

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report



2021 - 2022

Foreword from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission



Overview and Scrutiny Commission Chair: Councillor Robert Angell



Overview and Scrutiny Commission Vice-Chair: Councillor Tony Virgo

This report covers April 2021 to March 2022, a period when the new approaches and ways of delivering the overview and scrutiny (O&S) function within Bracknell Forest Council have begun to be embedded.

Theme-based scrutiny is now weaved through the work programme to support the effective delivery of the council's objectives. The Commission and panel chairs continue to recognise the sustained pressures on services and are keen to manage them carefully by designing reviews to support service activity. Work programme activities have regained their previous momentum after being refocused on covid recovery so that each review scope considered the impact of the pandemic and set a clear path for O&S to have a positive impact for residents. I must take this opportunity to thank the officers and staff who have maintained a high level of support for the O&S activity in these changing times. The Commission has developed its role of critical friend to consider the proposals from the three panels, and the quality of reviews and the reports being submitted to the Executive is evident. The reviews are set out in more detail later in this report with each panel chair describing their panel's activities in the past year.

As well as sponsoring the panel activities, the Commission's annual work programme now has three established milestone sessions: strategic health, crime and disorder and budget scrutiny.

In September the Commission discussed the current health provision and key issues in Bracknell Forest. The Commission took the opportunity to reflect on its strategic approach to health scrutiny to ensure that statutory responsibilities were being met within the new model. It formally agreed that one meeting per year be designated as the Commission's Strategic Health Scrutiny Committee and that the Finance and Wellbeing O&S Panel be retitled as the Health and Care O&S Panel. This recognised that the strategic theme of value for money was being managed by the Commission, whilst the Wellbeing and Finance O&S Panel's focus was on health and social care activities.

Councillor Mike Gibson was confirmed as the Chair of the Health and Care O&S Panel, following his nomination by Council in July. I would like to thank the previous chair, Councillor Malcolm Tullett for his hard work and commitment to the role.

In October the Commission considered the performance of the Community Safety Partnership and the priorities in the Community Safety Plan for the coming year. In reviewing performance, crime and reporting data the Commission were able to reflect on the successful partnership working undertaken as well as highlight where issues remained for Bracknell Forest residents.

In November the Commission invited the Executive Member for Transformation and Finance and the Executive Director: Resources to address the meeting before considering key issues and discussing how to prepare for the upcoming budget proposal consultation. This was followed up at the January meeting, where the Commission considered the council's draft budget proposals for 2022/23 before deciding whether they supported the recommendations which were open for public consultation.

Overview and Scrutiny has a vital role in performance management by linking the planning and delivery of services to the experiences of and impact upon local people. The Council Plan sets out the key objectives for 2019 to 2023. At the end of each quarter, the Chief Executive provides a high-level summary report of performance

across all services to the Executive, known as the Corporate Performance Overview Report (CPOR). Throughout the year the Commission has tracked progress towards delivering the Council Plan by reviewing the overview report which identifies achievements, as well as areas of concern, and demonstrates the action being taken where required. By aligning performance and finance information with the experiences of service users, members of the Commission are able to consider the potential impact on all of the borough's residents.

Responding to government guidance, the Commission has continued to hold remote meetings which has enabled sustained high levels of councillor engagement, attendance by experts and a diversity of witnesses. It is hoped that the new hybrid meeting technology will provide the opportunity for these benefits to continue in a blended approach with in-person meetings resuming as soon as practical.

O&S benefits from a wide range of experience and viewpoints, and the Commission welcomes input from residents and local organisations via its [public participation scheme](#). I would like to see this used more frequently so increased publicity will be a feature of the coming year to attract wider opinions on the council's performance.



Introduction from Kevin Gibbs, Executive Director: Delivery, acting as Statutory Scrutiny Officer



The important role that Bracknell Forest Council's Overview and Scrutiny functions provide as part of the corporate governance of the council has been illustrated by the programme of meetings and reviews completed in this performance year. The Centre for Public Scrutiny set out

guidance for approaches to scrutiny during the Covid-19 crisis. Within this guidance, it sets out "...[the] arguments in favour of continued, robust member-led scrutiny in this time of crisis" (The Centre for Public Scrutiny).

