the Council.

7 **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY AND AUDIT**

7.1 A Procurement Update was provided to the Overview & Scrutiny Commission in March 2008 which resulted in a request to report back procurement approvals, levels of "off-contract" expenditure and whether there was a case to centralise procurement. The resultant information item concluded that:-

- There are some areas of devolved procurement which would benefit from:
 - An updated and clearly documented Scheme of Delegation in each department, and
 - Senior officer membership of the Strategic Procurement Group (SPG).

- The importance of professional procurement throughout the Council is increasingly being recognised.
- The reasons for the off contract spend vary but it is continuing to reduce.
- Until the “Balancing the Budget” review of all support services is completed, it is recommended that the Council retains the existing devolved system of purchasing and cost centre management.

Subsequently, all departments have updated Schemes of Delegation and both membership and attendance of the SPG has improved. Professional procurement is a key theme of the new Procurement Strategy. Off contract spend continues to be monitored.

7.2 The internal audit in early 2008 on Contracting & Procurement covered a sample of suppliers with high expenditure. The audit highlighted some areas of non-compliance by departments. A further internal audit of major contracts was subsequently instigated, with several considerations raised. These considerations have been reviewed by an officer group, including Legal Services, Procurement and Audit, and an action plan agreed by the Executive in December 2008. Progress against this action plan is reported regularly to the Executive.

7.3 The Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) was introduced in April 2009, into which the Audit Commission will feed their review on the Use of Resources (UoR) by the Council. The UoR have been extended to include a new Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE) covering commissioning and procurement. The Strategic Procurement Group and Corporate Procurement have gathered evidence and some interviews with the Audit Commission have taken place.

8 PROCUREMENT STRATEGY AND KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

8.1 Of the remaining three actions in the 2005 Procurement Strategy, market development is being partially addressed by the Berkshire Procurement and Shared Services Unit (BPSSU) and the Ethical Code has been dropped in favour of the existing Council’s Code of Conduct. The final action, a major suppliers’ development programme, is carried forward into the new strategy as part of Risk Management.

The progress statement for the remaining actions is included in Annex C.

8.2 The new Procurement Strategy 2009-2011 was endorsed by the Council’s Executive in April 2009. In support of Government strategies and recognising the requirements of the Council’s medium term objectives. The following vision has been developed and is applicable to all Officers involved in the procurement process:

We will:-

Deliver high quality services to the Bracknell Forest community by using professional procurement practices to obtain best value for money whilst considering social benefits.

The Core Objectives of the Procurement Strategy are to:-

1. Obtain best Value for Money,
2. Use Professional Procurement practices,
3. Consider Social Benefits.

Within these three Core Objectives are key targets to be achieved over the next three years. The Social Benefits focus on Equality, Sustainability, Small Businesses and the Voluntary Sector which are now priorities – including the Council's new MTO to sustain economic prosperity.

Progress to date against the Summary Action Plan is shown in Annex C

- 8.3 The Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are shown in detail in Annex A. Some areas are showing an improvement although novation of contracts to Bracknell Forest Homes and the increase in direct payments has created some anomalies in other areas. The number of contracts on the database has further increased.
- 8.4 The total number of transactions (excluding direct debits) was 51,303 spread over 5,448 active suppliers. The number of transactions has continued to reduce. The number of suppliers with one invoice only in the 12 month period has increased to 2,300 from just below two thousand. This increase is probably due to the increase in direct payments to individuals. The top one hundred suppliers by transaction now represent 20,000 transactions (39%), a small decrease of 4%. The number of "true" invoices, measured by BVPI No.8, has continued to reduce by a further 16%..
- 8.5 In October 2008, the Government published the "Procurement value for money indicators" which are split into primary and secondary. These have been added to the top of Annex A. Additional indicators will be reviewed and added as data collection is improved.

9 THE FUTURE

- 9.1 Current and planned procurements are detailed in the departmental service plans, and include:-
- Highways – pavements, street care, traffic and transport requirements
 - Stationery
 - Telecommunications – fixed line telephony and related services
 - Building services – lift maintenance, fire alarms, heating & ventilation etc.
 - Construction – Primary Capital Programme, Garth Hill completion
 - Car Parking – management, equipment and enforcement
 - Domiciliary Care provision
 - Playgrounds & equipment – Playbuilder project funded by the DCSF
 - Broadband services framework – led by South East Grid for Learning (SEGfL)
- 9.2 Thames Valley collaborative projects for 2009 onwards, subject to final agreement, include:-
- IT Hardware and Software – Bracknell lead
 - Broadband services – Bracknell lead (as above)
 - Advertising – complete tender and review of practices – Reading lead
 - PASS Project – Reading lead
 - Publications & Subscriptions – RBWM lead
 - Commodity Price Benchmarking – RBWM lead
 - Training Services – RBWM lead
 - Community Meals – Slough lead
 - Occupational Health – Slough lead
 - Construction Framework (Small Works) – complete tender – West Berkshire lead
 - Property Service Contracts – West Berkshire Lead
 - Consultancy – Wokingham lead
 - School Meals (Phase 2) – Wokingham lead

