

**TO: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMISSION
28 JANUARY 2016**

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

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report highlights Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) activity during the period June to November 2015.

2 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **To note Overview and Scrutiny activity and developments over the period June to November 2015, set out in section 5 to 6, and Appendices 1 and 2.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 The Chief Executive has asked for a six monthly report on O&S activity to be submitted to the Corporate Management Team and O&S Members.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 None.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Overview and Scrutiny Structure and Membership

- 5.1 There were no changes to the membership of the O&S Commission or Panels in the period. Action continues to be taken periodically on the long-running vacancies for representatives of the Catholic Diocese and the Church of England on the O&S Commission and the Children, Young People and Learning O&S Panel.

Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme and Working Groups

- 5.2 The O&S Commission has approved some minor revisions to the O&S work programme for 2015-16, which is being delivered largely as planned. A routine report has been submitted to each O&S Commission meeting, monitoring progress against the O&S Work Programme, using traffic light indicators, and with particular reference to the Commission's own Working Groups.
- 5.3 The table at Appendix 1 sets out the status of the O&S Working Groups currently underway, along with the list of completed reviews since 2010.

Overview and Scrutiny Commission

- 5.4 The O&S Commission met on 9 July, 24 September and 19 November. The main items included:
- The customary annual meeting with representatives of the Community Safety Partnership and Thames Valley Police, with a focus on the 2014/15 annual crime figures and the priorities in the Community Safety Plan.
 - An introductory briefing in respect of the Chief Executive's Office and the Corporate Services Department.
 - Discussions with the Executive Members for Corporate Services and Transformation & Finance on their priorities and plans.
 - Reviewing the quarterly performance reports for the Corporate Services Department, the Chief Executive's Office and the Council as a whole.
 - Considering the response by the Executive to the Overview and Scrutiny report resulting from the review of Business Rates and Discretionary Relief.
 - Reviewing corporate decision items on the Executive Forward Plan.
 - Receiving the Bi-Annual O&S Progress Report, and progress reports from Panel Chairmen.
 - Considering an update from the Executive Member for Transformation and Finance, and the Borough Treasurer on the current budgetary position, in preparation for scrutiny of the 2016/17 budget proposals.
 - Receiving a presentation on the work of the Human Resources function, its current priorities and future plans
 - Receiving an update on the customer contact strategy, including performance in telephone response rates in the Customer Services Contact Centre.
 - Considering a briefing about complaints made against the Council in 2014/15
- 5.5 The O&S Commission's next planned meeting is on 28 January 2016 when the main item is anticipated to be the Executive's draft budget proposals for 2016/17.

Environment, Culture and Communities O&S Panel

- 5.6 Meetings of the Panel were held on 7 July, when it elected its Chairman and appointed its Vice Chairman, and 22 September, 2015. During the meetings the Panel considered and commented on:
- Director's Introductory Briefing & Service Plan 2015/16.
 - Bracknell Forest Borough Local Plan Updates.
 - Draft Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
 - Highway Maintenance Modelling System.
 - Highway Infrastructure Asset Management Plan.
 - Local Bus Services Update.
 - Changes to the Method of Collecting Christmas Trees.
 - Control of Horses Act 2015.
 - 2015/16 Work Programme Review Topics.
 - Working Group Update Report - Planning Function.
 - O&S Progress Report.
 - Scheduled Executive key and non-key decisions.
 - Quarterly Service Reports (QSRs) for the relevant quarters.
- 5.7 The Panel established a Working Group to review the Council's planning function. The Working Group met for the first time on 24 August when Members received a comprehensive briefing from senior officers regarding the functions and structure of the planning function, and related matters. A review scoping document focusing on issues of interest and concern to Members was subsequently agreed. At following meetings

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Members reviewed information requested from officers, research findings and the draft Local Enforcement Plan; received advice on the legal input to the planning function; considered Members' views on the planning function and the issue of Member and officer roles; and visited another local authority with a highly performing planning function to learn about best practice. Future work will feature meeting the Executive Member, Chairman of the Planning Committee and Director to discuss main findings, conclusions and recommendations flowing from the review before the Working Group finalises and reports on its work (see Appendix 1).

- 5.8 Further to actions sought by Members at Panel meetings, a revised statement accurately reflecting the status of road traffic growth was included in the departmental Service Plan, the rationale behind a road diversion was explained, a concession at Downshire Golf Complex was looked into and a letter responding to residents asking for existing trees to be pruned was reviewed. Points raised by the Panel as part of the response to the Parking Standards consultation were taken into account.
- 5.9 The Panel's next meeting will take place on 12 January 2016 and items under consideration will include the draft 2016/17 budget proposals, Bracknell Forest Local Plan Update and the Quarter 2 QSR.