The requirement for local authorities in England to establish overview and scrutiny committees is set out in [sections 9F to 9FI of the Local Government Act 2000](#) as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The Statutory guidance "[Overview and scrutiny: statutory guidance for councils and combined authorities](#)", sets out that as each council is a "democratically-elected body", it is for each council to determine how it sets out its arrangements to meet the requirement of the Act. Therefore, in line with this guidance, the arrangements in Bracknell Forest Council were revised in 2019, taking on board the feedback from the council's own commissioned review of its arrangements, and the issuing of the statutory guidance (May 2019). The current arrangements have been in place now for just over two years, demonstrating that the thematic structure of our panels, with the Overview and Scrutiny Commission overseeing the work programme, is an approach that has demonstrated its effectiveness for the council.

Within the council's Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 (Ensuring openness and comprehensive stakeholder engagement), prepared by the council's Monitoring Officer, he has confirmed that:

Overview and Scrutiny has established a structure that allows activity to better align with the themes of the Council Plan. The function has established and delivered against a work programme that supports the council objectives. The Commission has carried out research and made recommendations to support the Council's climate change targets and has scrutinised the budget and monitored the performance of all Council departments through the Council Plan Overview Report. ([Annual Governance Statement 2020/21](#))

The Statutory Scrutiny Officer has responsibility for promoting the role of overview and scrutiny, and supporting and advising:

- The Overview and Scrutiny Commission & panels
- The council's Executive and Executive Portfolio holders
- Officers and Chief officers of the council

In my role of Statutory Scrutiny Officer, I am required to make regular reports to full council on the state of scrutiny, explicitly identifying any areas of weakness. I am happy to give the council assurance that scrutiny is effective and adequately resourced to achieve the work programme.

That said, in September 2021, in response to concerns raised around the adequacy of the council's statutory health scrutiny, the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, asked for a review of the arrangements and formal report back to the Commission.

The review noted that

Along with social care functions, Overview and Scrutiny must, and must be seen to, hold all commissioners and providers of publicly funded health and social care services to account for the quality of their services. The powers of the health scrutiny are not just limited to requiring the council's Executive Members to attend and answer questions at meetings held in public, the scrutiny function can also hold to account committees of the council with a health focus, health partnerships between the council and the NHS, plus provision in the voluntary sector. The Health and Wellbeing Board also comes under the local authority scrutiny function, although decisions of partnership boards cannot be 'called in' as they are not decisions of the council's Executive.

The formal report confirmed that the arrangements were sound, although some changes could ensure that when the Commission was formally considering health matters, this could be more clearly signalled by designating one Commission meeting per year as the Commission's Strategic Health Scrutiny Committee (similar to the process the Commission uses when sitting as the Crime and Disorder Panel). Further, that the Finance and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Panel be retitled as the Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel, reflecting the reality of their work programme, which has been focused exclusively on health matters, and that the Commission had been leading on the Council Plan theme, Value for Money.

No other substantive reviews were carried out, in terms of the arrangements for scrutiny or the resources available.

The support to councillors for the provision of policy and research support, plus organising and administering meetings, has been set at 86 hours per week since 2018-19

A total of 74 hours has been spent in Commission and panel meetings delivering budget, performance, health and crime scrutiny and five separate panel reviews. The Commission and panels have interviewed 83 internal and external witnesses, and five Executive Members.

As part of the pre-budget scrutiny, the Commission reviewed the arrangements for supporting the function and the budget allocation for this work, in the context of other budget proposals. No recommendations were made following this review.

I am content that the function has adequate resources and that service departments are contributing sufficiently to reviews to ensure these are effective. I am therefore able to give the council my assurance that an effective culture of support for scrutiny exists and that the prerequisite for overall effectiveness has been met.

Education, Skills and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Panel



Chair: Councillor Mrs Gill Birch



Vice-Chair: Councillor Michael Brossard

All the panel members work very well together, and I thank them all for their help and support during 2021-2022. I really appreciate their commitment, expertise and drive to make the council and services better for our residents.

I would like to thank Tracey Wright, who left the area in July, for all her support as a parent governor representative on this panel. Parent governor representatives make sure councillors hear parents' views on educational issues and I have valued the contributions of both our representatives over the year.

The coronavirus pandemic continued to impact our capacity to meet in person so some activities have taken longer this year. However, the four-year plan has been realigned and we are now on track to deliver all our planned reviews. Despite the pandemic disruption, officer support has been excellent and councillor involvement has increased so I would like to thank everyone for their commitment and efforts.

