

Agenda Item 6



SIGNED OFF BY	Chief Executive
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TO	Overview and Scrutiny Committee
DATE	Wednesday, 10 April 2019

KEY DECISION REQUIRED	N
WARDS AFFECTED	(All Wards);

SUBJECT	Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Annual Report 2018/19
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RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be noted and recommended to Council.
2. That any additional observations be made to Council.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee serves as a critical friend to the Council and Executive. The Annual Report of the Committee provides a summary of the work of the Committee to the Council

SUMMARY

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee serves as a critical friend to the Council and Executive. As specified in its terms of reference, the Committee provides an annual report to the Council.

The Annual Report of the Committee provides a summary of the work of the Committee in 2018/19 to the Council. This report therefore supports awareness of the role and actions of the Committee by the Council.

The above recommendations are subject to approval by Full Council.

Agenda Item 6

STATUTORY POWERS
1. The functions of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are set out in Chapter 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution, and the terms of reference of the Committee.
KEY INFORMATION
2. The full Annual Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2018/19 forms Annex 1 to this report. 3. The Membership of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Committee's terms of reference, and attendance information for the year are set out in Annex 2 to this report.

REIGATE AND BANSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19

This Annual Report reviews Overview and Scrutiny activities in 2018/19.

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee has a number of roles in its terms of reference:
 - scrutiny of the decision making process;
 - monitoring the Council's performance;
 - operating as the "Audit Committee" of the Council;
 - operating as the "Crime and Disorder 'Scrutiny' Committee";
 - supporting the strategic development of policy proposed by the Executive;
 - reviewing issues of concern to local people through Councillor calls for Action;
 - "Call in" of Executive decisions;
 - participating in Joint Scrutiny arrangements in Surrey;
 - monitoring and scrutinising the activities of other organisations that impact on residents and businesses in the borough;
- 1.2. The Committee consists of 15 Members and establishes Review Panels, where required, to undertake detailed work on a 'task and finish' basis. These Panels mostly consist of five members. Panel recommendations are presented to the Committee, the Executive and/or Council.
- 1.3. In 2018/19 the advance questioning procedure was utilised for a number of the Committee's activities, to the benefit of both the Committee and those attending at its request. This procedure provides Members with more time to research issues and prepare questions. It also enables Officers, Members and external guests to prepare more detailed responses.
- 1.4. The Committee continued the arrangement of holding Executive Members to account for their responsibility areas by inviting them to present their objectives, recent achievements, current challenges and future priorities to the Committee.
- 1.5. The eMembers Room (Members' extranet) continued to provide Members with access to information to support their role and includes:
 - performance information including Internal Audit review reports;
 - presentations received at its meetings;
 - Scrutiny Panel reports;
 - Advance questions and responses
- 1.6. The Membership, Terms of Reference of the Committee and attendance at the Committee and its Panels are given in Annex 2.

2. Holding the Executive to Account

- 2.1. The Executive Members and/or Management Team representatives supported the Committee's scrutiny activities and attended meetings of the Committee and Scrutiny Panels throughout the year.
- 2.2. The Committee held the Leader and Executive Members to account through:
 - the attendance of the Leader, the Deputy Leader and Executive Members at the Committee or its Panels to explain how the Executive proposed to deliver its plans and strategies; and
 - Executive Members presenting their objectives to the Committee.
 - Reviewing a number of proposed Executive decisions and providing commentary to the Executive where judged appropriate.
- 2.3. Councillors Mr. M.A. Brunt, Leader of the Council, and Mr. T. Schofield, Executive Member for Finance attended the Budget Scrutiny Panel, to support the Panel's scrutiny. These councillors also attended the Committee meeting at which the report of the Budget Scrutiny Panel was received and considered, to further support this process and respond to questions from the Committee.
- 2.4. Councillor Mr. J.E. Durrant, Executive Member for Community Safety, attended the Committee's annual 'Crime and Disorder' meeting to support the scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership.
- 2.5. The Committee reviewed developing Council strategy areas, including the Council's developing Investment Strategy and a review of the Council's governance of commercial endeavours. It also received updates on the Council's forthcoming Corporate Plan and Housing Strategy as part of briefings from members of the Executive.
- 2.8. The Committee considered its work plan for 2019/20, supported by discussion between the Chair of the Committee, Leader of the Council and Chief Executive of the Council. This was supported by the Committee at its meeting in February, and recommended to the Executive and Council.
- 2.9. The Committee conducted pre-scrutiny of the Council's planned expansion of recycling services to flats within the borough, along with the required service commitments.

