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SOUTH BUCKS
District Council

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 19 June 2019 at 6.00 pm

Room 6, Capswood, Oxford Road, Denham

A G E N D A

Item

1.	Evacuation Procedure

2.	Presentation from Network Rail

3.	Apologies for Absence

4.	Minutes *(Pages 5 - 14)*

	To approve the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 25 February and 14 May 2019.

5.	Declarations of Interest

6.	Homelessness in South Bucks - Update *(Pages 15 - 22)*

	Appendix 1 (Pages 23 - 24)

	Appendix 2 (Pages 25 - 26)

7.	Crime statistics *(Pages 27 - 28)*

8.	Consilio Business Plan *(Pages 29 - 30)*

9.	End of Year Performance Report 2018/19 *(Pages 31 - 34)*

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10.   Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny Functions *(Pages 45 - 48)*

        Appendix (Pages 49 - 80)

11.   Bucks Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee

        To receive:

        Minutes of the 19 March 2019 (Pages 81 - 88)

12.   Bucks Children's Select Committee

        To receive:

        Minutes of the 12 March 2019 (Pages 89 - 96)

13.   Members Questions and Answers

        An opportunity for Members to raise questions about items:
        ▪ during the meeting
        ▪ written questions submitted previously
        ▪ raised by information items

14.   Work Programme *(Pages 97 - 98)*

        To agree the work programme timetable.

15.   Exclusion of the Public (if required)

        The Chairman to move the following resolution:-

                "that under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public
                be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the
                grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as
                defined in part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act."

Paragraph 3   Information relating to the financial or business affairs
of any particular persons (including the authority
holding that information).

16.   Farnham Park *(To Follow)*

   Reasons for restriction: Paragraph(s) 3

17.   Consilio Business Plan appendices

   Reasons for restriction: Paragraph(s) 3

   Appendix 1 (Pages 99 - 106)

   Appendix 2 (Pages 107 - 110)

Note: All reports will be updated orally at the meeting if appropriate and may be supplemented by additional reports at the Chairman's discretion.

Membership: Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillors: P Bastiman
M Bezzant
M Bradford (Chairman)
D Dhillon
T Egleton
P Kelly
M Lewis
D Saunders

Date of next meeting – Tuesday, 1 October 2019

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting - 25 February 2019

Present: P Bastiman (Vice-Chairman - In the Chair)
                            M Bezzant
                            T Egleton
                            P Kelly
                            M Lewis

Also Present: J Read

Apologies   M Bradford, D Dhillon and D Saunders
for
absence

100. **PRESENTATION FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF FRIMLEY PARK TRUST**

Neil Dardiss, Chief Executive of Frimley Park Trust attended the meeting and gave the Committee a presentation on Frimley Park Trust.

The Trust had delivered successful strategy over past 5 years **–** Improvements made over the last 5 years included:

- A Hyper Acute and Rehab Stroke Centre;
- Life-saving 24/7 heart attack centres and vascular network has been expanded;
- Community Services in NE Hampshire;
- New CT Scanner Endoscopy Unit at Heatherwood Hospital;
- First Acute Renal Unit in Surrey;
- Medication errors were down 63%;
- 98% of inpatients recommend the Trust to friends and family
- With regard to Cancer – Top 5 performer in the NHS

The Committee was informed that with regard to health, there were demographic challenges with population growth, people living longer, greater incidences of dementia etc. Frimley Trust was a learning organisation, investing in leadership and recognising the people who worked for the Trust. Leaders within the organisation were supported to be the best and enabled to support their great teams.

The Trust was building on past successes and thinking ahead to what the Trust's services could be in 10 years' time. The Trust was always looking to make improvements and putting patients at the centre of service design. Better joined up working was required with GPs, Social Care, providers and volunteers to improve outcomes. Services should be developed to focus on wellbeing and less on treating sickness.

A key development was the new Emergency Assessment Centre at Wexham Park Hospital which was a state of the art development. The capacity had been increased and all the emergency services were in the one unit. Members asked that a visit to Wexham Park Hospital be arranged to enable Members to see the new facility.

The Chief Executive of the Trust informed Members that there were still challenges relating to staffing; with a 14% vacancy rate for nurses. The recruitment of overseas staff would continue. Reference was made to the use of agency staff which equated to around £20m per annum, and the need to reduce this.

In response to a question about hospital car parking charges, Members were informed that car parking charges generated a turnover of £4.4m and the reality was that this revenue was part of the funding required for the NHS.