Community Infrastructure Levy

The council places great emphasis on making sure there is sufficient infrastructure in the right locations at the right time to support investment and growth. This can also be said of the six parish and town councils in the borough. This review found that towns and parishes had used their Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in excellent ways to support the community, as shown in the examples.



Fence around a cedar tree in Hedgehog Park, Birch Hill Central (photo by Mary Flynn)



Crowthorne's Morgan Recreation Ground



Security fencing at Crowthorne Parish Hall to prevent anti-social behaviour and vandalism

The parish and town councils participated fully in all the meetings during this review, demonstrating how well we all work together in partnership.

The review recommendations were endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission on 4 November 2021, and all six recommendations were accepted by the Executive on 14 December 2021. Follow up monitoring is now standard practice and the outcomes of recommendations will be reviewed in November 2022.

The review created a CIL survey to understand the approaches in the town and parish councils. The panel will ask the town and parish councils to complete the CIL survey again in November 2022 to compare responses. Also, the Chair and Vice-Chair will go to the Town and Parish Liaison meeting to monitor progress with the recommendations.

Training on CIL will now be part of borough councillors' development and will also be offered to town and parish councillors.

Care Leavers

The recommendations from the care leavers review were monitored at the Commission in June to evaluate progress on outcomes. It was very pleasing that all had been actioned, although two were only partially implemented due to Covid restrictions.

This was the first formal evaluation of recommendations so it was an opportunity to develop a clear approach than can be used for all future monitoring.

Special Educational Needs or Disability (SEND)

The SEND review has been scoped and is well underway. We are meeting with parents, carers and council officers, carrying out mystery shopping tasks on relevant services and reviewing the Ofsted SEND report and action plan. At the time of writing, the review is expected to be completed by the July Commission meeting.

In addition to the review activities above, the panel met in September to look at the forward plan, and in November to discuss the budget.

Findings and observations

- Weekly meetings with the lead officer have helped to manage the progress of the SEND review. If possible, I would recommend it as good practice to other panels.
- Monitoring the care leavers review was excellent and enabled the review to be concluded. Monitoring reviews is now firmly embedded as good practice, with a template approach now available.
- Councillor involvement in the CIL review was high, with up to 14 people, and the SEND review has similar good engagement.
- Having meetings at different times, especially in the evening, has meant more councillors have been able to contribute.
- There was more opportunity to look at the budget and scrutinise it, and I would like a separate opportunity for the panel to look at it in greater depth in 2022-2023.
- Having the latest quarterly performance data has been a challenge during the pandemic. I hope going forward we will have the opportunity to receive the latest data to enable effective scrutiny.

Councillor Mrs Gill Birch

Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel



Chair:
Councillor John Porter



Vice-Chair:
Councillor Mrs Tina McKenzie-Boyle

The objective of the panel changed at the start of the new term in 2019. The panel will still scrutinise how each service item has been delivered and whether it met its key objectives and will also now input into reviews of upcoming contracts, initiatives and plans. This welcome change increases the influence of scrutiny and allows councillors to make a greater contribution on behalf of residents.

Registered providers of social housing review

The first review to complete in the current year looked at registered providers of social housing. This review was carried out due to an increase of residents contacting their councillor regarding issues.

The panel interviewed the main providers of social housing within the borough establishing how they work and engage with their residents. The panel also had presentations from Public Protection officers, Assistant Director: Customer Experience, Digital and ICT, Assistant Director Early Help and Communities, housing enabling officers, senior housing resources officers and residents from Silva, Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing and Southern Housing.

The panel learnt that during Covid 19 all the providers had made welfare phone calls to vulnerable customers and supplied tailored

support including help with shopping and medicines collection.

The panel learnt how providers deal with complaints and how they are logged within the organisation. A key recommendation from the review was for Bracknell Forest Council to provide information on their website about what to expect from landlords, including statutory health and safety requirements.

The panel made five recommendations to the Executive, which were all accepted at the meeting of the Executive in April 2021.

A review will be held later in 2022 to ensure that the recommendations have been implemented.

Food waste in flats and houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs)

After the very successful implementation of food waste collection from households, the panel reviewed the viability and introduction of food waste collection from flats and houses of multiple occupancy (HMOs).

