

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

PROPOSED SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME FOR THE 2020/21 MUNICIPAL YEAR

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 To outline the proposed work programme for 2020/21 for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) and its 3 Task and Finish Groups (TFGs).

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 **That Cabinet note the proposed Scrutiny Work Programme for 2020/21 as outlined in section 5 of this report, whilst acknowledging that this is subject to change should any urgent issues arise.**

3. Introduction

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 The need for sound effective decision making is critical, especially as we continue to respond and recover from the global COVID-19 pandemic which has had and will continue to have a profound impact on individuals, communities and services. Elected members who sit on Barnsley's scrutiny committee have a vital role to play as 'scrutineers', providing a valid mechanism of challenge to performance, monitoring decision making and to ensure value for money is delivered.
- 3.3 Further to a review undertaken in the previous year, Barnsley Council's scrutiny arrangements continue to incorporate an OSC of 34 Councillors plus a Parent Governor Co-optee. The OSC meets formally 12 times per year in total; 3 of these meetings are in plenary mode to consider safeguarding topics and other key strategic business. For the remaining 9 meetings, Committee Members allocate time to 3 workstreams which each meet 3 times per year consisting of 12 Elected Members; however, all Committee Members usually have an open invitation to attend all workstreams, which are aligned to the Council priorities of:
- Thriving and Vibrant Economy
 - People Achieving Their Potential
 - Strong and Resilient Communities
- The OSC also maintains 3 Member-led TFGs which carry out in-depth investigations.
- 3.4 The OSC and its TFGs 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. In relation to safeguarding business, this will be undertaken by Committee Members in plenary sessions. Safeguarding considerations will be a feature of all workstreams to ensure services are protecting the most vulnerable. However, safeguarding will also be a key feature of the 'People Achieving Their Potential' workstream in challenging services to ensure they are achieving the outcome that 'children and adults are safe from harm'.

- 3.5 Area Councils can also 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 OSC and its TFGs. The OSC Chair meets with the Area Council Chairs periodically to liaise regarding topics on the OSC work programme and ensure any relevant concerns are raised.

4. Consideration of alternative approaches

- 4.1 The topics proposed in section 5 of this report are a reflection of input into the work programme from a variety of sources and stakeholders to identify the key issues requiring scrutiny during the 2020/21 municipal year. It is important to note however that the programme may be updated on an ongoing basis. This is particularly the case given the current global COVID-19 pandemic and that a number of issues may require consideration at urgent and short notice.

5. Proposal and justification

- 5.1 It is important that the Scrutiny work programme is developed to ensure effective scrutiny of local services to help improve outcomes for our communities. Forward planning is undertaken to identify key issues which require scrutiny during each municipal year, as well as allowing for the work programme to be reactive and evolve should issues require scrutiny at short-notice. Therefore it is important to note that the proposals below remain subject to change and each suggested investigation will need to be scoped in more detail.
- 5.2 The table below shows the proposed work programme for the OSC and notes when the Council's quarterly performance reports will be available throughout the year should they highlight any issues requiring further investigation:

Meeting Date	Topics
2020/21 Municipal Year	
Tues 12th May 2pm (Reduced Full Committee)	1. COVID-19 Response
Tues 9th June 2020 2pm (Thriving & Vibrant Economy)	1. Impact of COVID-19 on the Barnsley Economy & Town Centre Redevelopment
Thurs 9th July 2020 2pm (People Achieving Potential)	1. Impact of COVID-19 on Adult Social Care Services and Care Homes
Tues 21st July 2020 2pm (Strong & Resilient Comms)	1. Impact of COVID-19 on Community Safety
Tues 8th Sept 2020 2pm (Full Committee)	1. Safeguarding Adults Board Annual Report 2019-20 & Safeguarding Adults during COVID-19 2. Barnsley Safeguarding Children Partnership Annual Report 2019-20 & Safeguarding Children during COVID-19

	3. Private Member Briefing - Children's Social Care (Q1 Corporate Plan Performance Report 2020/21)
Tues 13 th Oct 2020 2pm (Thriving & Vibrant Economy)	1. Berneslai Homes Covid-19 Impact/Recovery & Contract Renewal & Strategic Plan 2020-31 2. Jobs, Skills & Employment
Tues 3 rd Nov 2020 2pm (People Achieving Potential)	1. Public Health and Covid-19
Tues 1 st Dec 2020 2pm (Strong & Resilient Comms)	1. Environmental Impact of Covid-19 and delivering the Council's Zero40 & Zero45 targets 2. Road Safety in Barnsley (Q2 Corporate Plan Performance Report 2020/21)
Tues 12 th Jan 2021 2pm (Full Committee)	1. Provisional Education Outcomes across the Borough 2020 including vulnerable groups 2. Private Member Briefing - Children's Social Care
Tues 9 th Feb 2021 2pm (Thriving & Vibrant Economy)	1. Transport in Barnsley 2. Barnsley's Cultural Offer
Tues 9 th March 2021 2pm (People Achieving Potential)	1. SEND Provision in Barnsley (Q3 Corporate Plan Performance Report 2020/21)
Tues 23 rd March 2021 2pm (Strong & Resilient Comms)	1. Homelessness – 12 months on from lockdown
Tues 27 th April 2021 2pm (Full Committee)	1. Development of Integrated Care in Barnsley 2. Private Member Briefing - Children's Social Care
2021/22 Municipal Year	
Tues 1 st June 2021 2pm (Thriving & Vibrant Economy)	1. Barnsley Town Centre Redevelopment & Ongoing Economic Recovery following COVID-19 (Q4 Corporate Plan Performance Report 2020/21)
Tues 29 th June 2021 2pm (People Achieving Potential)	1. Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
Tues 20 th July 2021 2pm (Strong & Resilient Comms)	1. NHS Cancer Services, Screening & Treatments