Reference was made to the E Referral system and the problems with the system where GP receptionists were sometimes referring minor cases to accident and emergency. The Chief Executive reported that there were three different IT systems in the three hospitals in the Trust and increased training was required for staff to enable a consistency of approach.

The importance of the partnership work with Buckinghamshire County Council was stressed, particularly in relation to mental health/social services to ensure work was taking place effectively around health and wellbeing.

Assurances were given to Members regarding improved training for staff around dementia and improved staff appraisals.

RESOLVED That the presentation be noted and the Chief Executive of Frimley Park Trust be thanked for attending the meeting.

101. **PRESENTATION FROM IAN BARHAM, LOCAL ENTREPRISE PARTNERSHIP ON LOCAL INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY**

Mr Ian Barham provided the Committee with a presentation on the Local Enterprise Partnership, "Building the Buckinghamshire Local Industrial Strategy".

Members were informed that the strategy was evidence based and the key facts informing the strategy for Buckinghamshire were:-

- Productivity is high 3rd of 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships
- Gross valued added per hour worked is 13.1% above national average
- 81.9% in employment - the highest in the corridor
- Highest proportion of professional, technical and scientific employment outside of London

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- 42% of workforce or approximately 80,000 people out-commuters – 35,000 to London boroughs
- Highest degree level workforce – low level of vocational qualifications – 25% of Bucks Students go to Russell Group Universities
- Population 10% below national average for 19-37 year olds – 10% above for 90+
- Low Business Innovation – Innovate UK funding only 7% of Oxfordshire's since 2011
- The UK's most micro firm economy 77.4% have fewer than 5 employees
- Business start-up is 17% above national average with high survival rates
- Digital connectivity poorest within the growth corridor - 1 in 10 in some areas cannot access superfast broadband.

The vision for Buckinghamshire Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership was that in 2030 and beyond, Buckinghamshire will be a place where:
- entrepreneurial businesses benefit from the strength of the county's iconic brands;
- testing, experimentation and commercialisation of new ideas thrive;
- sustained investment in R&D and future technologies drive continuous improvements in productivity.

Reference was made to the regions nationally recognised assets:

- The creative and digital economy with **Pinewood Studios** at its core – Reference was made to the core UK film industry which contributes £1.6billion to national GDP. Pinewood Studios lie at the heart of the cluster with the skills base supported by the world's best film school, the National Film and TV School in Beaconsfield.
- **Silverstone's** position at the core of a high production technology hub - Silverstone Tech Cluster with over 4000 businesses. World leading technologies in light-weighting, composites, aerodynamics and power train. 16,000 jobs in Knowledge Intensive Manufacturing in Bucks - up 12% since 2015. 300,000 sq ft of Enterprise Zone development planned at Silverstone
- The role of the **BTV-Westcott cluster** as a key link in the UK space sector supply chain and links to aerospace - Upstream Space to increase in value from £13.7bn to £40bn by 2030. Growth fuelled by smaller, more responsive and agile satellites. Productivity in the sector 60% above the national average. Westcott has the highest proportion of rocket engineers in UK – the UK Propulsion Test Centre. Potential for National Stem & HE Research Hub
- **Medical technologies** exploiting the international status of Stoke Mandeville and the expertise of the counties two universities- 28,000 already employed in the Health Sector. Home to Global Innovators such as GE Healthcare & Johnson & Johnson. 1st new medical school for over a century. At the apex of the Healthcare Golden Triangle. One of only 8 Independent Care pathways.

Facing demographic time-bomb 90+ 10% above national average. Birthplace of the Paralympic Movement.

RESOLVED – That the Committee noted the information provided in the presentation and thanked Mr Ian Barham for his attendance.

102. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 29 January 2019 were approved and signed by the Chairman of the Committee as a correct record.

103. **SERVICE PLANS 2019/20**

Consideration was given to a report which provided Members with the Service Plans for all service areas within the Councils.

Discussion took place on Community Safety Performance Indicators and reference was made to crime statistics for the District, such as the number of burglaries etc., not being easily accessible for Members. Previously the Police Local Area Commanders used to provide crime statistics to Members and it was agreed that this information should be provided to the Community Safety Partnership and to Members.

It was agreed that at the June meeting of the Committee, a report be submitted providing details on where crime statistics could be obtained and the best way to communicate them regularly to Members.

RESOLVED – (1) That the Service Plans be noted and Cabinet be informed that the Committee had no comments to make.

(2) That a report be submitted to the June meeting of the Committee providing details on where crime statistics could be obtained and the best way to communicate them regularly to Members.

