



**Report of the Director of Human Resources,
Performance and Communications
to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee
on Tuesday 9th June 2015**

Overview & Scrutiny Committee Arrangements and Work Programme 2015/16

1.0 Purpose of the Report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to outline Barnsley Council's Overview and Scrutiny arrangements and to provide information for discussion to develop the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme for 2015/16.

2.0 Background

2.1 Scrutiny was introduced in the Local Government Act 2000 (following the abolition of the old committee structure) as a means to hold the new council cabinets to account for its decisions. Since then, subsequent acts of parliament have bolstered scrutiny by extending its remit (and its statutory responsibilities) beyond the council to the work of partner organisations as well. Much of this legislation was consolidated in the Localism Act 2011. This includes Overview and Scrutiny having a specific role in exercising the Authority's powers in relation to the scrutiny of health services and the crime and disorder partnership in the Borough.

2.2 In the current climate, the need for sound effective decision making has never been more important. Elected members who sit on Barnsley's scrutiny committees have a vital role to play as 'scrutineers', providing a valid mechanism of challenge to monitor decision making, tackle poor performance and to ensure value for money is delivered.

3.0 Barnsley's Scrutiny Arrangements

3.1 Barnsley Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee (formerly the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee - Cab.20.5.2015/10) are responsible for not only holding the Council to account but also for scrutinising the performance of both the Council and its partners and whether they are delivering the intended outcomes or not. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee also has three member led Task & Finish Groups (TFGs) which carry out in-depth investigations. The TFGs are informal and do not meet in public, but they do report their findings and can make recommendations for change to the Cabinet. Both committees will also consider any Councillor Calls for Action.

3.2 The Children's Services Scrutiny Committee has recently changed to a Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee to enable the continued improvement and positive impact of the Council's Scrutiny Function. This reflects a number of

recent changes including the statutory requirement for an Adult Safeguarding Board and the creation of the Council's 'People' Directorate. The number of Elected Members on this committee has increased from 6 to 10 to ensure greater representation from across the Borough. The changes also reflect the findings of the Casey Report of Rotherham Council (Feb 2015) which highlights that Safeguarding is the responsibility of all Council departments and its partner agencies, therefore any Council Directorate including People, Place, Communities, Public Health, Core Services or our partner agencies could be called to the Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee.

- 3.3 Area Councils have also had an increasing performance monitoring role. This has been done through performance monitoring the services and contracts that are commissioned by the Area Councils and also to, where appropriate, performance monitor area based and borough wide services provided locally. Area Councils can undertake local investigations and invite internal and external services to discuss any concerns. The Area Councils can also feed any areas of concern and recommendations to the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Arrangements have also been made for the Chairs of the Scrutiny Committees to meet with the Area Council Chairs to identify any areas requiring scrutiny at the committees.

4.0 Work Programme Development Considerations

- 4.1 It is important that the work programmes of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee are developed to ensure effective scrutiny of local services to help improve outcomes for our communities.
- 4.2 It is important that the Committees undertake forward planning to identify key issues which require scrutiny as well as being reactive and allowing for the work programme to evolve should issues require scrutiny at short-notice. Both committees each have 6 meetings scheduled per Municipal Year, which usually contain 1 or 2 topics for consideration.
- 4.3 The Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee has indicated that for the 2015/16 Municipal Year it is planning to consider:
- Children's Safeguarding Board Annual Report
 - Adult Safeguarding Board Annual Report
 - Domestic Violence
 - Troubled Families Programme
 - Commissioning of the 0-19 Years Healthy Child Programme
 - Licencing with specific regard to safeguarding issues
 - Youth Services / Youth Offending Services
 - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) - 12 Month follow-up

As noted above, this work programme will be updated on an ongoing basis and the scope of each investigation will be discussed in more detail as appropriate.