5.3 The table below shows the proposed topics for the TFGs:

TFG	Topics
TFG 1	Children's Mental Health (Early Intervention & Prevention)
TFG 2	Child Poverty
TFG 3	Future Plans (COVID-19 Recovery, 2030 Plans, Council Plan 2021+)

5.4 To advise the OSC and its TFGs with their investigations, as per Cabinet agreement (Cab.27.7.16/6), on occasion 'Expert Participants' have been invited to contribute to meetings. This is to be able to both advise Members as well as ask questions of their own to witnesses in relation to topics where they have particular expertise, either by profession or service user experience. The committee therefore plans to continue this practice as appropriate on an ongoing basis.

5.5 In accordance with legislation and the provision for Local Authorities to form Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committees with other Councils to respond to substantial reconfiguration proposals covering more than one council area, the OSC Chair will continue to participate in these as appropriate. These meetings can be convened over varying geographical areas as well as over varying timescales as is deemed appropriate for the matters being considered.

6. Implications for local people / service users

- 6.1 By undertaking scrutiny of the topics in the work programme, this will contribute to the continued improvement of services for local people / service users.

7. Financial implications

- 7.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from this report, however recommendations could be made by the OSC/TFGs as part of their investigations which would require assessment of financial implications by the appropriate services responding which may be the Council or partnership agencies.

8. Employee implications

- 8.1 There are no specific employee implications arising from this report, however recommendations could be made by the OSC/TFGs as part of their investigations which would require assessment of employee implications by the appropriate services responding which may be the Council or partnership agencies.

9. Communications implications

- 9.1 It is noted that the work of Scrutiny keeps under review the performance of the Council and other relevant organisations in providing 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 of the Council and on occasion will be requested to be undertaken by other relevant organisations. In addition, the Communications Team promotes publication of the papers and attendance at the meeting via social media channels.
- 9.2 Whilst the scrutiny function is operating remotely via virtual means, members of the public are able to watch a live-broadcast of the meetings as well as view recordings of the meetings via the Council's webcast library.

10. Consultations

- 10.1 Consultation has taken place with Councillor Jeff Ennis OSC Chair, Members of the OSC, Area Council Chairs, the Leader of the Council, the Council's Senior Management Team and Chief Officers in partner organisations.

11. The Corporate Plan and the Council's Performance Management Framework

- 11.1 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 OSC work programme is scheduled around the quarterly performance reports which enable the Scrutiny work programme to be reactive to issues requiring consideration.

12. Tackling health inequalities

- 12.1 Tackling health inequalities and 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.

13. Risk management and health and safety issues

- 13.1 The Council's Scrutiny arrangements form an important part of the overall governance and internal control framework. The appetite of the Council to have meaningful and constructive scrutiny of its decisions makes a significant contribution to the transparency and accountability of Council activities.
- 13.2 The development of an agreed work-programme provides a great deal of focus and control to risks. Additionally, the flexibility built into the work programme provides a robust mitigation in the event of new or emerging issues requiring Scrutiny attention during 2020/21.

14. Promoting equality, diversity, and social inclusion

- 14.1 The Equality Act 2010 requires public authorities to pay due regard to the impact of their services, policies, functions and decisions on diverse groups (called "people with protected characteristics" in the Act). For Scrutiny this means ensuring that as part of their investigations they consider how the services or policies affect people from these groups, and ideally ensuring that people with direct experience have an opportunity to have their voices heard. Scrutiny should also seek to understand what steps services have taken to proactively assess the likely equality impact of their service design and delivery and how they have sought to monitor the actual impact once implemented.
- 14.2 By using 'Expert Participants' (see paragraph 5.4) the committee will be able to utilise a range of representatives to ensure appropriate challenge to services which will include those from minority groups. This work will require the engagement of the Equality and Inclusion Team and will be coordinated with the Network of Equality Forums, as well as exploring the options for other expert participants from within the community, when appropriate.

15. Reduction of crime and disorder

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

16. Background papers

- Council Constitution Changes – Annual Council 17th May 2019:
<https://barnsleymbc.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s49346/Council%20Constitution.pdf>
- Council's Forward Plan of Key Decisions July 2020:
<https://barnsleymbc.moderngov.co.uk/mgListPlanItems.aspx?PlanId=192&RP=135>
- Overview and Scrutiny: Statutory Guidance for Councils and Combined Authorities May 2019:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/800048/Statutory_Guidance_on_Overview_and_Scrutiny_in_Local_and_Combined_Authorities.pdf

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