The panel had presentations from waste and resources action programme (WRAP), ReLondon (previously the London Waste and Recycling Board), Suez (a waste contractor), Executive Member for the Environment, Assistant Director: Contract Services and Head of Environmental Services. It was noted that Bracknell Forest at the time of the review had no HMOs.

After the presentations from WRAP and ReLondon and hearing about the experiences of local authorities in London and across the country, councillors were keen to carry out site visits to see the issues and understand how Bracknell Forest Council could overcome them. Several councillors visited three sites, accompanied by environmental services. During the visits it was noted that some had poor lighting, cramped space which led to poor dry recycling and a lot of contamination. The site visits also showed some excellent storage solutions and small blocks of flats that recycled to a very high standard.

The panel was advised that the council needed to purchase an additional vehicle to collect food waste as the amount being collected from households had exceeded expectations. The purchase would create a small amount of spare capacity and this was to be used for food waste collections from flats. The panel then looked at how the council could best implement the roll out for the best return. It was decided to introduce

strict criteria based on dry recycling rates to establish those flats that would be provided with food waste collections.

The panel made three recommendations to the Executive which were all accepted at the Executive meeting in September 2021.

Highways and transport capital programme scrutiny

In December, the panel met to scrutinise the capital programme for highways and transport. The purpose of the meeting was for councillors to gain a stronger understanding of the highways and transport capital programme, particularly discussing the programme in areas such as funding process and prioritisation. This was achieved by having the Executive Director: Place, Planning and Regeneration and the Assistant Director: Highways and Transport present.

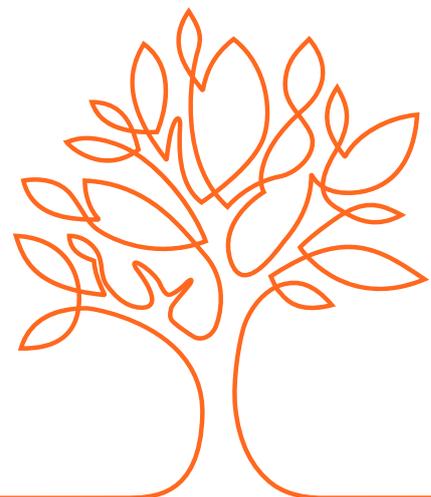
The panel identified seven key findings and provided a report for the Overview and Scrutiny Commission to consider ahead of the budget discussion meeting.

Observations

- Reviews have continued to be held remotely which has helped outside bodies participate in the reviews more easily.
- Reviews have not suffered by being remote.
- The themed approach has facilitated reviews across departments which have helped form policies.
- Future meetings could be a mixture of face to face and remote.

I would like to thank members of the panel, officers and outside bodies for their hard work and dedication in helping bring two excellent reviews and one scrutiny to the council.

Councillor John Porter



Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel



**Chair: Councillor
Mike Gibson**



**Vice-Chair:
Councillor Mrs
Isabel Mattick**

I became Chair of this panel in July and would like to thank my Vice-Chair, panel members, all the overview and scrutiny chairs and the scrutiny officers for their support as I moved into this role. Scrutinising the services and decisions that affect the health and wellbeing of our residents is a responsibility and a privilege, and I am keen to ensure this panel adds value in all its activities.

For me, that means we start with the data. Reviews should begin with the evidence, which we expand by talking to people about their experience and what that actually means. Each review, by necessity, is a snapshot, and we take the time to understand the wider context and overall direction of travel in order to be most effective. Putting the data in context, or asking ‘so what?’, is key to practical recommendations that make a difference.

Reviewing outcomes then helps us understand how effective we have been. Next year I look forward to reporting on what we have achieved over the electoral cycle and, importantly, what we have learned.

Blue badges

In April 2021, the Health and Care Panel scrutinised the application process for blue badges. We found an incomplete data set meant that Bracknell Forest’s national position on acceptance rates could not be accurately stated. However, interviews with officers and applicants

did highlight some opportunities. It was reassuring that the department was already addressing these areas and was running an internal project to implement change.

The panel collaborated with the Assistant Director to ensure a joined-up approach across the blue badge reviews and an effective route to implement any changes. The panel made five recommendations to the Assistant Director who agreed to take these into account in her project. A further two recommendations on reviewing refusal letters and creating local guidance were endorsed by the Commission in July and accepted by the Executive in September.