104. **REFRESHED JOINT BUSINESS PLAN 2019-20**

The Committee was informed that the Joint Business Plan was reviewed every year to reflect the changing needs of the locality and the communities that lived and worked within Chiltern and South Bucks, as well as the service planning process.

Members were informed that the Business Plan continued to take the same format, with the majority of changes being made to pages 7 and 8 of the document, where the purposes of the districts have been updated.

RESOLVED – That the report be noted and that Cabinet be informed that the Committee had no comments to make.

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105. **PERFORMANCE INDICATOR REVIEW 2019/20**

The report provided an update on the outcomes of the Performance Indicator (PI) review for 2019/20.

PIs were part of the Service Planning process and served as an important part of the Council's performance management framework as detailed in the Joint Business Plan and linked to the Councils' policy objectives.

Members were informed that for 2019/20 there were 43 PIs in total, comprising of 13 priority PIs which were reviewed on a monthly basis by Cabinet, and 30 additional corporate PIs, which were reviewed on a quarterly basis by Cabinet.

RESOLVED – That the report on the changes to Performance Indicators for each service be noted and Cabinet be informed that the Committee had no comments.

106. **PERFORMANCE REPORT QUARTER 3 2018/19**

The report outlined the annual performance of Council services against pre-agreed Performance Indicators (PIs) and service objectives for Quarter 3 of 2018-19.

Discussion took place on Healthy Communities PIs, particularly on the number of households living in temporary accommodation. Reference was made to the numbers being reduced but the target remaining the same. The Committee asked that Cabinet be asked to consider reducing the target.

It was agreed that for the next meeting of the Committee, a report be submitted which provided the following detail:

- An update on Homelessness in the District, details on the costs of the Bath Road, Taplow development and the impact on the numbers in B & B accommodation.
- Where the occupants of the 8 temporary housing units at Tatling End were to be temporarily transferred to, as Bath Road was not available yet.
- A comparison with other neighbouring local authorities, such as Slough, on how much they pay for B & B accommodation,

The Committee also asked that the relevant Cabinet Members be invited to attend the next meeting.

RESOLVED – That the performance reports be noted and that Cabinet be asked to give consideration to the comments made by the Committee in relation to reducing the target for the PI relating to the number of households living in temporary accommodation.

250219

107. **PLANNING SHARED SERVICE**

The report provided Members with an update on the progress of the implementation of the Exemplary Planning Service Action Plan.

Members were informed that the Plan sets out a series of short, medium and longer term actions, with several of the actions overlapping with the on-going work around the implementation of a shared planning service

The work builds on the long standing high performance of both Councils on the speed of processing planning applications. Details of the progress made against the targets in the Action Plan were detailed in the appendix to the report.

Reference was made to both Councils having also approved the Local Enforcement Plan in 2018, which added clarity about the enforcement process and timescales, and how and when the Councils would consider whether it was expedient to take action

A new Planning Enforcement Manager had started in September 2018, and the team had reviewed its internal procedures and improved processes, particularly in relation to issuing formal notices and the use of temporary stop notices. Other improvements included a new scheme of delegation for issuing Enforcement Notices, a review of all standard planning conditions and a project to review compliance with existing enforcement notices.

In relation to Appendix 1 which provided progress made against the targets in the Action Plan, reference was made to the need for the green status actions to be updated as the dates had passed. Officers agreed to action this.

A discussion took place on the flouting of planning permissions and Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) in relation to unauthorised works, which on occasions had resulted in no enforcement action being taken when reported to Enforcement Officers. Members were offered assurance that all unauthorised works which were carried out on TPO trees, were investigated by Enforcement Officers, after seeking advice from the Tree Officer on the course of action to be taken.

It was agreed that officers would send out information to Members on who to contact and the procedure for reporting unauthorised planning works and unauthorised works on TPO trees.

In addition, officers were asked to submit a report to the next meeting of the Committee, which provided statistics on complaints submitted on works carried out on TPO trees, and the number which had resulted in prosecutions.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted and officers be asked to undertake the actions requested above.

250219

108. **VIABILITY ASSESSMENTS**

The Committee was provided with a report which updated Members on the Council's approach to viability in light of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Policy Guidance (PPG).

Members were reminded that Government policy placed great emphasis on the need to provide affordable housing. Until recently Government policy had supported the development industry, and allowed a reduction in the amount of affordable housing if the applicant could demonstrate that the full provision of affordable housing would make the site unviable.

A viability appraisal was an assessment of whether the development of a site would create sufficient value, in that both the landowner brings the site to the market, and the developer has sufficient profit to undertake the development.