9.3 BPSSU projects for 2009/10 include:-

- Learning Disabilities Initiative (next phase)
- Energy data management and process improvement.

9.4 Value for money will continue to be delivered through

- Identification of suitable nationally-available frameworks, thereby reducing the cost of holding full competitions.
- Increased collaborative procurement through the TV Procurement Forum, BPSSU, and other public bodies, achieving lower pricing from larger purchasing power and sharing the cost.
- Enhanced competition for Bracknell Forest contracts through wider publication of forthcoming contract opportunities, particularly through the South East Business Portal.

9.5 The Corporate Procurement Team was originally established to assist the Council with balancing its revenue budget through the delivery of cashable savings. The Council's budget anticipates that new cashable savings of £100k in 2009-10 and a further £70k in 2010-11 will be achieved. Recent events have meant that the focus of the team has shifted towards increased support and advice for major departmental procurements. A project has therefore been included in the Council's Service Efficiency Strategy to establish the role and purpose of procurement in the medium term. This is a complex piece of work as the outcomes also need to take account of the BPSSU's role and work programme, (although continued funding for the Unit beyond 31 March 2010 is uncertain) and increased collaboration and joint working across Berkshire through the Thames Valley Procurement Forum. Work on this project is due to commence in November 2009.

JO ALDERSON
Head of Procurement

August 2009

ANNEX A - KEY PROCUREMENT PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

KPI	Source	As at 01/04/08	Aim	As at 01/04/09	Achieved
Total cost of the procurement function					
a) as a percentage of the organisational running costs	Balance Sheet – Corporate Procurement Team (including Admin)	N/A		0.09%	N/A
b) as a percentage of non-pay expenditure		N/A		0.16%	N/A
Professionally qualified procurement employees as a percentage of total procurement employees	Corporate Procurement Team (including Admin)	N/A		2 out of 4 – 50%	N/A
Number of organisations top 10 suppliers who have a formal agreement	Contracts database & £35k report – <i>Note 1</i>	N/A		100%	N/A
No of contracts >150k on full extension	Contracts database	62	↑	74	✓
No of contracts <150k on full extension	Contracts database	35	↑	43	✓
Total contracts	Contracts database	97	↑	117	✓
No of suppliers	Annual expenditure ex Agresso	5,238	↓	5,448	✗ <i>Note 2</i>
	Single Transaction	1,954	↓	2,292	✗ <i>Note 2</i>
Annual expenditure	Annual expenditure ex Agresso	£102.4m		£96.4m	
Average per supplier	Calculation	£19,545	↑	£17,696	✗ <i>Note 2</i>
Identified Procurement Community members	Agresso Authorisers	188	↓	190	=
Volume of spend on Contract	Contracts database & £35k report	£48.1m	↑	£42.9m	✗ <i>Notes 2 & 3</i>
Volume of spend off contract	Calculation	£54.3m	↓	£53.5m	✓
No. of invoices	- BVPI No.8	35,850	↓	30,050	✓

Average invoice value	Calculation (against BVPI)	£2,856	↑	£3,208	✓
No. of Contract notices on OJEU	TED website (PINs, notices & awards)	19	↑	23	✓
Cashable Procurement Savings	SPG - Cumulative	£883k	N/A	£811k	✗ Note 3
	SPG - New	N/A	£200k	£173k	N/A

Note 1: The existing contracts database is based on contracts over £35k advised by the departments. Work is ongoing to improve the data captured through the quarterly £35k report.

Note 2: The number of active suppliers with a single transaction has increased by over 300. There are over 800 which would appear to be a named individual probably reflecting the increase in direct payments.

Note 2: Change due to novation of the Building Materials & Windows contracts to Bracknell Forest Homes. Awaiting contract information on construction works.

Note 3: Covers Adult Social Care spot contracts (£9.8m) and SEN school placements (£3.6m).