3. Executive Member Objectives

- 3.1. The following Executive Members presented their objectives to the Committee (in chronological order):
 - Councillor Mr. E. Humphreys, Executive Member for Business and the Economy, who provided a briefing on the Council's work to support economic prosperity, including an overview of business trends in the borough and the work of the business prosperity team to support business and the delivery of social value in the borough;
 - Councillor Mrs. N. Bramhall, Executive Member for Property and Acquisitions, who provided a briefing on the Council's property activities, including information on the Council's current properties, investment acquisition and developments, and community facilities and regeneration projects;

- Councillor Mr. M. Brunt, Leader of the Council, who provided a briefing on the work of the Council, including leadership priorities, Council initiatives and projects, future challenges facing the Council, and engagement between the Executive and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- Councillor Mr. J. Durrant, Executive Member for Community Safety, who provided a briefing on the community safety work of the Council, including its work with the East Surrey Community Safety Partnership and to address matters such as anti-social behaviour, modern slavery, and domestic abuse.
- Councillor Mr. G. Knight, Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Housing and Benefits, provided a briefing on the Council's Housing Services, Intervention Team and Revenues, Benefits & Fraud services, including information on work to address homelessness, the developing housing strategy, and support for residents.
- Councillor A. Horwood, Executive Member for Neighbourhood Services, provided a briefing on the Council's Neighbourhood Services, including information on the structure of neighbourhood services, an overview of services provided, current focusses and future challenges.
- Councillor K. Foreman, Executive Member for Planning Policy, is providing an update to the Committee at its April meeting, on the Council's work within the Planning Policy portfolio.

3.2. The Committee welcomed the opportunity to examine in detail the work of portfolio holders, to test the relationship of this work to the Council's corporate objectives and to scrutinise the performance of the Council's services.

4. "Crime and Disorder 'Scrutiny' Committee"

4.1. The Committee again held an annual meeting as part of its 'Crime and Disorder' responsibility. The Committee scrutinised the activities of the East Surrey Community Safety Partnership (ESCSP) in 2018/19.

4.2. The Police and Crime Commissioner for Surrey, and the Police Borough Commander for Reigate and Banstead were invited to attend the meeting as key community safety partners, and supported the Committee in its scrutiny activity.

4.3. The Committee investigated in questioning a wide range of community safety issues, and explored the current activity areas and priority concerns of the ESCSP, the work of the Police in the borough, and areas in which the Council, ESCSP and Police could best work together. The discussion considered the importance of cooperation and information sharing among a range of matters.

5. Work with Housing Partners: Housing Associations

5.1. An overview of the Council's Housing work was provided to the Committee in February, which included information on the Council's current work with Raven Housing Trust, along with potential future work with both Raven and other housing associations. It was identified that additional information on the Council's housing activities and work with housing associations as part of the development of the Council's new Housing Strategy in the coming year. There was an opportunity for the Committee to ask questions regarding the Council's work in this area. It is expected that the Committee will continue to monitor the Council's work on housing and with housing associations in future.

6. Performance Monitoring

- 6.1. The Committee continued to monitor the Council's performance. This included reviewing the following information:
- Service Performance Management (quarterly);
 - Revenue and Capital Management (quarterly);
 - Risk Management (six monthly);
 - wider economic indicators and issues that affect public services (quarterly);
 - performance against the 5 Year Plan 2015-20 (annually).
- 6.2. The detailed information on performance variances and responses to Member questions was provided in the e-Members Room in support of this activity. More detailed information on service performance was also available from the e-Members Room.
- 6.3. The advance questioning procedure was utilised to support each quarterly performance report, and the Chief Executive, in regularly supporting meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, was able to answer additional questions on performance. Where the Chief Executive was unable to attend, an appropriate Management Team representative attended to provide continuity of support to the Committee.
- 6.4. The quarterly reports showed that the Council continued to perform well. Any comments from the Committee on performance were reported to the Executive for their consideration.

7. Audit

A Internal Audit

- 7.1. There were 14 Internal Audit reviews undertaken by RSM (the Council's Internal Audit contractor for 2018/19) in the 2018/19 period up to the end of March, and final reports for all of these audits have been issued. Each final report is provided in full on the e-Members Room and Members were invited to submit advance questions to Committee meetings on a quarterly basis. Exception reports are provided to the Committee where an audit identifies significant concerns. There were no exception reports required in 2018/19 as no major issues were identified by the audits. In June 2018 the Committee considered RSM's Annual Internal Audit Report for the year ended 31 March 2018, which provided a positive opinion on the overall adequacy of and effectiveness of the organisation's risk management, control and governance processes.
- 7.2. The Committee considered and provided observations on a proposed new internal audit partnership agreement arrangements, to support the Council's internal audit activities from 2019/20 onwards.
- 7.3. As delegated in the Council's Constitution, the Committee considered the proposed Internal Audit Strategy and Audit Plan for 2019/20 at the March 2019 meeting of the Committee. The Internal Audit Strategy and Audit Plan identify key risks facing the Authority, and the risks identified for 2018/19 were monitored throughout the year via the Internal Audit reviews.
- 7.4. In March 2019, the Committee considered the strategic risk register for 2019/20, which underpins the Council's internal audit approach, and had the opportunity to make any comments to the Executive.