Mental health

In September, the panel began a review into the accessibility and effectiveness of primary care and voluntary sector mental health services. The review recognised that demand for mental health services is increasing, and that vulnerable people can progress to more serious mental illness if they can’t easily access early help.

The panel interviewed a range of services across primary care and the community and voluntary sector to understand data and context, including Talking Therapies, Friends in Need and Stepping Stones Recovery College. We also heard from residents about their experience of mental health services. At the time of writing, the review is nearing completion and has identified a range of practical actions that the council and our partners can take to help people access support more easily. The recommendations, which focus on visibility of services, communication and engagement, will be presented to the Commission in April.

The panel experienced good working relationships across services and sectors, and I would like to thank all our partners for their full contribution to this review. It was also an opportunity to work across panels and I am grateful for the involvement of Councillor Mrs Birch, Chair of the Education, Skills and Growth O&S Panel.

Future topics

The panel recently held a workshop to identify topics for future reviews. We considered a number of topics, ranging from the care work marketplace to dentistry, and have selected the most appropriate for further scoping work.

Observations

- Reviews have been delivered via remote meetings this year. Online meetings help attendees to balance review work with other responsibilities, increasing the range of people who can participate. They can also help reduce mobility challenges for some.
- However, technology introduces barriers in some cases so flexibility is important. Residents were offered a range of ways to participate in the blue badge and the mental health reviews. The council is introducing hybrid meetings technology which I am keen to use where appropriate.
- Reviews benefit from a 'core' of regular attendees who provide consistency and knowledge across all sessions.
- However, every councillor can add value, regardless of how many sessions they are able to attend. Review attendees are welcome for any period and their insights will be valuable.
- The ready availability of evidence packs and meeting recordings via webpages also supports contributions from less regular attendees
- The mental health review was very collaborative and a wide range of partners were willing to be involved. Partnership working improves outcomes for residents and ensures the benefits of effective scrutiny are available to more bodies.
- Addressing health and care inequalities is a key part of effective health scrutiny. Social care looks after our most vulnerable residents, and vulnerability can often be linked to inequalities. I aim to keep equalities at the heart of this panel's review work.

Councillor Mike Gibson



Overview and scrutiny at Bracknell Forest Council

Overview and Scrutiny is structured with an overarching O&S Commission and three O&S panels, which are described in detail below. Each panel is responsible for up to two themes from the Council Plan. By aligning activity areas with strategic themes, O&S can focus on topics that closely support the council's objectives over the four-year administration period.

These arrangements recognise that scrutiny is most effective when operating the task and finish group model rather than as sub-committee. Panels work flexibly to carry out focussed enquiries and deep dive reviews across a wide range of topics in support of the council's objectives. Panels meet as required to deliver the work programme rather than on a pre-agreed fixed cycle.

The format is also flexible, and activities range from a single scrutiny panel meeting on an issue to a three - six month focussed review. In addition to the core panel membership, all non-Executive members can take part in any review work. This enables the O&S function to tap into the skills and knowledge of members across a wide variety of topics. It also means that councillors who need to balance external responsibilities can be involved effectively based on their availability, interests and knowledge.

This approach recognises the importance of non-Executive members' involvement in policy development and pre-decision input and scrutiny, ensuring that scrutiny not only provides challenge but also actively contributes to the work of the council.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

Membership:

Councillor Angell (Chair), Councillor Virgo (Vice-chair)

Councillors Mrs Birch, Brossard, Gbadebo, Mrs Mattick, Mrs McKenzie-Boyle, McLean, Mossom, Porter, Temperton, Gibson

Responsibilities:

- Create a focussed work programme to ensure scrutiny activity contributes effectively to the Council Plan objectives
- Continually manage the work programme to ensure the best use of resources, accommodating any necessary extensions or urgent short-term issues
- Act as sponsor for panels as they undertake deep dive reviews or support policy development
- Consider the recommendations from panels' scrutiny activity and, where they are supported, refer to the appropriate decision-maker
- Scrutinise the council's budget proposals
- Hold the Executive to account for council performance according to the Corporate Performance Overview Report
- Carry out the council's crime and disorder responsibilities and strategic health responsibilities.
- Strategic theme: Value for money
- Manage call in (the process to scrutinise Executive decisions).
- Review the policy framework.