Health O&S Panel

- 5.10 The Panel met on 2 July and 1 October 2015. The main items considered at those meetings included:
- Receiving an introductory briefing in respect of the Council's role and functions in relation to health.
 - Discussing with the Executive Member for Adult Services, Health and Housing his priorities for Health over the next four years.
 - Meeting the Chief Executive of the South Central Ambulance Service to review the Trust's performance and future plans
 - Receiving the results of inpatient surveys and other independent information on the performance of NHS Trusts providing services to Bracknell Forest residents.
 - Receiving the bi-annual progress report of O&S.
 - Meeting the Chief Executive of Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust to review the Trust's progress, with particular reference to overcoming the weaknesses found by the Care Quality Commission at Heatherwood and Wexham Park hospitals.
 - Agreeing the Panel's future work programme, for approval by the O&S Commission.
 - Reviewing the quarterly service reports of the Adult Social Care, Health and Housing department, relating to health.
 - Considering scheduled Executive Key and Non-Key Decisions relating to Health.
 - Receiving the 2014-15 Annual report of Healthwatch Bracknell Forest.
- 5.11 Between formal Panel meetings, members were engaged in other Health O&S work pertinent to their specialist interests, for example:
- Attending the annual general meetings of nearby NHS Trusts
 - Providing comments on Berkshire Healthcare Trust's annual Quality Account
 - Holding two informal Panel meetings to consider a range of issues including specialist member roles and providing detailed comments on the draft Health and Wellbeing strategy.
 - Commencing a Working Group to review whether there is sufficient GP capacity to meet the Borough's future needs.
- 5.12 The Panel's next meeting is on 14 January 2016, when the main items are likely to be a meeting with the Director of Public Health and the Council's Consultant in Public Health,

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and consideration of the Executive's draft budget proposals for health related work in 2016-17.

Joint East Berkshire with Buckinghamshire Health O&S Committee

- 5.13 This Committee, formed jointly with Slough Borough Council, the Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead, and Buckinghamshire County Council has remained suspended, the last meeting having been held in March 2013. The O&S Commission had previously decided to end the Council's involvement in the Joint Committee, unless there is a need to respond to a statutory consultation affecting health services in East Berkshire.

Children, Young People and Learning O&S Panel

- 5.14 Meetings of the Panel took place on 10 June and 30 September, 2015. During the meetings the Panel considered and commented on:
- The minutes of meetings of the Corporate Parenting Advisory Panel.
 - Director's Introductory Briefing and Service Plan 2015/16.
 - Quarterly Service Reports (QSRs) for the relevant quarters, giving particular attention to matters including outcomes of Ofsted school inspections, headteacher recruitment, recruitment and retention of children's social workers, social worker salary bandings and free school places.
 - Update on the implementation of the Children and Families Act 2014.
 - Independent Reviewing Officer Annual Report 2014/15.
 - Elective Home Education.
 - Children's Social Care Complaints, Concerns and Compliments Annual Report 2014/15.
 - Consultations on changes to Annual Admissions Arrangements 2017/18 and School Designated Areas.
 - Next review topic / working group.
 - Working Group Update Report.
 - O&S Progress Report.
 - Scheduled Executive key and non-key decisions.
- 5.15 The Panel received the Executive's response to the report of the review of substance misuse involving children and young people undertaken by one of its working groups. In its response the Executive stated that: *'We would like to thank the Working Group for their very helpful and well informed report which will enable us to further improve and develop our services.'*
- 5.16 The Panel set up a Working Group to review Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) in the Borough owing to concerns associated with the increasing level of awareness of it following recent high profile cases in areas such as Rotherham, Rochdale and Oxford. The Working Group commenced its review in August 2015 when it received an introductory briefing in respect of CSE. It has met on numerous occasions since when it has met Council officers involved in all aspects of Children's Social Care, Youth Services and Community Safety, and also representatives of multi-agency groups working to prevent and tackle CSE, the police and a local charity. Relevant information and data has been gathered. Future work will consist of exploring work in schools to raise awareness of CSE and meeting representatives of the NHS to discuss commissioning and providing sexual health services and the GP role in child protection (see Appendix 1).
- 5.17 In response to actions arising at Panel meetings, Members received information concerning the under 18 conception rate, which schools had fewer than 60% of pupils achieving Level 4 or above in Reading, Writing and Maths at KS2, the independent audit of a school's

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Private Fund Accounts, consulting parents/carers and neighbours on the Education Capital Programme for Great Hollands Primary School and elective home education.

- 5.18 The Panel next meets on 11 January 2016 when it will consider agenda items including the draft 2016/17 budget proposals, the Quarter 2 QSR, the School Places Plan 2015-2020 and the Local Safeguarding Children Board Annual Report.

