

**CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL
24 MARCH 2010**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY – QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT
Assistant Chief Executive**

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1 This report sets out the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) activity over the period November 2009 to January 2010, also the national and local developments in O&S.

2 SUGGESTED ACTION

- 2.1 That the Children's Services and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the Overview and Scrutiny activity over the period November 2009 to January 2010, set out in section 3 and Appendices 1 and 2.**
- 2.2 That the Children's Services and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the developments in Overview & Scrutiny set out in section 4.**

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

(i) Overview and Scrutiny Activity

Overview and Scrutiny Working Groups

- 3.1 The table at Appendix 1 sets out the current status of the O&S Working Groups, along with the list of completed reviews.

Partnership Scrutiny

- 3.2 Good progress has been made with implementing the agreed approach to partnership scrutiny. Responses have been received to most of the questionnaires previously sent to the ten Theme Partnerships. The Partnership Overview and Scrutiny Group held its second meeting on 15 January 2010.
- 3.3 The Audit Commission has announced that they propose to update the corporate governance methodology and introduce partnership governance inspection. Representatives of the Audit Commission met the Chairman of the O&S Commission and the Head of O&S on 3 February to enquire about O&S of the Bracknell Forest Partnership, as part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment process.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

- 3.4 The O&S Commission continues to meet on a two-monthly cycle. At its meeting on 19 November, the main items considered were: appointing Overview and Scrutiny panel members to fill the vacant positions on the Health and Adult Social Care O&S Panels (these were filled by Councillors Burrows and Phillips respectively); considering the response by the Executive Member to the Overview and Scrutiny

report on the Review of Waste and Recycling; receiving the monitoring report on the implementation of the Council's 'All of Us' Community Cohesion Strategy and the race, gender and Disability Equality Schemes; and reviewing the CPOR for quarter one (April to June) of the 2009/10 financial year. The Commission established a Working Group to provide an input to the Council's Key Objectives, and has written to the Chief Executive and the Leader with comments on those objectives. The Commission met on 28 January, where the main items were meeting the Chairman and Lead Officer of the BFP Board; concluding the scrutiny of the 2010-11 budget; considering changes to the frequency of O&S meetings and the O&S work programme; and adopting the reports of the O&S reviews of the 14-19 Education Entitlement and the Bracknell Healthspace.

Environment, Culture and Communities O&S Panel

- 3.5 The Panel has continued to meet on a three-monthly cycle. It met on 8 December, and the main items included: considering the Department's Performance Monitoring Report for quarter 2; reviewing the Climate Change Partnership and meeting the Chairman and Lead Officer; receiving an update in respect of the Playbuilder Project; considering the Executive's responses to the 'Waste Not Want Not' review of waste and recycling and the review of the implementation of the Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan; and receiving updates from the Panel's Working Groups, also the quarterly O&S progress report. The Panel met on 12 January, the main items being a meeting with the Chairman and Lead Officer of the BFP Strategic Housing Partnership, and the scrutiny of the 2010-11 budget.

Health O&S Panel

- 3.6 The Panel has continued to meet on a three-monthly cycle. At its meeting on 3 December, the Panel: met representatives from South Central Ambulance NHS Trust, receiving a presentation on the Trust's performance and priorities; met the Director of Corporate Affairs and the Director of Nursing from Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals Trust, who provided an update on the financial position of the Trust; and met the Director of Finance and Performance, NHS Berkshire East, noting the current budgetary situation with particular reference to planning for reductions. The Panel were also appraised of progress on the three working groups on: Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies, the Bracknell Healthspace, and the NHS Core Standards. The Panel considered the quarterly O&S progress report; and noted the draft minutes for the Joint East Berkshire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 14 September 2009. The Health O&S Panel's next meeting is on 4 March.