- 4.4 It has previously been agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would receive a copy of the Council's Quarterly Corporate Plan Performance Report, which contributes to the reactive work programme of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee by the timely identification of areas requiring scrutiny. Both internal and external providers can be invited to discuss performance issues around any areas identified by the Committee, therefore it is envisaged that the Corporate Performance Report will also form the basis of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme for 2015/16.
- 4.5 The table below shows the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings for the 2015/16 Municipal Year which includes where consideration needs to be made of each Quarterly Corporate Plan Performance Report. The table also shows items which require scrutiny on an annual basis and indicates where they may fall in the work programme:

Meeting Date	Topics
2015/16 Municipal Year	
Tues 9th June 2015	1. Q4 Corporate Plan Performance Report 2014/15 2. Introduction to the Council's Corporate Plan 2015-18 3. Work Programme Development
Tues 1 st Sept. 2015	1. ? 2. ?
Tues 6 th Oct. 2015	1. Q1 Corporate Plan Performance Report 2015/16 2. ?
Tues 1 st Dec. 2015	1. Educational achievement across the Borough as well as a specific report on Looked After Children 2. Q2 Corporate Plan Performance Report 2015/16
Tues 9 th Feb. 2016	1. Corporate Parenting Panel Annual Report 2. ?
Tues 5 th April 2016	1. Q3 Corporate Plan Performance Report 2. ?
2016/17 Municipal Year	
Tues 7 th June 2016	1. Q4 Corporate Plan Performance Report 2015/16 2. Work Programme Development

- 4.6 As Corporate Parenting is the responsibility of all Members, it was agreed at the meeting held on Tuesday 10th February 2015 that the Corporate Parenting Panel Annual report would be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on an annual basis. It is also recommended that educational attainment across the Borough is discussed on an annual basis which would include specific information on Looked After Children. Both of these issues have been scheduled into the work programme as above.

4.7 In addition to the topics identified above, other issues / services which Members may wish to consider are listed below. These are a combination of topics which have either been suggested by Members, are highlighted in the Council's Forward Plan of key decisions or are issues / services which have not been covered by Overview and Scrutiny for some time:

- Anti Poverty Strategy (due at Cabinet June 2015)
- Fly tipping
- Community Safety – Reporting to '101', Anti-Social Behaviour
- CQC Inspection of Barnsley Hospital (will be taking place July 2015-report due 1 month after approximately)
- Better Care Fund
- Area Councils – 2 years on
- Berneslai Homes – Annual Report due October 2015

4.8 As highlighted previously, in addition to the Scrutiny Committees, there are 3 Task and Finish Groups (TFGs) which can undertake in-depth investigations into topics. During 2014/15, the Work Readiness TFG specifically looked at what services and initiatives are available with regards to preparing young people to be 'work ready' and how successful they are. Following this investigation, Members have expressed an interest to continue their investigation into the 2015/16 municipal year but to consider provision for adults. Therefore it is suggested that in addition to identifying topics for the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme, 2 topics should be considered for detailed investigation by the 2 remaining TFGs.

5.0 Today's Meeting

5.1 Today's meeting provides an opportunity for Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members to identify areas of concern which impact upon the whole Borough and input into the development of the draft work programme for 2015/16 including topics for the TFGs. This report identifies topics which Members may wish to consider; however during the meeting Members may wish to share other ideas and make recommendations as to what key topics should be covered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and TFGs during 2015/16.

5.2 Following discussion at the meeting, work will be undertaken to finalise and seek agreement for the work programme for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Task and Finish Groups.

6.0 Background Papers and Useful Links:

Proposed Changes to the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee to establish a Safeguarding Scrutiny Committee (Cab.20.5.2015/10):

<http://edemocracy.barnsley.gov.uk/0xac16000b%20x00585d17>

Barnsley Council Forward Plan of Key Decisions – published 29th May 2015:
https://www2.barnsley.gov.uk/media/3706239/20150529_forward_plan_jul-dec15_pdf_version.pdf

More information about Scrutiny in Barnsley:
<https://www.barnsley.gov.uk/about-us/how-we-work/decision-making-process/overview-and-scrutiny-committee>

Centre for Public Scrutiny website: <http://www.cfps.org.uk>

7.0 Officer Contact:

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1st June 2015