ANNEX B - PROCUREMENT SAVINGS 2008-9

Estimated Total Savings are usually calculated by comparing previous pricing and new pricing at the beginning of the contract and therefore does not take into account any fluctuation in usage which may subsequently occur. Those contracts labelled 'New' contributed towards the Council's cashable savings target of £200k in 2008-9. In addition to the savings below, new non-cashable savings totalling **£326k** were achieved - primarily through cost avoidance on electricity and gas.

Depts	New	Contract	Nature of saving	How achieved	Contract Expiry	Estimated Total Saving	2008-9 Savings
REVENUE:							
All		Agency staff – now includes care staff	Lower pricing	Implementation of Hants CC contract	30-Jun-09	£275k	£40k
All		Fixed line Telecoms	Lower pricing	Competitive tendering and e-auction	30-Sep-09	£356k	£49k
All		IT framework	Lower pricing	Competitive tendering	31-Mar-10	£467k	£56k
All		Mobile Phones	Lower pricing	Change to new OGC framework	31-Dec-08	£42k	£24k (1)
All		Printer Cartridges	Lower pricing	Using new OGC framework via Banner agreement	29-Jun-08	Up to £29k per annum	£3k (1)
All		Photocopier / Multifunction Devices and Associated Services	Lower pricing	Using OGC framework	31-Aug-10	£68k	£8k (1)
All		Office Cleaning	Lower pricing	Competitive tendering	31-Oct-11	£360k	£90k
All		Electricity – un-metered	Lower pricing	Using OGC framework	30-Sep-08	£77k	£45k
All		Food & Drink	Lower pricing	Competitive tendering	Various 2011	£30k per annum	£34k
CS		Transport Services	Lower pricing	Competitive tendering	31-Aug-11	£141k p.a.	£141k
CS	New	Consultancy	Lower pricing	Using OGC framework	Ad Hoc	£5k	£6k (1)
CS	New	Insurance	Lower pricing	Competitive tendering	31-Mar-12	£600k	£170k
SC&L	New	Fostering Agencies	Lower pricing	Using Wokingham frameworks	31-Aug-11	£96k	£9k
EC&C	New	Library Stock	Lower pricing	Using CBC frameworks	31-Mar-10	£28k	£9k
All	New	Miscellaneous					£10k
						Sub Total	£694k
HOUSING:							
EC&C		Building Materials – contract novated to BFH in Feb-08	Profit Share & Rental Income only	Competitive tendering	30-Oct-09	£124k	£137k
						Sub Total	£137k
						TOTAL	£831k

(1) As confirmed by OGC Buying Solutions

ANNEX C - PROCUREMENT STRATEGY PROGRESS STATEMENT

June 2009

	Checkpoints	Achieved Yes/No	Actions reqd	Evidence of achievement	Cmptn Date	Comments
2.2	Integrate with depts annual Service Plans	Y	Discuss with HoP&I		Apr-09	Major procurements will now be identified in annual Service Plans. New Annex C covering Anticipated Procurement Projects over £100k in the coming year.
3.2	Review processes and Contract Regulations	Y	Completed	Adoption of revised Regs by Full Council and publication on Intranet	Dec-08	New Contract Standing Orders (CSOs) written and effective from 1st April 2009.
3.3	Procurement Manual and best practice toolkit	Y	Completed	Publication of Manual and completion of staff training	09-04 Feb-09	Advice published in Procurement Manual and on Intranet. Manual revised, effective 1st April 2009.
4.2 5.1	Best practice guidance to staff in conjunction with SAG and CCG	Y	Completed	Procurement manual chapter published	03-06	Procurement section in Climate Change Action Plan. Review of "Quick Wins" completed by SPG. Procurement Manual updated.
10.1	Ethical code as part of Procurement Manual	Y	Completed	Procurement manual chapter published	12-07	Existing Code of Conduct for staff referenced in Manual.