B External Audit

- 7.5. The Committee received the annual report for the 2017/18 financial year from the External Auditors (KPMG) in September 2018.
- 7.6. The Committee were pleased to note that KPMG had been generally positive and that no major issues had been identified by the auditors. This confirmed that the Council had proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources. The minor issues identified were noted to be being monitored and addressed.

8. Joint Scrutiny Arrangements in Surrey

- 8.1. Though the Committee has the facility to undertake joint scrutiny, no such reviews took place in 2018/19. The facility will be utilised in the future should a topic be identified that meets the criteria for collaborative scrutiny.

9. Strategy and Policy Development

- 9.1. The Committee commented on the following draft strategies and policies:
- Treasury Management Strategy 2019/20;
 - The expansion of recycling services in the borough;
 - Medium Term Financial Plan 2019/20-23/24 (through the budget scrutiny process).
 - The Council's outline Capital Investment Strategy 2019/20.
- 9.2. The Committee also received information on the developing Corporate Plan and Housing Strategy as part of briefings provided by Executive Members.
- 9.3. The Committee also received and considered the Schedule of Meetings for 2019/20.

10. Operational arrangements

- 10.1. As the Chairman of the Committee, I had regular meetings with the Chief Executive which focussed on delivering the Committee's work programme. I am particularly appreciative of this involvement and for the support of the Chief Executive at our meetings.
- 10.2. I am equally grateful for the support provided by the Leader of the Council, with whom I met to discuss the work of the Executive and the work of the Committee, and how these could continue to support and complement each other. In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Procedure Rules, the Committee's work programme for 2019/20 was discussed with the Leader.

11. Review Panels

- 11.1. The Committee had one Review Panel this year, as detailed below.

Budget Scrutiny Review Panel (Chairman: Cllr. Mr. N. Harrison)

- 11.2. The Budget Scrutiny Review Panel reviewed the Service & Financial Planning (Provisional Budget) 2019/20 report.
- 11.3. The Panel undertook a very robust review and considered over 100 advance questions along with further questions and comments that were raised within the meeting.
- 11.4. The Panel recognised and appreciated the significant amount of work that had gone into preparing the service and financial plans for 2018/19 and concluded that the budget proposals were sound, balanced and achievable. This also applied to the updated Capital Programme and Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 11.5. The Committee supported the conclusions of the Panel and provided its comments to the Executive for their final consideration of the Budget.

12. 'Call-in' of Executive Decisions

- 12.1. No 'Call-In's were received during 2018/19.

13. Community Call for Action

- 13.1 No Community Calls for Action were recorded during 2018/19.

14. Conclusion

- 14.1. The Committee recognises that the Council continues to focus on outcomes for residents and businesses and is responding well to continuing financial pressures and managing its processes in an efficient manner. The work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has maintained a streamlined approach in 2018/19 and in developing its work programme for 2019/20 has sought to continue this.
- 14.2. Nevertheless, the Committee has worked hard on behalf of the Council and community in scrutinising the Council's decision making process, holding Executive Members to account, and monitoring the Council's performance, as well as contributing to strategic policy development. All of this activity adds great value to the Council's processes and assists the Council to uphold a consistently high level of service.
- 14.3. Throughout this year, effort has been made to enhance the relationship between the Committee and the Executive, and thus to increase the effectiveness of the Committee's activities in support the Council. I am appreciative of the approach of the Leader and the Executive in supporting this improvement, and in working to address previous concerns of the Committee. I was pleased to welcome the Leader to the December meeting of the Committee to provide an update on the overall work of the Committee, and hope that this arrangement will continue in future.
- 14.4. In accordance with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Terms of Reference, the Council is requested to note this Annual Report.

**COUNCILLOR B.A. STEAD
CHAIRMAN,
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MEMBERSHIP 2018/19

All Councillors, except Members of the Executive, may be Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Panels appointed by it. However, no Member may be involved in scrutinising a decision in which he/she has been directly involved.