Children's Services and Learning O&S Panel

- 3.7 The Panel is continuing a three-monthly meeting cycle. At its meeting on 16 December the main items considered by the Panel included: the department's 2009/10 Performance Monitoring Report for the second quarter; considering the annual report of the Local Safeguarding Children Board; considering the draft report of the 14-19 Education Provision O&S Working group; receiving a written update on the English as an Additional Language O&S Working Group; and noting the quarterly O&S progress report. The main items at the Panel's meeting on 20 January 2010 were a meeting with the Chairman and Lead Officer of the Early Years, Child Care and Play Theme Partnership, and the scrutiny of the 2010-11 budget.

Adult Social Care O&S Panel

- 3.8 The Panel continues to meet on a three-monthly cycle. At its meeting on 1 December, the main items considered by the Panel included: reviewing the department's Performance Monitoring Report for the second quarter of 2009/10; a discussion with the Chairman and Lead Officer of the Health and Social Care Partnership; receiving the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2009, also a progress update on the Transforming Adult Social Care pilot; and receiving the outcome of the inspection of Adult Social Care services by the Care Quality Commission. The Panel met on 18 January to consider the 2010-11 budget.

Joint East Berkshire Health O&S Committee

- 3.9 This Committee continues to meet broadly on a three-monthly cycle, rotating between the three Councils' venues. The last Committee meeting was on 10 December in Maidenhead, when the Committee: received an update on the Working Group reviewing car parking charges at NHS Establishments; received a presentation from the Director of Corporate Affairs for the South Central Ambulance Trust on the Trust's performance; received an update on the budgetary position of Heatherwood and Wexham Park Hospitals Trust from senior staff; and were provided with an update on the Care Quality Commission's Annual Performance Assessment of NHS Berkshire East Trust for 2008/2009. The Committee's next meeting is on 30 March 2010 in Bracknell. Bracknell Forest Council is due to assume Chairmanship and officer support for this Committee for the 2010/11 municipal year.

Overview and Scrutiny Officer Resources

- 3.10 The proposed 2010-11 budget approved by the Executive for consultation contains a number of cost reductions, including a reduction in the current O&S officer team from three to two Full Time Equivalents. This will require a commensurate reduction in the O&S work requiring officer support. The O&S Chairmen met on 15 December 2009 to consider how this might best be addressed, CMT considered the issue on 13 January, and the O&S Commission made decisions on changes to the frequency of meetings, also reductions in the O&S Work programme, at its meeting on 28 January. The changes are now being implemented.

Other Overview and Scrutiny Issues

- 3.11 Responses to the feedback questionnaires on the quality of O&S reviews are summarised in Appendix 2.
- 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.
- 3.13 External networking on O&S in the last quarter has included Members attending the South Central Health O&S Committees meeting on 10 November in Wokingham. Reading BC have launched an O&S review of the Re3 Waste project, and have invited O&S representatives from Wokingham BC and Bracknell Forest BC to participate in this.
- 3.14 Councillor Mark Phillips has been given a one to one induction on O&S and has been appointed onto the Adult Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

- 3.15 Efforts were made to recruit a new Parent Governor in November, without success. The vacancy will be re-advertised in six months time.
- 3.16 An externally-delivered budget scrutiny training session took place on 2 November, and feedback from Members was positive.
- 3.17 The O&S Annual Report is soon to be drafted, for submission to Council in April.

4 (ii) Developments in O&S

- 4.1 The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill received Royal Assent on 13 November 2009. As advised in the last quarterly report, the main clauses relating to Overview and Scrutiny relate to the handling of petitions and a requirement for a statutory officer designation for O&S. The Commencement Order on the statutory O&S officer issue has been made and takes effect from 1 April 2010, and the necessary action is in hand. The Commencement Order on the petitions issue is awaited.
- 4.2 The regulations and guidance for the O&S provisions in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 are still awaited, despite the Act having commenced on 1 April 2009. CLG is continuing to work with the Centre for Public Scrutiny to develop these.
- 4.3 We await the outcome of the Government's consultation entitled 'Strengthening Local Democracy', which the Council responded to. There has been broad support for the expansion of O&S to Utility companies, etc, and common themes in the responses covered resources, training and local discretion. The Government's response to the consultation outcome is due to be issued in the 'winter of 2009'.