Members were informed that both Councils had a robust approach to viability, using all powers contained in the new NPPF and the PPG, in order to get to the facts of each individual case put forward by developers.

Reference was made to sites where viability assessments and negotiations had taken place with developers.

During discussion reference was made to schemes which had been granted planning permission and then non-material changes were made, which affected viability.

Officers were asked to give consideration to providing a more detailed section on viability in Planning Committee reports.

RESOLVED – That the update in the report be noted and officers be asked to give consideration to providing a more detailed section on viability in Planning Committee reports.

109. **FARNHAM PARK**

The Committee was informed that the purpose of the report was to request that Members examine the issues relating to the operation of the Farnham Park leisure facilities, which were provided under the remit of the Farnham Park Charitable Trust.

The Director of Resources reported that information on the feasibility of the playing field option had not been received and it was agreed that consideration of the issues raised in the report, be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee.

250219

RESOLVED – That consideration of the issues contained in the report be deferred to the next meeting of the Committee to enable details of the feasibility of the playing field options to be included in the discussions.

110. **BUCKS CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE**

Members received the Minutes of the meeting of the Buckinghamshire County Council Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee held on 15 January 2019.

RESOLVED - That the Minutes of the Buckinghamshire County Council Children's Social Care and Learning Select Committee be noted.

111. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Committee considered the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme and made amendments as discussed during the meeting.

RESOLVED That the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be updated and agreed.

The meeting terminated at 8.25 pm

250219

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Meeting - 14 May 2019

Present: M Bradford (Chairman)
                      P Bastiman, M Bezzant, T Egleton, P Kelly, M Lewis and
                      D Saunders

1.   **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed by Councillor Egleton, seconded by Councillor Kelly and

RESOLVED that Councillor Bradford be declared Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2.   **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

It was proposed by Councillor Bradford, seconded by Councillor Kelly and

RESOLVED that Councillor Bastiman be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

The meeting terminated at 8.24 pm

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SUBJECT:	*Homelessness in South Bucks - Update*
RELEVANT MEMBER	*Healthy Communities Portfolio Holder Councillor Patrick Hogan*
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	*Head of Healthy Communities – Martin Holt*
REPORT AUTHOR	*Housing Manager – Michael Veryard*
WARD/S AFFECTED	*All Wards*

1. Purpose of Report

At Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25th February 2019, Members requested an update on homelessness in South Bucks district. The purpose of this report is to update Members on homelessness in the South Bucks district and on the delivery of the Council's statutory homelessness services including the provision of temporary accommodation.

> **RECOMMENDATION**
>
> **That the contents of the report are noted**

2. Executive Summary

The Council has implemented the legal changes to its homelessness service required by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 (which came into effect from 3rd April 2018). The overall number of households in temporary accommodation reduced during 2018/19 with a particular reduction in the number in nightly booked accommodation. This has been secured via homelessness prevention measures and by developing additional types of temporary accommodation (e.g. private sector leasing).

3. Reasons for Recommendations

The report is for noting.

4. Content of Report

4.1 During 2017/18 a Homelessness Task and Finish Group undertook a full review of the Council's delivery of its statutory homelessness services including the provision of temporary accommodation. Recommendations and an Action Plan was agreed and implemented with a final report going to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 30th January 2018.

4.2 Following the adoption and implementation of the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group, the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 became law from 3rd April 2018. This Act introduced significant changes to the Council's statutory homelessness duties including:

(i)   A requirement that the Council must accept a homelessness application from any persons who are threatened with homelessness within 56 days (previously 28 days),

(ii)   The introduction of a new Prevention duty to assist all households who are threatened with homelessness.

(iii)   The introduction of a new Relief duty requiring the Council to work with homeless households for a minimum of 56 days to try to resolve their homelessness (including providing temporary accommodation for priority need households during this period)

(iv)   A requirement to provide all applicants with a personalised action plan.

(v)   A formal Duty to Refer requiring other statutory agencies to refer homeless clients to the Council (including social services, Job Centres, some health services and Prison and Probation).

Appendix 1 summarises the new homelessness applications process that the Council has been required to follow since 3 April 2018. The remainder of this report provides an overview of how the Council has responded to the first year of the new statutory homelessness requirements and how it has managed the delivery of temporary accommodation over this period.