Adult Social Care and Housing O&S Panel

- 5.19 The Panel met on 16 June and 15 September, 2015. The main items discussed and considered at the meetings were:

- Director's Introductory Briefing and Service Plan 2015/16
- Quarterly Service Reports (QSRs) for the relevant quarters.
- Adult Social Care Annual Report (Local Account) 2014/15.
- Annual Complaints Reports 2014/15 for Adult Social Care and for Housing.
- Bracknell Forest Safeguarding Adults Partnership Board Annual Report 2014/15.
- Implementation of the Care Act 2014.
- Next Review Topic / Working Group.
- Working Group Update Report
- O&S Progress Report
- Scheduled Executive key and non-key decisions.

- 5.20 A Working Group of the Panel was established in July 2015 to contribute to the Council's emerging Homelessness Strategy. Members received an introductory presentation concerning the Homelessness Strategy, met representatives of local organisations involved in homelessness, observed at meetings of the Homelessness Forum Board owing to its involvement in developing the Homelessness Strategy and visited some of the homelessness accommodation utilised by the Council. The Working Group has formulated and fed back its views in respect of the draft Strategy and its work is now complete (see Appendix 1).

- 5.21 Between formal meetings, the Panel responded to consultations in respect of the Council Tax Scheme, Housing Related Support and Charging in Social Care.

- 5.22 The next meeting of the Panel will be held on 19 January 2016 and items under consideration will include the draft 2016/17 budget proposals, the Quarter 2 QSR and the Panel's next review topic.

Other Overview and Scrutiny Issues

- 5.23 Various O&S training events were held to help Members in their O&S role. This included

- The Commission and Panels receiving briefings on issues of departmental interest in their respective areas.
- An externally-delivered training session for the O&S Chairmen and Vice Chairmen on chairmanship skills
- Specialised Health O&S induction training.
- An externally-delivered Budget scrutiny training event.

- 5.24 Responses to the feedback questionnaires on the quality of O&S reviews are summarised in Appendix 2, showing a high average score of 2.7 (90%).

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- 5.25 Quarterly review and agenda setting meetings between O&S Chairmen, Vice-Chairmen, Executive Members and Directors are taking place regularly for the Panels (every two months for the O&S Commission).
- 5.26 The O&S Commission Chairman, together with O&S officers attended the annual conference of the Centre for Public Scrutiny in June.

6 DEVELOPMENTS IN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

- 6.1 There were no notable developments in O&S nationally or locally in the period covered by this report.

7 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Statutory Scrutiny Officer

- 7.1 The monitoring of this function is carried out by the Statutory Scrutiny Officer on a quarterly basis. The induction and training for the new members of the Commission and its Panels has gone well. Good progress is being made on the agreed programme of work by Overview and Scrutiny for 2015/16. Scrutiny Panels' planned reviews will focus on areas of importance to local residents.

Borough Solicitor

- 7.2 There are no legal implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Borough Treasurer

- 7.3 There are no additional financial implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 7.4 Not applicable. The report does not contain any recommendations impacting on equalities issues.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 7.5 Not applicable. The report does not contain any recommendations impacting on strategic risk management issues.

Workforce Implications

- 7.6 Not applicable. The report does not contain any new recommendations impacting on workforce implications.

Other Officers

- 7.7 Directors and lead officers are consulted on the scope of each O&S review before its commencement, and on draft O&S reports before publication.

8 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

8.1 None.

Method of Consultation

8.2 Not applicable.

Representations Received

8.3 None.

Background Papers

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

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY CURRENT WORKING GROUPS – 2015/16

Position at 20 November 2015

Overview and Scrutiny Commission								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Draft Economic Strategy	Leake (Lead) Allen, Angell, and Mrs Mattick	Victor Nicholls	Richard Beaumont	√	Completed	N/A – Comments provided at meeting on 25 August 2015	N/A	The O&S views were taken into account in the revised draft strategy.
Draft Council Plan	Leake (Lead)), Angell, Allen, Mrs Angell, Mrs Birch, Brossard, Finnie, Harrison, Mrs Mattick, Mrs McCracken, Mrs Phillips and Mrs Temperton	N/A	Richard Beaumont	√	Completed	N/A – Comments provided at workshop on 10 September 2015	N/A	The O&S Views were taken into account in the revised draft Council Plan.

Environment, Culture and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Panel								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
The Planning Function	Angell (Lead), Mrs Angell,	Max Baker	Richard Beaumont	√	At the information			About 80% through

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	Brossard, Finnie, Leake and Porter				gathering stage			information gathering.
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Children, Young People and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Panel

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
Child Sexual Exploitation	Mrs McCracken (Lead), Mrs Birch, Ms Gaw, Peacey and Mrs Temperton	Karen Roberts / Sonia Johnson	Andrea Carr	√	At the information gathering stage.			The review is approximately 50% complete.