Education, Skills and Growth Overview and Scrutiny Panel

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Panel membership: Councillor Mrs Birch (Chair), Councillor Brossard (Vice-chair) Councillors Ms Gaw, Mrs Hamilton, Gbadebo, Ms Hayes, Ms Merry, Skinner , Temperton Parent governor representatives (voting): Mark Glanville</p> | <p>Strategic themes: Education and skills Economic resilience</p> |
|---|--|

Environment and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Panel membership: Councillor Porter (Chair), Councillor Mrs McKenzie-Boyle (Vice-chair) Councillors Angell, Brossard, Brown, Ms Gaw, Mrs Ingham, Kennedy, Kirke</p> | <p>Strategic themes: Communities Protecting and enhancing our environment</p> |
|---|--|

Health and Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>Panel membership: Councillor Mike Gibson (Chair), Councillor Mrs Mattick (Vice-chair) Councillors Allen, Atkinson, Bhandari, Brossard, Finch, Mrs L Gibson, Mrs McKenzie, McLean, Skinner, Temperton</p> | <p>Strategic themes: Caring for you and your family</p> |
|--|---|

Each panel is responsible for up to two themes from the Council Plan. By aligning activity areas with strategic themes, O&S can focus on topics that closely support the council’s objectives over the four-year administration period.

O&S activities are supported by officers from the Democratic and Registration Services function, providing 86 hours of support per week. Interim Covid arrangements are in place and the 86 hours are currently delivered by four people:



| Governance & Scrutiny Officer | Governance & Scrutiny Officer | Governance & Scrutiny Officer | Governance & Scrutiny Manager |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 0.68 FTE | 0.68 FTE | 0.68 FTE | 0.3 FTE |

Governance and Scrutiny officers work across all three panels, supporting one review at a time. Moving support between panels ensures sharing of good practice and increases collaboration and understanding across strategic themes. It avoids siloed working and provides a balance of opportunities for councillors and officers to develop and share their skills

Ann Moore
 Assistant Director:
 Democratic &
 Registration
 Services

Overview and Scrutiny in figures

This section summarises O&S activities over the current administration:

| Commission | | |
|---|--|---|
| 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 |
|  <p>6 meetings held</p>  <p>Climate Change review commenced</p> |  <p>9 meetings held</p> <p>3 reviews completed – recommendations to Executive</p> |  <p>9 meetings held</p> |
| 2 over 2 hrs | 8 over 2 hours | 1 over 2 hours |
| Average 1.40 hrs each | Average 2.20 hrs each | Average 1:0 hrs each |
| Total = 9.45 hrs | Total = 20.20 hrs | Total = 15.15 hrs |

| Panels | | |
|--|---|---|
| 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021- 22 (to mid-March) |
| <p>14 </p> <p>panel meetings held across 3 panels</p> | <p>25 </p> <p>panel meetings held across 3 panels</p> | <p>36 </p> <p>panel meetings held across 3 panels</p> |
| <p>2 </p> <p>reviews completed – recommendations to Executive</p> <p>1 review almost complete – on hold</p> | <p>1 </p> <p>reviews completed – recommendations to Executive</p> <p>2 reviews close to completion</p> <p>3 reviews in early stages of pre-review preparation</p> | <p>5 </p> <p>reviews completed – recommendations to Executive</p> <p>1 review close to completion</p> <p>2 reviews in progress</p> <p>1 post-review feedback completed</p> |