SBDC Homelessness Services in 2018/19 – General Overview

4.3 During 2018/19, South Bucks District Council received a total of 107 homelessness applications which triggered either the Prevention or Relief Duty (see paragraph 4.2 above). This compares to a total of 102 homelessness applications in the preceding year, 2017/18. The change in legal duties from 3rd April 2018 means that this is not a like-for-like comparison. However, it does indicate that the overall number of homelessness applications was broadly the same in 2018/19 as it was in 2017/18.

4.4 During 2018/19, South Bucks District Council saw an overall reduction in the number of households in temporary accommodation as shown in the chart below:

Chart 1 – SBDC – Number of Households in Temporary Accommodation 18/19
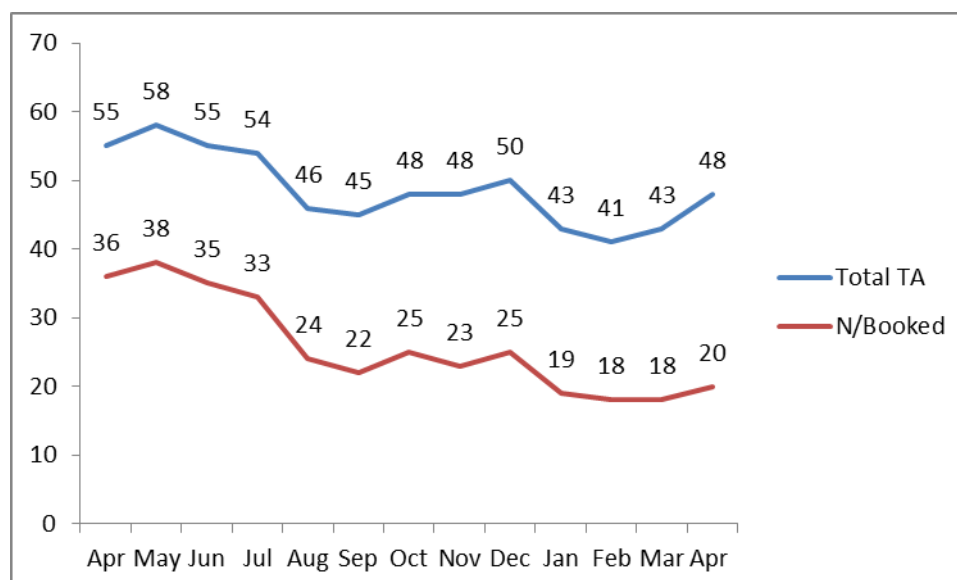
4.5 Overall, the number of households in temporary accommodation saw an annual drop of 12% at the end of the year 2018/19 (55 down to 48). However, within this total, the number of households in nightly booked temporary accommodation had dropped more significantly with a 44% reduction overall (36 down to 20). This had significant implications for the Council's budget as nightly booked accommodation generates significant cost for the Council.

4.6 By way of comparison, at the end of 2018/19, the LGA (Local Government Association) undertook a survey of all local housing authorities to assess the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act one year after it came into force. The survey recorded that 83% of authorities had seen an increase in homelessness applications and 61% had seen an increase in the use of temporary accommodation. Therefore, the work undertaken in South Bucks District Council in managing the homelessness service and the associated temporary accommodation has helped the authority to go against the national picture in 2018/19. Unlike the majority of other local housing authorities, the Council maintained homelessness applications at a broadly similar level to the previous year and managed to secure a reduction in temporary accommodation numbers.

4.7 The other main headlines from the first year of operating the Homelessness Reduction Act provisions in South Bucks District Council are below:

(i)   The development of alternative temporary accommodation options has helped to reduce the reliance on bed and breakfast and nightly booked accommodation (see further details below).

(ii)   Officers are spending more time on case work and paperwork with each client (including the production of a personalised action plan for each client, additional letters and case work administration).

(iii)   Officers are working with clients to try to prevent and relieve homelessness wherever possible. This includes negotiating with family and landlords to allow applicants to remain in their home and/or helping them to access other accommodation via Bucks Home Choice and private renting. However, factors such as high local rent levels and the cap on Local Housing Allowance (which limits the level of housing benefit for private rented sector tenants) are severely restricting the ability of clients to be able to move into private rented housing in South Bucks. This is a common issue in many local housing authorities as highlighted by the LGA survey.

(iv)   Officers have implemented and applied the new duties effectively and in accordance with the new legal requirements. There has not been any upturn in review requests or challenges. However, we may see an increase in the future as more legal challenges start to happen across the country.

(v)   The impact of the Duty to Refer from other statutory agencies has been limited so far. However, we are starting to see an increase in referrals as other agencies start to get more familiar with the process.

