

Cheltenham Borough Council
Council – 7 December 2020
Annual Report on Overview and Scrutiny

Accountable member	Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Chris Mason
Accountable officers	Democratic Services Team Leader, Bev Thomas
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 between April 2019 and March 2020, including the outcomes of the scrutiny task groups, as well as detailing 'what's next'.</p> <p>Scrutiny endorsed the annual report at their meeting on the 2 November 2020 and welcomes the opportunity for Council to debate this report and give its views on the success or otherwise of the scrutiny arrangements.</p>
Recommendations	Council is asked to note the Annual Report of Overview and Scrutiny 2019-20.

Financial implications	<p>There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. The annual budget proposals and the scrutiny of financial performance and other budgetary issues are reviewed throughout the year by the Budget Scrutiny Working Group, as detailed in the section on Task Groups in the annual Scrutiny report.</p> <p>Contact officer: Paul Jones, Executive Director Finance and Assets paul.jones@cheltenham.gov.uk Tel: 01242 264365</p>
Legal implications	<p>There are no legal implications arising from the recommendation within this report.</p> <p>Contact officer: One Legal - legal.services@tewkesbury.gov.uk</p>
HR implications (including learning and organisational development)	<p>There are no direct HR implications arising from this report.</p> <p>Contact officer: Corry Ravenscroft, HR Business Partner - West Corry.Ravenscroft@publicagroup.uk</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	An effective overview and scrutiny process can contribute to positive outcomes on any of the objectives in the Corporate Strategy. Increased public involvement in Overview and Scrutiny will support the council's objective to listen and respond to local communities and their issues.
Environmental and climate change implications	None

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Appendices	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Risk Assessment 2. Annual Report
Background information	<u>Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting (2 November) – DRAFT minutes</u>

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 September 2019
	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.	Democratic Services Team Leader	27/9/11	3	3	9	Reduce	Ensure we take every opportunity to review our scrutiny arrangements. The scrutiny review will provide an opportunity to enhance our scrutiny arrangements where necessary.	Member training was held in May 2019. Scrutiny is covered as part of the corporate induction and Officer training is offered on a regular basis. Campbell Tickell undertook a review of scrutiny and fed back their findings and recommendations in February 2020. A Task Group has been established to devise an action plan for delivery of the recommendations.
	If the council cannot dedicate resources to support the scrutiny process then the O&S process will not be fully effective.	Democratic Services Team Leader	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 and all task groups have been supported. Resources are limited across the council so members will need to carefully prioritise all scrutiny task group reviews to ensure they make optimum use of the resources available. In February 2020, the Campbell Tickell review team suggested that the committee should review and determine how enquiry topics are to be identified; should they be focused on the delivery of the council's corporate plan? They felt that this would make better use of finite resources and help negate

									possible tension between Cabinet and the committee.
	If the task groups operate outside of the democratic process, then scrutiny could become disjointed and progress difficult to control and track.	Democratic Services Team Leader	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. Task groups in the last 12 months have been supported by Democratic Services.
	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.	Group 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 2019-20 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, with budget having been allocated to member training and a scrutiny review in 2019. It could become an issue if O&S wished to procure some external expertise at any point.
	If O&S does not take an active role in the major change programmes it may	Chair of O&S	21/09/15	3	2	6	Accept	O&S to include scrutiny of change programmes in its workplan and	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

	lose its opportunity to influence the scrutiny arrangements in any new proposed ways of working							ensure it is consulted on any future scrutiny arrangements	information can be requested.
	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.	Democratic Services	25/7/17	3	2	6	Accept	Ensure new member and staff inductions cover the full extent of the role of scrutiny.	Member training was undertaken in May 2019 and officer training is arranged on a regular basis. Further member training was scheduled to form part of the 2020 new member induction after the May elections, which were subsequently deferred. Consideration is being given to how scrutiny training could be included on the councils new Learning Management System.

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