

**Cheltenham Borough Council**  
**Council**  
**21 July 2014**  
**Annual Report on Overview and Scrutiny**

<b>Accountable member</b>	<b>Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Tim Harman</b>
<b>Accountable officers</b>	<b>Democratic Services Manager, Rosalind Reeves</b>
<b>Accountable scrutiny committee</b>	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	<b>All indirectly</b>
<b>Significant Decision</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>Executive summary</b>	<p>In December 2011 Council approved the new arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny to be implemented following the elections in May 2012. These new arrangements focused on a managing and coordinating overview and scrutiny committee with scrutiny task groups carrying out the detailed work and reporting back to the main committee.</p> <p>Under the new arrangements scrutiny was required to produce an annual report for Council and this is contained in appendix 2. This report sets out the achievements of scrutiny over the last 12 months and in particular highlights the outcomes of a range of scrutiny task groups.</p> <p>The Chief Executive has initiated an LGA peer review which will take place in September this year. Part of their terms of reference will be to look at the council's scrutiny arrangements and wider decision making including behaviours and governance and they will seek views from members, officers and partners.</p> <p>Scrutiny welcomes the opportunity for Council to debate this report and give its views on the success or otherwise of the revised scrutiny arrangements together with any improvements it would like to see. These can then be taken forward together with any outcomes from the LGA peer review and used to enhance the scrutiny process.</p>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<b>The Council is asked to note the Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny and highlight any changes or improvements it would like scrutiny to consider.</b>

<b>Financial implications</b>	<p>There no financial implications arising from this report.</p> <p><b>Contact officer: Mark Sheldon,</b>  <b>mark.sheldon @cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264123</b></p>
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<b>Legal implications</b>	<p>The Authority must have at least one Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Scrutiny committees may review both executive and non executive functions and can make reports and recommendations to the Council or the Cabinet on those functions and “on matters which affect the authority’s area or the inhabitants of that area”. A scrutiny committee may also take the role of the crime and disorder committee under the Police and Justice Act 2006.</p> <p><b>Contact officer: Peter Lewis, peter.lewis@tewkesbury.gov.uk, 01684 272012</b></p>
<b>HR implications (including learning and organisational development)</b>	<p>There are no direct HR implications arising from this report.</p> <p><b>Contact officer: Julie McCarthy</b></p> <p><b>Julie.McCarthy@cheltenham.gov.uk 01242 26 4355</b></p>
<b>Key risks</b>	<p>The original risk assessment which accompanied the report to Council in December 2011 has been attached as appendix 1 with an additional column of comments on those risks.</p>
<b>Corporate and community plan Implications</b>	<p>An effective overview and scrutiny process can contribute to positive outcomes on any of the objectives in the Corporate Strategy.</p> <p>Increased public involvement in Overview and Scrutiny will support the corporate objective ‘Our residents enjoy a strong sense of community and are involved in resolving local issues’.</p>
<b>Environmental and climate change implications</b>	<p>None</p>

<b>Report author</b>	<p><b>Contact officer: Rosalind.Reeves, Democratic Services Manager, Rosalind.reeves@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 77 4937</b></p>
<b>Appendices</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Risk Assessment</li> <li>2. Annual Report</li> </ol>
<b>Background information</b>	<p>Report to Council 12 December 2001 on the new arrangements for Overview and Scrutiny</p>

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk		
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	Impact 1-4	Likelihood 1-6	Score	Control	Action	Comments as at July 2014
	If any new arrangements are not supported by a change in culture across members and officers they may not be successful in delivering the outcomes required.	Director Commissioning	27/9/11	3	3	9	Reduce	Get members and officers buy in during the review by seeking their views and ideas. Seek advice on cultural change during the next phase.	There is now a much better understanding of the new scrutiny arrangements by officers and members who have been involved in scrutiny task groups but there is still a need to maintain awareness with new members and officers through ongoing education and training. The relationship between Cabinet and scrutiny is an area for further development.
	If the council cannot appoint dedicated scrutiny officers to support the new arrangements they will not be fully effective.	Director Commissioning	1/12/11	3	3	9	Reduce	Optimise the use of existing resources in the new arrangements	The importance of facilitation support from Democratic Services for scrutiny task groups has been highlighted by members as a success factor. Democratic Services resources are limited so members will need to carefully prioritise all scrutiny task group reviews to ensure they make optimum use of the resources available.
	If the task groups operate outside of the democratic process, then scrutiny could become disjointed and progress difficult to control	Director Commissioning	1/12/11	3	3	9	Accept	Guidance to officers supporting task groups on keeping documentation and reporting back to	See note above. Task groups facilitated by officers outside democratic services have sometimes been less well documented and more difficult to track progress but officers have been encouraged to adopt standard procedures and good practice. This has been assisted by the production of a

	and track.							Democratic services.	scrutiny guide available on the intranet.
	If members do not put themselves forward for task groups the workload could be unevenly shared across members and be a source of potential conflict or result in task groups not having the right skill mix.	Groups Leaders	1/12/11	3	3	9	Reduce	Utilise the skills audit Group Leaders to manage, monitor and encourage participation  Task groups to maintain records of attendance	Members have been putting themselves forward for task groups but it has tended to be a similar set of members. We need a better understanding of why some members are not engaging the scrutiny process.
	If scrutiny does not have any dedicated budget it will be difficult to promote public involvement and engagement	Council	1/12/11	2	3	6	Accept	Utilise relevant project budgets Consider allocating small budget to O&S as part of budget round	Scrutiny does not have a dedicated budget but this has not been a significant issue to date. It could become more of an issue if O&S wanted to buy in some outside expertise at any point.

**Explanatory notes**

**Impact** – an assessment of the impact if the risk occurs on a scale of 1-4 (4 being the greatest impact)

**Likelihood** – how likely is it that the risk will occur on a scale of 1-6 (6 being most likely)

**Control** - Either: Reduce / Accept / Transfer to 3rd party / Close