SBDC Homelessness Services in 2018/19 – Temporary Accommodation

4.8 Under the provisions introduced by the Homelessness Reduction Act, the Council has a duty to secure temporary accommodation when it accepts a Homelessness Relief Duty and it has reason to believe that the applicant is in priority need (e.g. household with or expecting children, applicant with significant medical issues etc.). The Relief Duty lasts for a minimum of 56 days. Therefore, the Council will normally have to provide temporary accommodation for at least 56 days before it can make a final decision on whether or not it has a duty to secure longer term accommodation for the household. If the Council accepts this longer term duty then it has to continue to provide temporary accommodation until the applicant can secure a permanent move elsewhere.

4.9 Appendix 2 includes a table showing a month by month breakdown of temporary accommodation provision during 2018/19. Further background information on each type of temporary accommodation is given below:

4.10   Bed and Breakfast/Nightly Booked Accommodation – The Council places applicants directly into this accommodation and pays a nightly rate directly to the landlord. The Council then re-charges the applicants £25.00 per night towards the cost of the accommodation (the Housing Act 1996 allows the Council to make a reasonable charge to applicants in relation to the costs that it is paying).

4.11   The nightly rate payable by the Council will vary depending on the type of accommodation and size of household. A review of applicants who were in nightly booked accommodation in March 2019 (including those who moved out during that month):

- The nightly rate being paid for a B&B (with shared facilities) ranged from £30.00 per night to £65.00 per night
- The nightly rate for self-contained nightly booked accommodation (typically used for larger families) ranged from £65.00 to £85.00 per night. Payments of £85.00 per night tend only to be made in exceptional cases with a larger family. In these cases, the focus will be to move these families on to other temporary accommodation (e.g. private sector leasing) as soon as possible.
- Overall, the average nightly rate being paid by the Council for a placement during March 2019 was £55.00 per night.
- These are gross nightly costs and do not include the £25.00 per night charge that the Council makes in turn to the applicant.
- Comparisons with the rates paid by other authorities are difficult to make as this information is not generally shared. Many authorities are looking to generally reduce their use of nightly booked accommodation in the same way as South Bucks District Council is doing. Informal discussions with other authorities over the last 12 months indicate that the rates paid by South Bucks District Council are comparable with other authorities and are lower in some cases.

The highest nightly costs are for larger self-contained family units. In reducing the number of nightly booked units overall, the Housing Options service has particularly focussed on reducing the number of households in self-contained units. This number dropped from 19 down to 8 during 2018/19 (a reduction of nearly 58%).

4.12   **Gerrards Cross Former Police Houses –** During the first 8 months of 2018/19, the Council continued to utilise 8 former Police Houses as temporary accommodation. Originally, the houses were leased by Bucks Housing Association from Thames Valley Police and the Council nominated homeless households to occupy the properties. When the Council acquired the site from Thames Valley Police, it continued to lease the houses to Bucks Housing Association for this purpose. The Council required vacant possession of the site at the beginning of December 2018 in order to allow redevelopment to commence. In the months leading up to this, the Council's Senior Housing Options Officer worked with the 8 existing occupiers, Bucks Housing Association, L&Q and other partners to ensure that all occupiers were moved on by the December 2018 deadline. As result of this work, 6 of the occupiers were moved directly into L&Q tenancies and 1 occupier moved directly into a PSL (Private Sector Leasing Scheme) property with Paradigm. The remaining occupier had to be moved into temporary nightly booked accommodation for a short time before being moved on to a L&Q tenancy in February 2019. All of the former police houses were vacated by the December 2018 deadline and the site to be handed over to the contractor as planned.

4.13   **Private Sector Leasing Scheme (PSL Scheme) –** The PSL scheme operated in partnership with Paradigm grew considerably during 2018/19 to meet a significant proportion of the Council's temporary accommodation requirements. Under the scheme, Paradigm lease properties from individual owners and then let

them to homeless applicants who are nominated by the Council. Paradigm enters into a tenancy agreement with the applicant (including rent payments). The Council is not liable for any rent payments or arrears. It pays a flat rate management fee to Paradigm. During 2018/19, the PSL scheme expanded from 1 property to 20 properties and by the end of the year was meeting 42% of the Council's overall temporary accommodation requirements.

4.14   **Bucks Housing Association Acquisitions –** The Council provided capital funding of £360,000 to support Bucks Housing Association to acquire three properties in South Bucks to be utilised as temporary accommodation for Council homelessness applicants. The acquisitions were completed during the latter part of 2018/19 and are all now being utilised as temporary accommodation. Bucks Housing Association enters into a tenancy agreement directly with the applicant (including rent payments). The Council is not liable for any rent payments or arears and does not make any ongoing payments to Bucks Housing Association for the properties.

4.15   **Other Registered Provider Accommodation –** A small number of units within the general needs housing stock owned by L&Q and Paradigm continue to be utilised as temporary accommodation. These are mainly historical cases as the registered providers have advised that they do not normally wish to let general needs stock as temporary accommodation. However, they will still consider this on a case by case basis if there are exceptional circumstances (e.g. a large family where suitable temporary accommodation may not be available from other sources).

4.16   **Bath Road (Walters Court and 801 Bath Road) –** These units are not shown in the Table as they were still in development during 2018/19. The scheme is providing a total of 14 units (12 at Walter Court and 2 at 801 Bath Road) that will provide a significant additional supply of temporary accommodation (to further reduce the reliance on B&B or other nightly booked accommodation). The units will be leased to Bucks Housing Association and, in turn, Bucks Housing Association will enter into tenancy agreements (including rent payments) directly with homeless applicants nominated by the Council. The Council will not be liable for any rent payments or arrears or any other ongoing payments to Bucks Housing Association in connection with the properties.

4.17   As shown in the above paragraphs, the Council's Housing Options service has worked throughout 2018/19 to maximise homelessness prevention and develop additional strands of temporary accommodation in order to manage demand and provide alternatives to the use of B&B and nightly booked temporary accommodation. The new units at Bath Road form one strand of this work and were originally scheduled to be completed in the latter part of 2018/19. However, the Housing Options service has not been working on the basis that these units will become available on any specific date. The service has been working to deliver a wide range of homelessness prevention and temporary accommodation options

and the Bath Road units will provide a valuable additional resource as and when they are ready to occupy.

SBDC Homelessness Services in 2018/19 – Expenditure

4.18   The reduction in the use of B&B and nightly booked temporary accommodation has helped to reduce the costs incurred by the Council on its homelessness service. The budget outturn figures for 2018/19 shows that the total net expenditure on the Council's overall homelessness budget was £237,887 against a budget of £269,970.

SBDC Homelessness Services in 2019/20 – Issues going forward

4.19   The early weeks of 2019/20 has seen a continued upturn in the number of households in temporary accommodation although the number still remains below where it was at the beginning of 2018/19. As at 14 May, the total number in temporary accommodation was as follows:

Type of Temporary Accommodation	Number (at 14/5/19)
B&B	12
Other nightly booked	6
Private Sector Leasing Scheme	25
Bucks Housing Association acquisitions	3
Other Registered Providers	5
Total in Temporary Accommodation	**51**

4.20   The above table shows that which there continues to be a slight increase in the overall demand for temporary accommodation, the Council is continuing to minimise the number of households in B&B or nightly booked accommodation (18 in total). At the time of writing, it is anticipated that both the Bath Road scheme and lettings in the forthcoming Denham development will allow some of these households to move on. Overall, the trends nationally and locally indicate that the demand for temporary accommodation is unlikely to drop significantly during 2019/20. The increased range of temporary accommodation options that were brought forward during 2018/19 and the Bath Road scheme will both help the Council in managing this demand.

4.21   As reported above, other authorities have seen an upturn in homelessness applications following the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. It is possible that we will start to see this in South Bucks as well during 2019/20 as clients and other agencies become more familiar with the new legal requirements that are now in place. The Duty to Refer may see more homeless clients being referred to the Council from other statutory agencies. We are also starting the see

the first legal challenges in other Councils relating to how the Act is being implemented and this may have a knock on effect in generating more applications depending on the legal rulings. Officers will continue to monitor this.

5. Consultation
Not applicable

6. Options *(if any)*
Not applicable.

7. Corporate Implications
Reports must include specific comments addressing the following implications;

7.1 Financial
The main report contains details of the budget out-turn for 2018/19.

7.2 Legal
This report deals with the delivery of the Council's statutory homelessness duties under Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended by the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017)

8. Links to Council Policy Objectives

This report links to the following Policy Objectives
- Delivering cost- effective, customer- focused services
- Working towards safe and healthier local communities

9. Next Steps

Officers will continue to update Members on key issues relating to the Homelessness service and the provision of temporary accommodation

Background Papers:	None, other than those referred to in this report.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Appendix 1

Summary of New Homelessness Application Process (Following Homelessness Reduction Act)

New Process for Councils (3/4/18 onwards)

Homeless within 56 days?