Adult Social Care and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel

WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
The Draft Homelessness Strategy	Mrs Angell (Lead), King, Mrs McCracken, Ms Merry, Peacey and Mrs Temperton	Simon Hendey	Andrea Carr	√	Completed	N/A	N/A	The Working Group has considered, and submitted its views on, the draft Strategy.

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Health Overview and Scrutiny Panel								
WORKING GROUP	MEMBERS	DEPT. LINK OFFICER	O&S LEAD OFFICER	SCOPING	PROGRESS OF REVIEW	REPORT / SUBMISSION	EXECUTIVE RESPONSE	CURRENT STATUS
GP Capacity	Peacey (Lead), Phillips, Mrs Mattick, Mrs Temperton, Tullett and Virgo. Dr Norman	TBC	Richard Beaumont		At scoping stage			First meeting held on 19 November

Completed Reviews (Since 2010)

Date Completed	Title
January 2010	Medium Term Objectives 2010/11
January 2010	Review of the Bracknell Healthspace (publication withheld to 2011)
January 2010	14-19 Years Education Provision
April 2010	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2009/10
July 2010	Review of Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan (Update)
July 2010	The Council's Response to the Severe Winter Weather
July 2010	Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies
October 2010	Safeguarding Vulnerable Adults in the context of Personalisation
October 2010	Review of Partnership Scrutiny
December 2010	Hospital Car Parking Charges
January 2011	Safeguarding Children and Young People
March 2011	Review of the Bracknell Healthspace (Addendum)
April 2011	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010/11
June 2011	Office Accommodation Strategy
June 2011	Plans for Sustaining Economic Prosperity
July 2011	Review of Highway Maintenance (Interim report)
September 2011	Performance Management Framework
September 2011	Review of the Council's Medium Term Objectives
October 2011	Plans for Neighbourhood Engagement
October 2011	Regulation of Investigatory Powers
October 2011	Site Allocations Development Plan Document
January 2012	Common Assessment Framework
February 2012	Information and Communications Technology Strategy
April 2012	NHS Trusts Quality Accounts 2011/12 (letters submitted to five Trusts)

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Date Completed	Title
April 2012	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2011/12
June 2012 & April 2015	Commercial Sponsorship
July 2012	Communications Strategy
November 2012	Proposed Reductions to Concessionary Fares Support and Public Transport Subsidies
November 2012	Modernisation of Older People's Services
January 2013	Preparations for the Community Infrastructure Levy
February 2013	Substance Misuse
February 2013	'Shaping the Future' of Health Services in East Berkshire
April 2013	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2012/13
April 2013	NHS Trusts Quality Accounts 2011/12 (letters submitted to three Trusts)
July 2013	School Governance
September 2013	Delegated Authorities
October 2013	Bracknell Forest Bus Strategy
January 2014	Applying the Lessons of the Francis Report to Health Overview and Scrutiny
April 2014	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2013/14
June 2014	Review of School Places
September 2014	Review of Cultural Services
October 2014	The Council's Role in Regulated Adult Social Care Services
February 2015	Business Rates and Discretionary Relief
April 2015	Substance Misuse Involving Children and Young People
April 2015	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2014/15
August 2015	Draft Economic Strategy
September 2015	Draft Council Plan
November 2015	Draft Homelessness Strategy

Results of Feedback Questionnaires on Overview and Scrutiny Reports

Note – Departmental Link officers on each major Overview and Scrutiny review are asked to score the key aspects of each substantive review on a scale of 0 (Unsatisfactory) to 3 (Excellent).

	Average score for previous 23 Reviews ¹
PLANNING Were you given sufficient notice of the review?	2.9
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?	2.8
Was there adequate communication between O&S and the department throughout?	2.8
Did the review get to the heart of the issue?	2.6
REPORTING Did you have an opportunity to comment on the draft report?	2.8
Did the report give a clear and fair presentation of the facts?	2.6
Were the recommendations relevant and practical?	2.5
How useful was this review in terms of improving the Council's performance?	2.5
Overall average score	2.7 (90%)

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, Review of Housing and Council Tax Benefits Improvement Plan, 14-19 Education, Preparedness for Public Health Emergencies, Safeguarding Children, Safeguarding Adults, the Common Assessment Framework, Modernisation of Older People's Services, Community Infrastructure Levy, School Governance, Delegated Authorities, Applying the Lessons of the Francis Report, School Places, Cultural Services, and Business Rates.