Background Papers

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

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Alluse/Overview and Scrutiny/2009/10/CMT 10.2.10 O&S Progress Report

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORKING GROUPS – 2009/10

Position at 3 February 2010

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
Medium Term Objectives 2010/11	Edger, Finnie, Leake, Parent Governor representative Dr Patrick Joseph-Franks	Victor Nicholls	Richard Beaumont	N/A	√	√		A letter was sent to the Leader and the Chief Executive on 22 January

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
Personalisation - Safeguarding Adults	Turrell (Lead Member), Mrs Fleming, Leake, Edger and Mrs Shillcock	Zoe Johnstone	Andrea Carr	In draft				The next meeting is arranged for 11 February.

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
Supporting People (SP)	Mrs Shillcock (Lead) & Mrs Fleming	Simon Hendeley / Clare Dorning	Andrea Carr	√	07/08 √ (Annual monitoring)	07/08 √ (Annual monitoring)	N/A	The Working Group met on 30 September and will meet again on 22 February to monitor progress.
Review of Highway Maintenance [On hold]	Mclean (Lead) Beadsley, Brossard, Leake and Parish and Town Councillors: Edwards (Binfield) Kensall (Bracknell) Withers (Crowthorne) Mrs Cupper (Sandhurst)	Steve Loudoun	Richard Beaumont (Victoria Bale to support)	√	The Commission decided on 28 January to suspend this review until other O&S reviews have been completed and resources become available			The Group has now met three times. The scoping document has been agreed, also a report to the Panel on the highways maintenance budget reduction.

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	Burrows (Lead), Mrs Angell, Thompson. Mrs Mattick	David Steeds	Andrea Carr	√				The Group has held a number of meetings. The next meeting will be with Tim Pettis from the Health Protection Agency, the date to be arranged.
Bracknell Health Space	Virgo (lead) Mrs Angell, Baily, Leake, Mrs Shillcock	Glyn Jones/ Mary Purnell	Richard Beaumont	√	√	√		Report adopted by O&S Commission on 28 January

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 Car Park Charges	Plimmer (Slough, Lead member),	TBC	Sunita Sharma (Slough	√				Fieldwork is underway

	Virgo, Endacott (RB W&M) Jacky Flynn (LINK)		BC)					
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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
14-19 Years Education Provision	Mrs Birch (Lead) Dr Josephs-Franks, Kensall, Mrs McCracken, Mrs Ryder	Martin Surrell	Andrea Carr (Victoria Bale to support)	√	√	√		Report adopted by O&S Commission on 28 January

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

Publication Date	Title
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
July 2009	Review of Waste and Recycling
July 2009	Review of Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan

Publication Date	Title
December 2009	NHS Core Standards

Appendix 2

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 10 Reviews ¹
PLANNING Were you given sufficient notice of the review?	2.8
Were your comments invited on the scope of the review, and was the purpose of the review explained to you?	2.9
CONDUCT OF REVIEW Was the review carried out in a professional and objective manner with minimum disruption?	2.7
Was there adequate communication between O&S and the department throughout?	2.7
Did the review get to the heart of the issue?	2.6
REPORTING Did you have an opportunity to comment on the draft report?	2.9
Did the report give a clear and fair presentation of the facts?	2.5
Were the recommendations relevant and practical?	2.5
How useful was this review in terms of improving the Council's performance?	2.6

¹ Road Traffic Casualties, Review of the Local Area Agreement, Support for Carers, Street Cleaning, Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities, English as an Additional Language in Schools, Children's Centres and Extended Services, Waste and Recycling, Older People's Strategy, and Review of Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan.