

**TO: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION
20 NOVEMBER 2014**

**WORK PROGRAMME AND PANEL ACTIVITY UPDATE REPORT
Assistant Chief Executive**

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Work Programme for 2014-15 and Panel activity, with particular reference to Working Groups of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission.

2 RECOMMENDATION

That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:

- 2.1 **Reviews the progress by the O&S Commission and the O&S Panels against the work programme**
- 2.2 **Notes the progress achieved to date by the Commission's Working Group.**

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

O&S Work programme

- 3.1 The O&S Work Programme for 2014-15, incorporating (where available) each Chairman's assessment of progress, is at Appendix 1.

Business Rates Working Group

- 3.2 This Working Group, comprising Councillors Angell (Lead Member), Leake, Heydon and Virgo, commenced on 19 May and has met on seven occasions to date. Matters covered have included: a background briefing by officers; agreement on the purpose and scope of the Working Group; meeting Executive Members and officers to discuss their perspective, particularly on the prospective use of discretionary rates relief to bring unoccupied buildings into use, and to stimulate economic development; considering the merits of a possible discretionary rate relief scheme; meeting another council and private sector business representatives regarding business rates; and reviewing information on rates avoidance schemes, appeals cases and the collection of arrears. Information gathering is now complete, and the Working Group's report is being drafted.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED/ ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS/ EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT/ STRATEGIC RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES / OTHER OFFICERS/ CONSULTATION – Not applicable

Unrestricted

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Monitoring Of Work Programme for Overview and Scrutiny in 2014/15

The Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Chairmen's assessment of the progress on the work programme for O&S in 2014/15 is shown below, where the symbols represent:



Completed or on course for completion



Delayed or completion at risk



Will not be achieved in 2014-15

Comments by O&S Commission Chairman

The work of the Scrutiny Panels is broadly in line with the programme. The details are in their individual reports. The work of the Commission is progressing according to schedule, and the report on Business rates will be presented at the January 2015 meeting. This Working group has been involved in much work and the cooperation of external partners has been much valued. Officer support for scrutiny work in a future administration may well require additional resource as the Council moves into the next phase of its development. An additional meeting of the Commission was held on 22 October to meet with the CEO and Chairman of the West London Mental Health Trust to discuss their proposals to discontinue some of their sirens. During a lengthy and frank discussion, the Commission pointed out a number of inconsistencies in the Trust's approach to the matter. A number of ideas were submitted by the Commission and the Trust undertook to take these ideas and reconsider their approach. Any revised proposal would be brought back for comment. Invitations to members of the Commission to visit Broadmoor were made.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION		Status / Comment
1.	Co-ordination of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels	
2.	Routine monitoring of the performance of the Council's corporate functions	
3.	Exercising pre-decision scrutiny by reference to the Executive Forward Plan	
4.	2015/16 Budget Scrutiny To review the Council's budget proposals for the Chief Executive's Office and the Corporate Services Department for 2015/16, and plans for future years. To include a discussion with the Borough Treasurer during 2014 on the evolving budgetary position.	
5.	Crime and Disorder Committee To include an annual meeting with representatives of the Community Safety Partnership.	

6.	Other Policy Development To make an input to the review of the <u>Economic Development Strategy</u> .	
7.	Business Rates To review the impact of Re-Localisation of Business Rates, and the connection with economic development initiatives.	

Comments by Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairman

ADULT SOCIAL CARE AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL		Status / Comment
1.	Monitoring the performance of the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing Department To include receiving statutory plans and reports (such as the annual reports on complaints received), monitoring the action taken by the Executive to earlier reports by the Panel, and being briefed on the implications of new legislation, including the Government's Care Bill.	
2.	Exercising pre-decision scrutiny by reference to the Executive Forward Plan	
3.	2015/16 Budget Scrutiny To review the Council's Adult Social Care and Housing budget proposals for 2015/16, and plans for future years.	
4.	The Council's Role In Regulated Adult Social Care Services To complete the review of the Council's role in regard to care governance and managing safeguarding in regulated services.	
5.	Forestcare A review of the lifeline alarms and other services provided under Forestcare.	

Comments by Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairman

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND LEARNING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL		Status / Comment
1.	<p>Monitoring the performance of the Children, Young People and Learning Department</p> <p>To include receiving statutory plans and reports (such as the annual reports of the Local Safeguarding Children Board, and on complaints received). Monitoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The number of Looked After Children, and the implications for service delivery and resources; • Schools' performance, particularly secondary schools; • The action taken by the Executive to earlier reports by the Panel 	
2.	Exercising pre-decision scrutiny by reference to the Executive Forward Plan	
3.	<p>2015/16 Budget Scrutiny</p> <p>To review the Council's Children, Young People and Learning budget proposals for 2015/16, and plans for future years.</p>	
4.	<p>The Provision of School Places</p> <p>To complete the review of the Council's arrangements for planning and providing places for children in Bracknell Forest's schools.</p>	
5.	<p>Substance Misuse</p> <p>Further to the 2012-13 review by the Adult Social Care and Housing O&S Panel, to review actions to minimise substance misuse by children and young people.</p>	

Comments by Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairman

The Environment, Culture and Communities Overview & Scrutiny Panel have met once since the last Commission meeting when the following matters were discussed -(A) Quarterly Service Report (Budget variances - concessionary fares (due to Government changes) - Planning Policy Community Infrastructure (due to deferral of the implementation of CIL) - Waste disposal (due to increased cost of land fill) / the Panel noted the increase in planning applications which could adversely impact on performance / Officers were seeking to identify additional areas for rose beds at the Cemetery and Crematorium (B) Supported Bus Service Contracts (C) Enforcement Policy (Regulated Services) (D) Parks and Open Spaces Quality

Improvements - Jocks Lane Recreation Ground and Sandhurst Memorial Park (E) Bracknell Forest Borough Local plan Update (F) adopting the Cultural Services Report (this has now been submitted to the Executive).

ENVIRONMENT CULTURE AND COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL		Status / Comment
1.	<p>Monitoring the performance of the Environment, Culture and Communities Department</p> <p>To include the performance of the Leisure operations, review of any inspection reports or self-evaluations; monitoring the action taken by the Executive to earlier reports by the Panel, and monitoring significant departmental developments.</p>	
2.	<p>Exercising pre-decision scrutiny by reference to the Executive Forward Plan</p>	
3.	<p>2015/16 Budget Scrutiny</p> <p>To review the Council's Environment, Culture and Communities budget proposals for 2015/16, and plans for future years.</p>	
4.	<p>Cultural Services</p> <p>To complete the review of the Council's cultural services offering, in the context of pressure on public finance, with particular reference to libraries and assistance for South Hill Park.</p>	

Comments by Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel Chairman

I think the panel has made considerable progress in the way we scrutinise at our quarterly meetings and have managed to meet all the main trusts on a regular basis. The addition of Dr Norman has given the panel considerable medical knowledge particularly with his questioning regarding clinical applications. Clearly this has up'd our game. Much better planning of those meeting has helped with our scrutiny and strategy.

However we need to improve on the way we manage our own portfolios to be fully effective on the basis of the Francis recommendations.

HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL		Status / Comment
1.	<p>Implementing the new Approach to Health Scrutiny</p> <p>To deliver the new approach to health scrutiny as recommended by the Panel's Working Group on the Francis report. This might in due course lead to a focussed review in 2014/15 or later years</p>	
2.	<p>2015/16 Budget Scrutiny</p>	

Unrestricted

	To review the Council's budget proposals for public health in 2015/16, and plans for future years.	
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