For information, the Membership of the Committee during 2018/19 was as follows:-

Councillor Mr. B.A. Stead (Chairman)

Councillors	Mr. T. Archer	Councillors	Mr. J.P. King
	Mr. M.S. Blacker		Mr. R. Michalowski
	Mr. R.W. Coad		Mr. D.T. Powell
	Mr. G.R. Curry		Mr. J.M. Stephenson
	Mr. J.C.S Essex		Mrs. A.F. Tarrant
	Mr. J.S. Godden		Ms. R.S. Turner
	Mr. N.D. Harrison		Mr. J.F. White

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Terms of Reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are set out below:-

(a) Scrutiny

- Review and scrutinise decisions made by, and the performance of the Leader / Executive decision maker, Committees and Council Officers excluding decisions on individual applications/cases;
- Review and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets or particular service areas;
- Make recommendations to the Leader / Executive decision maker, Committees or the Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process;
- Review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies.

(b) Policy Review and Development

- Assist the Council [and the Executive] in the development of its budget and policy framework;
- Conduct research, community and other consultation on policy issues and possible options.

In relation to (a) and (b) above:

- Question the Leader / Executive decision maker, Committees, Directors, Chief Officers or Heads of Service;
- Liaise as necessary with external organisations;
- Question and obtain confirmation/advice from any other person/organisation.

(c) Budget/Resources

- To exercise responsibility for resources allocated to support the work of the Committee.

(d) Audit Responsibilities

- To consider the effectiveness of the Council's risk management arrangements;
- Approve the Council's internal audit strategy and monitor performance;
- Review summary internal audit reports and the main issues arising, and seek assurance that appropriate action has been taken where necessary;
- Receive the annual report of the Chief Internal Auditor;
- Be consulted upon reports received from External Audit and other inspection agencies.

(e) Crime and Disorder

- That for the purposes of the Police and Justice Act 2006 that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be designated as the Crime and Disorder Committee with the following remit:
 - (a) To review or scrutinise decisions made, or action taken, in connection with the discharge by the responsible authorities of their crime and disorder functions;
 - (b) To make reports or recommendations to the responsible authority(s) with respect to the discharge of those functions.

(f) Joint Scrutiny

- The scrutiny and reporting functions set out in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Local Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees) (England) Regulations 2009 and any amendments made thereto, and in particular:
 - (a) The scrutiny of the improvement targets contained in the Surrey Local Area Agreement; and
 - (b) To make reports or recommendations to the LAA partners with respect to the matters that relate to a relevant LAA target.

(g) Generally

- To report annually to the Council on the Committee's work and (following consultation with the Executive) upon the future Work Programme for the Committee;
- To appoint panels as necessary to carry out and report upon the work of the Committee;
- To consider any valid Councillor Call for Action;
- To ensure effective scrutiny of the Treasury Management Strategy and procedures.

ATTENDANCE 2018/19

Overview and Scrutiny Committee		
No. of Meetings Held Not including 10 April	Members	No. of Meetings Attended Not including 10 April
7	Councillors Mr. B. Stead (Chairman) Mr. J.P. King (Vice Chairman) Mr. T. Archer Mr. M.S. Blacker Mr. R.W. Coad Mr. G.R. Curry Mr. J.C.S Essex Mr. J.S. Godden Mr. N.D. Harrison* Mr. R. Michalowski Mr. D.T. Powell Mr. J.M. Stephenson Mrs. A.F. Tarrant Ms. R.S. Turner Mr. J.C. White* Mr. J.F. White	5 6 7 7 7 7 7 1 3 6 2 4 5 5 3 5
	<p>*Councillor Mr. J.C White was a member of the Committee for the 4 meetings between 1 June 2018 and 31 December 2018, and Councillor Mr. N.D. Harrison was a member of the Committee for the 3 meetings between 1 January 2019 and 31 March 2019. Councillor Mr N.D. Harrison was also in attendance at the 11 October 2018 meeting of the Committee and present as a substitute at the 6 December 2018 meeting of the Committee, in addition to the number of meetings listed as attended above.</p>	

REVIEW PANELS 2018/19: ATTENDANCE

Panel	No. of Meetings Held	Members	No. of Meetings Attended
Budget Scrutiny Review	1	Councillors Mr. N. Harrison (Chairman) Mr. T. Archer Mr. G.R. Curry Mr. J.C.S Essex Mr. J.P. King Mr. B.A. Stead Mr. J. Stephenson	1 1 - 1 1 1 -
	Note:	Councillors Mr. M.A. Brunt (Leader of the Council), Mr. T. Schofield (Executive Member for Finance), Mr. R. Ashford, Mr. M.S. Blacker, Mr. V.H. Lewanski, Mr. C.T.H. Whinney, and Mr. J.F White were also in attendance.	