Annex D - Procurement Strategy 2009-011 - Summary Action Plan

Item	Subject	Action	Priority	Target	Progress
1	Professional Procurement				
1.1	Code of Conduct	Publish guidance	1	May-09	Complete
1.2	Ethical Procurement	Approval & publish guidance	1	May-09	Complete
1.3	Consultation	Review elected member involvement	3	Nov-09	In Progress
1.4	e-Procurement	Commence e-Invoicing	2	Dec-09	Review Complete
1.5	Contract management	Publish guidance	2	May-10	
1.6	Guidance & Training	New contracts database	2	Dec-09	Dependent upon Agresso Upgrade
2	Value for money	Whole life costing	1	Feb-10	
2.1	Savings	<i>As published in the Finance Service Plans</i>			
2.2	Collaboration	Improve links	3	Sep-09	In progress
2.3	Innovation	Assist officers	2	Feb-10	
2.4	Risk	Review guidance	3	May-09	Complete
3	Social Benefits				
3.1	Corporate Social Responsibility	<i>Refer 1.2, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4 and 3.5</i>			
3.2	Equality	Embed EIAs	1	Dec-09	In progress
3.3	Sustainability	Increase procurement of sustainable goods	2	Dec-10	
3.4	SMEs	Embed Concordat	3	Dec-09	
3.5	Third Sector	Improve links	3	May-10	

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION 24 SEPTEMBER 2009

GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION ON 'STRENGTHENING LOCAL DEMOCRACY'

CHAIRMAN OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION

1 INTRODUCTION

This report seeks the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's views on the proposals in the consultation by the Department for Communities and Local Government 'Strengthening Local Democracy'.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:

- a) considers its response to the main themes of the consultation document affecting Overview and Scrutiny
- b) delegates to the Chairman of the O&S Commission the input to the Council's overall response to the consultation and the specific questions affecting O&S.

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 The Department for Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) consultation paper on 'Strengthening Local Democracy'¹ was issued on 23 July with a response deadline of 2 October. The document was circulated to Members of the Commission on 2 September.
- 3.2 The consultation document states that it is 'focused on promoting local democratic renewal by strengthening the capacity of local government to serve citizens'. It contains a number of proposals and questions relating to Overview and Scrutiny (O&S), together with others concerning local authorities' powers and their role in tackling climate change, sub-regional working, and the relationship between central and local government. The Corporate Management Team are considering making a response to the consultation document and wish to incorporate in that response the views of the O&S Commission on the proposals concerning O&S.
- 3.3 The questions in the consultation document concerning O&S are reproduced in Appendix 1, along with the relevant extracts from the consultation document. The main themes arising from the proposals, together with consequential issues not mentioned in the document are:

¹ The CLG consultation document can be found at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/localgovernment/pdf/1290537.pdf>

- a) Should O&S be extended to all the public services provided by partner organisations in the local strategic partnership, also to sub-regional partnerships?
- b) Should O&S be extended to the provision of wider public services such as public transport and utility companies?
- c) Should any extension of O&S attract the same powers as apply currently?
- d) How could such an expansion of O&S activity be managed so as to complement and not conflict with the roles of the statutory regulators?
- e) Should any agreement to extend the role of O&S be conditional on the provision by government of additional resources to meet the increased workload?
- f) Is the status and resourcing of O&S sufficient?
- g) How can public engagement in O&S be improved?

Background Papers

Consultation document 'Strengthening local democracy', DCLG, July 2009

Contact for further information

Richard Beaumont – 01344 352283

e-mail: richard.beaumont@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

‘STRENGTHENING LOCAL DEMOCRACY’ CONSULTATION BY THE DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Consultation questions relating to Overview and Scrutiny

CHAPTER 1: LOCAL GOVERNMENT AT THE CENTRE OF DECISION MAKING	
<u>Question 1</u>	Do you agree that we should extend scrutiny powers in relation to Local Area Agreement (LAA) partners to cover the range of their activities in an area, not just those limited to specific LAA targets?
<u>Extract from Consultation document</u>	<p><i>'61. We want to examine whether the scope of scrutiny powers should be increased so that they cover all of the issues that matter to the local community. Other than for health, and crime and disorder matters, formal scrutiny powers are currently limited to those bodies that are under a duty to co-operate with a local authority in setting and delivering the priorities established in the Local Area Agreement (LAA). Other than on crime and disorder, and on health, scrutiny committees can only use these powers when the issue at hand falls under the scope of priorities set out in the LAA.</i></p> <p><i>62. But the issues which matter to local people often go beyond the scope of LAAs. And they relate to many other organisations than just those who are responsible for delivering the priorities set out in this agreement. Although in some places, other local service providers who have not formally signed up to the LAA – for example utility companies – voluntarily co-operate with council scrutiny reviews, this is not always the case.'</i></p>
<u>Question 2</u>	Do we need to make scrutiny powers more explicit in relation to local councils' role in scrutinising expenditure on delivery of local public services in an area? If so, what is the best way of achieving this?
<u>Extract from Consultation document</u>	<p><i>'63. If they are to act effectively on citizen's behalf, on all the issues which matter to them, we need to further strengthen the scrutiny powers which councils have. This would mean:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>broadening</i> the number of bodies which can be subject to scrutiny committees: not limited to those responsible for health, crime and disorder or council functions, nor just those responsible for priority targets set out in the LAA <p><i>enabling</i> scrutiny committees to make reports and recommendations to a wider range of bodies for their consideration, and these bodies could be required to have regard to the recommendations and formally respond to scrutiny committees'</p>

