

Cheltenham Borough Council
Overview and Scrutiny – 11 September 2017
Annual Report on Overview and Scrutiny

Accountable member	Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Tim Harman
Accountable officers	Democratic Services Manager, Rosalind Reeves
Accountable scrutiny committee	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Ward(s) affected	All indirectly
Significant Decision	No
Executive summary	<p>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee manages and coordinates scrutiny at the council, with scrutiny task groups carrying out the detailed work and reporting back to the main committee.</p> <p>Under these arrangements the Overview and Scrutiny Committee 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 (April 2016 – March 2017) and in particular highlights the outcomes of the scrutiny task groups, as well as detailing ‘what’s next’.</p> <p>Scrutiny welcomes the opportunity for Council to debate this report and give its views on the success or otherwise of the scrutiny arrangements.</p>
Recommendations	The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to endorse the Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny 2016-17 and forward it to Council to be noted.

Financial implications	<p>There are no financial implications arising from this report.</p> <p>Contact officer: Sarah Didcote, sarah.didcote@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 264125</p>
Legal implications	<p>There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation within this report.</p> <p>Contact officer: Peter Lewis, peter.lewis@tewkesbury.gov.uk, 01684 272012</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	<p>There are no direct HR implications arising from this report.</p> <p>Contact officer: Carmel Togher, carmel.togher@cheltenham.gov.uk 01242 775125</p>

Key risks	The original risk assessment which accompanied the report to Council in December 2011 has been updated with an assessment of the current risks affecting the effectiveness of the O&S arrangements and is attached as Appendix 1.
Corporate and community plan Implications	<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>
Environmental and climate change implications	None

Report author	Contact officer: Saira Malin, Democracy Officer, Saira.Malin@cheltenham.gov.uk, 01242 77 5153
Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk Assessment 2. Annual Report
Background information	n/a

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 August 2017
	If O&S does not take an active role in the major change programmes it may lose its opportunity to influence the scrutiny arrangements in any new proposed ways of working	Chair of O&S	21/09/15	3	3	9	Reduce	O&S to include scrutiny of change programmes in its workplan and ensure it is consulted on any future scrutiny arrangements	Member seminars continue to be held at appropriate times and the relevant Cabinet Members have been invited to discuss particular programmes and projects as necessary and additional information can be requested.
	If any scrutiny arrangements are not supported by a change in culture across members and officers they may not be successful in delivering the outcomes required.	Rosalind Reeves	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 and the relationship between Cabinet and scrutiny has been developed. Further training is planned for late 2017 or early 2018 for new officers and as a refresher for others.
	If the council cannot dedicate resources to support the scrutiny process then the O&S	Rosalind Reeves	1/12/11	3	2	6	Accept	Optimise the use of existing resources within the scrutiny arrangements	It is acknowledged that facilitation support from Democratic Services for scrutiny task groups is important. Resources are limited across the council so members will need to carefully prioritise all scrutiny task group

	process will not be fully effective.								reviews to ensure they make optimum use of the resources available. In 2015, the LGA peer review team suggested that the scrutiny work plan should focus on high priority areas given the limited resources available and the committee have had to consider resources when deciding what to scrutinise and how.
	If the task groups operate outside of the democratic process, then scrutiny could become disjointed and progress difficult to control and track.	Rosalind Reeves	1/12/11	3	2	6	Accept	Guidance to officers supporting task groups on keeping documentation and reporting back to Democratic services.	See note above. In the past, task groups facilitated by officers outside of democratic services have on occasion been less well documented and more difficult to track progress of. A scrutiny guide was produced and officers are encouraged to adopt standard procedures and good practice.
	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	Only one task group was established during 2016-17 and this provided an opportunity to introduce members, who had not previously participated in a review, to how task groups operate. It is hoped that other members will put themselves forward should a topic of interest arise.
	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 an issue if O&S wanted to buy in some outside expertise at any point.

	If scrutiny is not carrying out the full extent of its role i.e. pre and post decision scrutiny and overview, there is a risk of a democratic deficit.	Rosalind Reeves	25/7/17	3	2	6	Accept	Ensure new member and staff inductions cover the full extent of the role of scrutiny.	Further training is planned for late 2017 or early 2018 for new officers and as a refresher for others.
--	--	-----------------	---------	---	---	---	--------	---	---

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