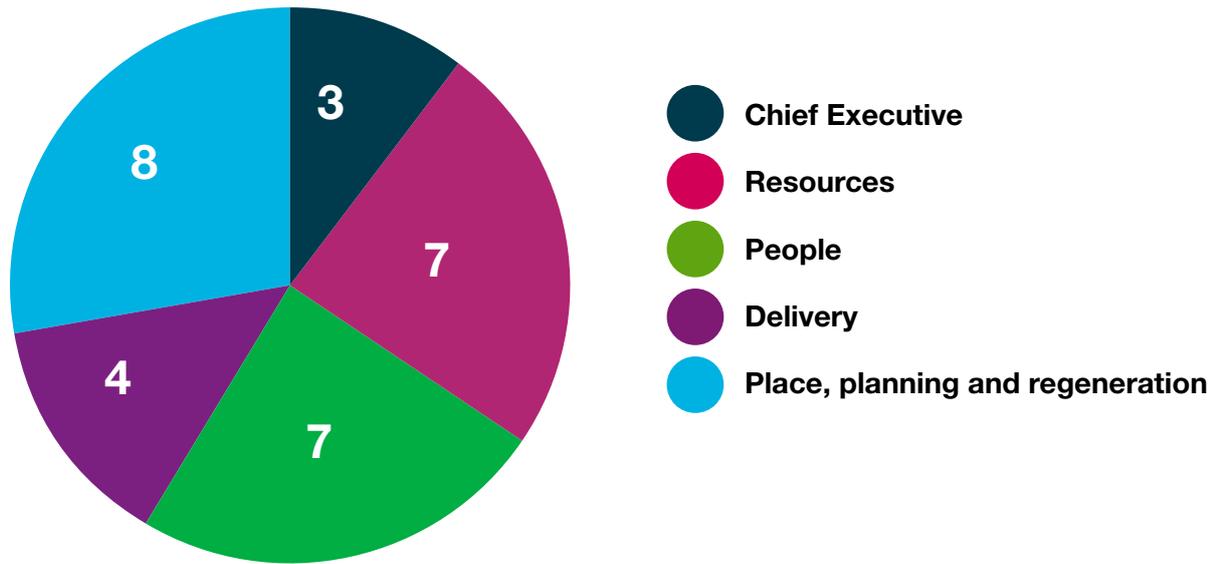
Here are further insights into O&S activities in 2021-22:

| Activity overview by council theme | | |
|---|--|--|
|  <p>Value for money</p> <p>Time in panel meetings: 34 hours Pages of evidence: 424</p> |  <p>Caring for you and your family</p> <p>Time in panel meetings: 24 hours Pages of evidence: 118</p> |  <p>Economic resilience</p> <p>Time in panel meetings: 7 hours Pages of evidence: 242</p> |
|  <p>Protecting and enhancing your environment</p> <p>Time in panel meetings: 11½ hours Pages of evidence: 277</p> |  <p>Education and skills</p> <p>Time in panel meetings: 13 hours Pages of evidence: 166</p> |  <p>Communities</p> <p>Time in panel meetings: 3 hours Pages of evidence: 61</p> |

Summary of witnesses:

| Commission | Panels | Total |
|---|---|---|
|  <p>11 Officers</p> |  <p>18 Officers</p> |  <p>29 Officers</p> |
|  <p>5 External</p> |  <p>49 External</p> |  <p>54 External</p> |
| Executive members: 3, over 5 meetings | Executive members: 3, over 4 sessions | Executive members: 5, over 9 occasions |

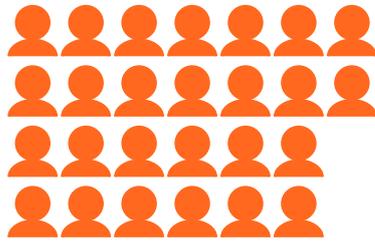
Bracknell Forest Officer witness by directorate



Number of councillors involved in reviews:

26

(not including Executive Members)



Total press articles:



Getting involved

Overview and scrutiny activities benefit from a wide range of knowledge, experience and viewpoints and the Commission is keen to encourage wider participation. Review recommendations help shape the services we deliver for residents. Here are some insights from partners and officers about what they gained from recent reviews.

“The timing of the O&S review was a good fit in relation to the roll out of food waste, which started in March 2021. Naturally, the council was keen to build on a very successful household collection with a further roll out to flats, and this review helped steer the recommendations to the Executive. Hearing from other authorities and landlords who had already introduced schemes helped us to focus on the best way to maximise food waste recycling while keeping the scheme parameters realistic. The end result will begin rolling out from Spring 2022.”

Damian James, Assistant Director: Contract Services, regarding the food waste review

“The findings of the mental health review chime with our experience and we will look to build on them in our work to increase access and self-referral. Being involved in this scrutiny review highlighted the collaboration already in place across primary mental health services and meant we were able to help shape quality recommendations for the benefit of patients.”

Nadia Barakat, Director for Mental Health, NHS Frimley Clinical Commissioning Group

Find out more about the [overview and scrutiny work programme](#). If you would like to be involved in future activities contact committee@bracknell-forest.gov.uk.