<u>Question 3</u>	Do you agree that we should bring all or some of the local public services as set out in this chapter fully under the local authority scrutiny regime? Are there other bodies who would benefit from scrutiny from local government?
<u>Extract from Consultation document</u>	'64 <i>Subject to views, we propose to offer councils greater scrutiny over: ...police strategies in local authority areas... fire and rescue authorities... local authorities' delivery of high-quality educational provision... probation authorities... provision of public transport and transport infrastructure... Jobcentre Plus...utility companies... young people's education and skills issues'</i>
<u>Question 4</u>	How far do you agree that we should extend scrutiny powers to enable committees to require attendance by officers or board members of external organisations to give evidence at scrutiny hearings, similar to the powers already in existence for health and police?
<u>Extract from Consultation document</u>	'63. <i>If they are to act effectively on citizen's behalf, on all the issues which matter to them, we need to further strengthen the scrutiny powers which councils have. This would mean enhancing the powers which these committees have. Officers and board members could be required to appear in front of the committee'</i>
<u>Question 5</u>	What more could be done to ensure that councils adequately resource and support the local government scrutiny function to carry out its role to full effect?
<u>Extract from Consultation document</u>	<p>'65. <i>Those scrutiny committees which are really effective are those which are well supported by their local authority. We are already requiring lead councils to designate an officer to support the scrutiny committee, which will help raise the profile and visibility of scrutiny.</i></p> <p>66. <i>The proposals in this consultation will further increase the status of scrutiny as one of the council's central roles. As the democratically accountable leaders of their areas, it will be a priority for every council leader to ensure that their council's scrutiny activities are effective. This will involve leaders and council executives considering carefully the resources that are devoted to scrutiny and the status accorded to those leading the scrutiny work.</i></p> <p>67. <i>One option is to place a duty on council chief executives to ensure that committees have adequate resources to carry out their work. While recognising the importance of scrutiny, this would also mean that final decisions on how best to organise resources are left with those who are best-placed to make them.</i></p> <p>68. <i>We also believe that scrutiny should take greater visibility and recognition as befits its vital role. A visible commitment by a local authority to the importance of overview of scrutiny would be ranking the position of chair of certain overview and scrutiny committees in the authority on a par with a cabinet post. This might include the special responsibility allowance for this post being equal to that of a cabinet member in the authority.</i></p>

<u>Question 6</u>	How can council leaders ensure that scrutiny is a core function of how their organisations do business and have a full and proper role in scrutinising the full range of local public services?
<u>Extract from Consultation document</u>	
<u>Question 7</u>	What more could be done to better connect and promote the important role of local government scrutiny to local communities, for example citizens as expert advisers to committees?
<u>Extract from Consultation document</u>	<i>74. We have a duty to citizens to ensure that bodies spending public money and delivering public services in local areas are open to appropriate, proper challenge and effective scrutiny by the democratically elected councillors for that area. We are also clear that local scrutiny must keep to those issues which affect local service delivery.</i>
CHAPTER 4: SUB-REGIONAL WORKING	
<u>Question 17</u>	Should the activity of sub-regional partnerships be required to be subject to scrutiny arrangements?
<u>Extract from Consultation document</u>	<p><i>'146. As sub-regional structures grow in power and influence, it is important that greater power is matched by clear, democratic and accountable leadership</i></p> <p><i>149. As these partnerships of authorities have developed it has become more difficult for citizens to understand who is doing what on their behalf. It is vital that local people and organisations understand how these partnerships work, and how they can influence what takes place at this higher level.</i></p> <p><i>150. We want to ensure that existing and planned mechanisms for joint working between authorities at the sub-regional or city-regional level are as accessible, transparent and accountable as possible.</i></p> <p><i>161. In the first instance there is a strong case for strengthening existing and planned structures through requiring the activity of sub-regional partnerships to be subject to scrutiny arrangements.'</i></p>
<u>Question 18</u>	Should councils' joint overview and scrutiny committees be able to require sub-regional bodies to provide them with information on the full range of their activities and to consider their recommendations on sub-regional matters?
<u>Extract from Consultation document</u>	<i>158. There are various mechanisms in place or planned for holding these formal sub-regional bodies, referred to above, to account and to allow local people to get involved in their activities. These include an intention to enable local authorities to establish joint overview and scrutiny arrangements to allow them to examine any matter that is of relevance to the area. Authorities could use this mechanism to establish a committee that would be able to scrutinise the activity of local authorities working together at the sub-regional</i>

level.

