

BARNSELY METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL (BMBC)

This matter is not a Key Decision within the Council's definition and has not been included in the relevant Forward Plan.

**Report of the
Executive Director Core Services
to Full Council**

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (OSC) ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of the attached Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) Annual Report is to inform the Full Council of the work undertaken by Committee Members during 2019-20 and to publish the report for the public as evidence of local authority as well as partner agency decision makers being held to account.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **It is recommended that Members receive the OSC's Annual Report and note the contribution of the work undertaken in further improving services across the Borough.**

3. Introduction/Background

- 3.1 Scrutiny was introduced in the Local Government Act 2000 as a means to hold Council Cabinets to account for their decisions. Since then, subsequent acts of parliament have bolstered Scrutiny by extending its remit 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.
- 3.2 Overview and scrutiny is carried out by non-Cabinet Members and is there to act as the check and balance to the decisions being made by both the Council and its partners. The key principles of Overview and Scrutiny are to:
- Provide 'critical friend' challenge;
 - Amplify the voices and concerns of the public; and
 - Drive improvement in public services.
- 3.3 In March 2019, the findings of the recent Corporate Peer Challenge of Barnsley Council undertaken by the Local Government Association (LGA) were presented in a feedback report. As part of this it was acknowledged that 'The council's scrutiny function appears to work well. Members are knowledgeable about the areas they scrutinise and they are appropriately inquisitive about the subject matter, with good working relationships with officers'.

- 3.4 Within the LGA report it was recommended that ‘the work and impact of scrutiny could be further enhanced if members’ activities and achievements in shaping and improving policy through overview and scrutiny were pulled together in an annual report, which is then reported to Full Council on an annual basis’.
- 3.5 The production of the attached OSC Annual Report provides evidence of the work of Committee Members as well as the ongoing implementation of the recommendations from the Corporate Peer Challenge in the ongoing improvement of the Council and its services.

4. Implications for local people / service users

- 4.1 The OSC Annual Report provides evidence to the public of decision makers at both the Council and partner agencies being held to account and the resultant contribution to service improvement. The report also references where local people and service-users have been directly involved in the committee’s work during 2019-20 and the valuable contribution they make.

5. Financial implications

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
- 5.2 It is noted however that the work of Scrutiny helps to ensure the delivery of value for money services across the Borough.

6. Employee implications

- 6.1 There are no direct employee implications arising from this report.

7. Communications implications

- 7.1 It is noted that the work of Scrutiny keeps under review the performance of the Council and other relevant organisations in providing safeguarding and other services to Barnsley communities. Proactive communication about these services and activities takes place on a regular, planned basis as part of the communication strategy for each directorate.
- 7.2 In addition to ongoing communications, publication of an OSC Annual Report provides opportunity to document the Committee’s activities and highlight its contribution to service improvement.

8. Consultations

- 8.1 Consultation has taken place with Elected Members and the Council’s Senior Management Team.

9. The Corporate Plan and the Council’s Performance Management Framework

- 9.1 The work of Scrutiny contributes to the achievement of and improvement in services in relation to a number of outcomes identified in the Council’s Corporate Plan Performance Report. The workstreams of the Committee are also focused

around the Council's three priorities of: a thriving & vibrant economy; people achieving their potential; and strong & resilient communities.

- 9.2 Children's and adults' services, in particular to those who are vulnerable, are a high priority for the council and the work of Scrutiny promotes this emphasis and contributes to performance improvement.

10. Tackling health inequalities

- 10.1 Ensuring the wellbeing and safeguarding of our adults and children continues to be a priority for the Council and its partners. The work of Scrutiny contributes to this work in highlighting issues and ensuring appropriate plans are in place to address them.

- 10.2 As noted in the attached report, the committee's work for the year ahead will remain cognisant of the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on services, especially the likely impact on health inequalities.

11. Risk management and health & safety issues

- 11.1 Scrutiny of service performance both of the Council and its partners contributes towards the effective control and mitigation of risks relating to the delivery of services including the protection of vulnerable adults and young people in the Borough.

12. Promoting equality & diversity and social inclusion

- 12.1 The work of Scrutiny promotes equality and diversity and social inclusion throughout all its work in considering the performance of and improvement in services. The Committee will continue to consider the impact of service provision on all Barnsley communities including vulnerable groups. The involvement of co-optees on the OSC and its TFGs will also enable the committee to further involve those from our diverse communities; thereby promoting social inclusion.

13. Reduction of crime & disorder

- 13.1 As part of Scrutiny's role in performance management and service improvement, work is specifically undertaken in relation to the reduction of crime and disorder through the consideration of particular services and work with partners.

14. Appendices

- 14.1 Appendix 1 – OSC Annual Report 2019-20

15. Glossary

- 15.1 BMBC – Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
OSC - Overview and Scrutiny Committee
TFG - Task and Finish Group

16. **Background papers**

- Agendas, reports and minutes for all of our Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meetings are available here:
<https://barnsleymbc.moderngov.co.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?Committeeld=224>
- Council Constitution Changes – Overview & Scrutiny Function - Annual Council 17th May 2019 – Item 8:
<https://barnsleymbc.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=133&MId=5243&Ver=4>
- LGA Feedback Report on the Corporate Peer Challenge of Barnsley Council March 2019:
<https://barnsleymbc.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s55659/Appendix%201.pdf>

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