161. In the first instance there is a strong case for strengthening existing and planned structures through enabling joint overview and scrutiny committees to require sub-regional structures, and their partners, to provide them with a broader range of information and to consider their recommendations on sub-regional matters.'

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION 24 SEPTEMBER 2009

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY – QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT Assistant Chief Executive

1 INTRODUCTION

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

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

- 2.1 **That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission notes the quarterly progress report on Overview and Scrutiny.**

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

(i) Overview and Scrutiny Activity

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme

- 3.1 The indicative work programme for O&S in 2009/10 was contained in the Annual report of O&S, adopted by Council in April 2009. This has been considered by the newly appointed Commission and Panels and the Commission adopted the revised work programme at its meeting on 16 July. The Chairman of the O&S Commission sent the revised programme to the Leader and Chief Executive on 6 August.

Overview and Scrutiny Working Groups

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

Partnership Scrutiny

- 3.3 The approach to O&S of the Bracknell Forest Partnership was endorsed by the BFP Board on 21 May and implementation has commenced. Questionnaires have been sent to the ten Theme Partnerships, whose Chairmen and Lead Officers have been invited to meet the Commission or relevant O&S Panel. Nominations have been received from partner organisations for the Partnership O&S Group, whose first meeting is planned for 28 September.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

- 3.4 The O&S Commission continues to meet on a two-monthly cycle. At its meeting on 11 June, the main items included: meeting the Chairman and Lead Officer of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership; adopting the two Working Group reports on Waste & Recycling and the Review of the Council's Older People's Strategy;

receiving the Executive's response to the review of services for Adults with Learning Disabilities; and considering the final 2008/09 Performance Monitoring Reports for the Chief Executive's Office and the Corporate Services Department. At its meeting on 16 July, the main items considered by the Commission were: the Executive's response to the review of Children's Centres and Extended Schools Services; the final 2008/09 Corporate Performance Overview Report; adopting the report of the O&S review of the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Improvement Plan; considering the new statutory guidance on scrutiny of crime and disorder matters; and adopting the O&S work programme for 2009/10. The Commission's next meeting will be on 24 September.

Environment, Culture and Communities O&S Panel

- 3.5 The Panel has continued to meet on a three-monthly cycle. At its last meeting on 23 June, the Panel: appointed Councillor Finnie as Chairman and Councillor McLean as Vice-Chairman; reviewed the Department's Performance Monitoring report; received a report and presentation on the Section 106 procedure; received an update from the Cleaner Borough Group and received the report of the review of the Implementation of the Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan. The Panel is commencing a new review on Highway Maintenance, with participation from Town and Parish Councils, and has received a separate briefing presentation on the Play Builder Scheme. The Panel's next meeting is on 8 September, at South Hill Park.

Health O&S Panel

- 3.6 The Panel has continued to meet on a three-monthly cycle. At its last meeting on 18 June, the main items included: determining the Panel's response to proposals from Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals Trust (H&WPHT) on service changes; considering information produced by the NHS Trusts on Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services; also the 'Aiming High' programme; determining the Panel's response to the consultation on the Broadmoor Hospital redevelopment; reviewing information from H&WPHT on their financial position; and considering the Executive's response to the Panel's letter concerning the Council's Health and Wellbeing strategy. The Panel's next meeting is on 3 September.

Children's Services and Learning O&S Panel

- 3.7 The newly restructured Panel has commenced a three-monthly meeting cycle. At its last meeting on 10 June, the main items considered by the Panel included: reviewing the statutory annual report for children's social care complaints; considering the Ofsted Inspection report on the Council's Adoption Service, together with the action plan; receiving a presentation on Education Transport policy; and reviewing the department's latest Performance Monitoring Report, also the quarterly report of O&S. The Panel's next scheduled meeting is on 16 September.

Adult Social Care O&S Panel

- 3.8 The newly restructured Panel has commenced a three-monthly meeting cycle. At its last meeting on 2 June at Heathlands Day Care Centre, the main items considered by the Panel included: consideration of the Panel's work programme, informed by a presentation by the Chief Officer for Adult Social Care; receiving the Executive's response to the review of services for Adults with Learning Disabilities; reviewing the statutory annual report for adult social care complaints; considering the report of the review of social care and community transport; receiving an update on the 'Caring

about Carers' O&S report; and reviewing the department's latest Performance Monitoring Report, also the quarterly report of O&S. The Panel's next scheduled meeting is on 1 September.

Joint East Berkshire Health O&S Committee

- 3.9 This Committee, now chaired and serviced by Slough BC until May 2010, continues to meet broadly on a three-monthly cycle, rotating between the three Councils' venues. The last Committee meeting was on 29 June in Bracknell, when the Committee: confirmed co-opted members; received a presentation by H&WPHT on proposed service changes; questioned H&WPHT on their car park charging policy; reviewed the link between the Primary Care Trust's operating framework and budget; and considered the Committee's work programme for 2009-10. The Committee's next meeting will be on 14 September at Slough.
- 3.10 Responses to the feedback questionnaires on the quality of O&S reviews are summarised in Appendix 2.
- 3.11 External networking on O&S in the last quarter has included two O&S Chairmen and two O&S officers attending the annual conference of the Centre for Public Scrutiny in June.
- 3.12 Quarterly review meetings between O&S Chairmen, Vice Chairmen, Executive Members and Directors are taking place regularly for the Commission and the Panels. Agenda-setting meetings continue to be held, usually in combination with the review meetings.

(ii) Developments in O&S

- 3.13 The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill is still going through its Parliamentary stages, and is due for its third reading in October. As advised in the last quarterly report, the main clauses relating to Overview and Scrutiny relate to the handling of petitions.
- 3.14 The O&S provisions in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 commenced on 1 April 2009. The accompanying regulations and guidance relating to scrutiny of local strategic partnerships is awaited. Statutory guidance has been issued by the Home Office on the O&S provisions in the Act flowing from the Police and Justice Act. This guidance was considered by the O&S Commission, in its capacity as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee in July, and discussions are on-going with Thames Valley Police Authority.
- 3.15 On 23 July, the Government's Communities Secretary launched a consultation entitled 'Strengthening Local Democracy'. This envisages increased O&S powers for local authorities, with councils becoming a local point of accountability for citizens to call on to scrutinise public spending decisions. Greater influence over all the money coming into their area would mean that councils could scrutinise more than £100bn a year from other deliverers of public services. DCLG has said that councils would become the setting for select committee style sessions at which councillors could 'grill anyone charged with spending public money - not only police chiefs, health bosses but also representatives from Job Centre Plus and the Environment Agency - and demand action where they are coming up short'. Other services provided by organisations outside the public sector such as utility companies whose actions equally affect people's quality of life would also be subject to a new level of council scrutiny.

- 3.16 The new arrangement whereby O&S reports are personally presented to the Executive at their briefing meeting by the Lead Member of the O&S review, commenced during this quarter.
- 3.17 The revised structure of O&S, with the Social Care and Learning O&S Panel being split into two: Adult Social Care, and Children's Services and Learning, was implemented in this quarter, with all Panels electing Chairmen and Vice Chairmen, and agreeing their work programmes for the municipal year. The O&S Commission have now met twice in their new capacity as the Council's statutory 'Crime and Disorder' Committee.

Background Papers

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

Contact for further information

Victor Nicholls- 01344 355604

Victor.Nicholls@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Richard Beaumont- 01344 352283

Richard.beaumont@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

Doc. Ref

Alluse/Overview and Scrutiny/2009/10/CMT 19.8.09 O&S Progress Report

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUPS – 2009/10

Position at 6 August 2009

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Older People's Strategy	Edger (Lead), Mrs Birch & Virgo	Victor Nicholls	Richard Beaumont	√	√	√	√	<u>Completed</u> - Executive response received on 22 June to letter of 29 April containing O&S observations on the strategy

Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Services for People with Learning Disabilities (Social Care Modernisation Agenda)	Leake (Lead), Mrs. Shillcock & Virgo	Glyn Jones	Andrea Carr	√	√	√	√	<u>Completed</u> The Executive response to the letter of 6 April 2009 summarising the work of the Working Group and making

								recommendations was received by the Panel on 2 June 2009.
Transforming Social Care (TSC)	To be appointed	Glyn Jones	Andrea Carr					All-Panel workshops are proposed to familiarise members with distinct areas of TSC before a working group is set up to undertake more in-depth review work in this area.

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Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Strategic Review of Waste	Brunel-Walker (Lead), Mrs. Angell, Beadsley, Mrs. Ryder, Wade (Crowthorne), Allen (S'hurst & Ms Healy (Warfield)	Steve Loudoun / Janet Dowlman	Andrea Carr	√	√	√		The report was adopted by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on 11 June 2009 and subsequently submitted to the Executive member. A response is

								expected in September 2009.
Supporting People (SP)	Mrs. Shillcock (Lead) & Mrs. Fleming	Simon Hendey / Clare Dorning	Andrea Carr	√	07/08 √ (Annual monitoring)	07/08 √ (Annual monitoring)	N/A	The Working Group met on 30 September 2008 to monitor progress against implementation of the SP programme and reported its findings to the Panel on 18 December 2008. It will meet again in autumn 2009 to monitor progress.
Housing Strategy	Finnie (Lead), Mrs. Fleming and Finch	Clare Dorning	Richard Beaumont	√	√	√	√	<u>Completed</u> Detailed input provided to draft strategy, which was finalised and approved by the Executive in July 2009
Implementation of the Housing and Council Tax Benefit Service	Finch (Lead), Beadsley, Burrows	Simon Hendey / Shanaz Alam	Emma Silverton (Richard Beaumont to Support)	√	√	√		Awaiting Executive response to report sent on 22 nd July 2009

Improvement Plan								
Review of Highway Maintenance	Beadsley, Brossard, Leake and Mclean Parish and Town Councillors: Edwards (Binfield) Kensall (Bracknell) Withers (Crowthorne) Mrs Cupper (Sandhurst) Young (Winkfield)	Steve Loudoun	Richard Beaumont					First meeting arranged for 28 September 2009.

Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies (previously known as Patient	Burrows (Lead), Mrs. Angell, Thompson. Mrs. Mattick,	David Steeds	Andrea Carr	√				The re-launched Working Group has met on 5 occasions and met the Director of

Focus)								Public Health and the Council's Head of Environmental Health & Safety and Emergency Planning Manager. Further meetings with reps of the Primary Care Trust, Health Protection Agency and Emergency Preparedness Division of the Dept of Health are proposed.
Bracknell Health Space	Virgo (lead) Mrs Angell, Baily, Leake, Mrs Shillcock	Glyn Jones/ Mary Purnell	Richard Beaumont	√				Three meetings held to date, also a site visit to the private sector builder of the Healthspace. Further meetings are being arranged.

Joint East Berkshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Hospital Discharge Procedures	Baily, Coad (Slough BC), Napier (RB W&M)	N/A	Andrew Scott (RB W&M)	√				No progress in last year and now under review.

Children's Services and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	DRAFT REPORT / SUBMISSION	FINAL REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Extended Services & Children's Centres (Joint with Health OSP)	Leake (Lead), Mrs. Birch, Mrs. Angell, Mrs. McCracken, Burrows, Beadsley	Graham Symonds / Karen Frost	Katie Dover/ Richard Beaumont	√	√	√	√	The Executive response to the report has been received and it will be considered at the Panel meeting on 16 September.

14-19 Years Education Provision	Mrs Birch (Lead) Dr Josephs-Franks, Kensall, Mrs McCracken,	Martin Surrell	Andrea Carr (Emma Silverton to support)	√				The Working Group has met on nine occasions to date and visited
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	Mrs Ryder							Bracknell & Wokingham College and Ranelagh and Sandhurst Schools. A visit to Garth Hill College is proposed and a questionnaire has been sent to local employers.
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Completed Reviews

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

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

Results of Feedback Questionnaires on Overview and Scrutiny Reports

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

	Average score for previous 8 Reviews ¹
PLANNING	2.9
Were you given sufficient notice of the review?	
Were your comments invited on the scope of the review, and was the purpose of the review explained to you?	2.9
CONDUCT OF REVIEW	2.6
Was the review carried out in a professional and objective manner with minimum disruption?	
Was there adequate communication between O&S and the department throughout?	2.6
Did the review get to the heart of the issue?	2.8
REPORTING	2.9
Did you have an opportunity to comment on the draft report?	
Did the report give a clear and fair presentation of the facts?	2.4
Were the recommendations relevant and practical?	2.5
How useful was this review in terms of improving the Council's performance?	2.4

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, and Waste and Recycling.