↓

Assessment and Action Plan

↓

Homelessness Prevention Duty

↓

Homelessness Relief Duty

↓

Does Council have main Housing Duty?

ClassificationMarking

Appendix 2 - Breakdown of Number of Temporary Accommodation Units (Snapshot – First day of month)

TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION	DESCRIPTION	Number in TA (Snapshot)												
		1/4/18	1/5/18	1/6/18	1/7/18	1/8/18	1/9/18	1/10/18	1/11/18	1/12/18	1/1/19	1/2/19	1/3/19	1/4/19
Nightly Booked (B&B)	Nightly booked and shared facilities	17	18	18	17	12	12	16	15	18	9	9	9	12
Nightly booked (S/contained)	Nightly booked and self-contained	19	20	17	16	12	10	9	8	7	10	9	9	8
GX Former Police Houses	Leased to Bucks HA	6	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	6	0	0	0	0
Private Sector Leasing Scheme	Properties leased by Paradigm	1	2	3	5	6	8	8	10	12	16	15	18	20
Paradigm Housing Stock	General needs housing being used as TA	4	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	1
L&Q Housing Stock	General needs housing being used as TA	8	7	7	6	6	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Bucks HA	Units acquired with SBDC grant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	2	3
TOTAL		55	58	55	54	46	45	48	48	50	43	41	43	48

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SUBJECT:	*Crime statistics*
RELEVANT MEMBER	*Cllr Patrick Hogan, Portfolio Holder for Healthy Communities*
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	*Martin Holt, Head of Healthy Communities*
REPORT AUTHOR	*Katie Galvin, Community Safety Manager* *Katie.galvin@chilternandsouthbucks.gov.uk 01494 732265,*
WARD/S AFFECTED	*'Not Ward specific';*

1. **Purpose of Report**
   A brief report to explain how crime statistics will be shared with the Community Safety Partnership.

   RECOMMENDATION

   1. **To note the report.**

2. **Content of Report**

2.1 At South Bucks O & S Committee on 25 February, during discussion on Service Plans, reference was made to Community Safety PIs and that crime statistics such as the number of burglaries are not readily available for Members. Previously the Local Area Commanders used to provide stats and Members felt that this information should be provided to the CSP.

2.2 It was asked that for the June meeting of O & S that a report be provided on the best way for these stats to be obtained and the best way to communicate them to Members on a regular basis.

2.3 Following consultation with Superintendent Amy Clements, a verbal update including crime statistics and current trends will be provided at each Community Safety Partnership (CSP) meeting. (The CSP meets three times a year.) The police also provide an update on issues of partnership working such as; domestic violence, safeguarding, Prevent and initiatives to deter crime and disorder.

2.4 Additionally Superintendent Amy Clements, will provide a verbal update at the bi-monthly meetings with the portfolio holder, community safety manager and head of service. These meetings also consider matters that are of local policing and community safety significance such as; the use of ANPR cameras, travellers, local policing priorities etc.

2.4 Community Safety Performance Indicators – residential burglary and violence against a person are updated quarterly on Covalent.

2.5 Crime statistics and comparisons against the most similar family group are also in the public domain. www.police.uk can be accessed by Councillors and residents and can be broken down into local neighbourhoods and specific crime categories.

3. **Consultation**

   Superintendent Amy Clements was consulted with and agrees to provide a verbal update at each CSP meeting.

4. **Corporate Implications**

   Reports must include specific comments addressing the following implications;
   4.1 Financial - none
   4.2 Legal - none

5. **Links to Council Policy Objectives**

   We will work towards safe, healthy and cohesive communities

6. **Next Steps**

   To provide a verbal update regarding crime statistics at each CSP meeting.

Background Papers:	None, other than those referred to in this report

SUBJECT	Consilio Property Ltd
RELEVANT MEMBER	Barbara Gibbs
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	Jim Burness
REPORT AUTHOR	Gill Cotterell,
WARD/S AFFECTED	N/A

1. Purpose of Report

The Business Plan for Consilio Property Ltd has been reviewed and amended for the financial year 2019/2020. The draft Plan has been approved by the Board of Consilio Property Ltd, however it must also be approved by Cabinet to meet the corporate governance requirements of the company, before it can be tabled at the Consilio Property Ltd AGM.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1.   **It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Business Plan for financial year 2019/20 as contained in the appendix in Part 2.**

2. Executive Summary

The 2018/19 Consilio Property Business Plan objectives were implemented in full with the exception of one point. This concerned the appointment of a company to provide acquisition advice and support. However, in order to obtain unbiased, independent and cohesive advice, the Board decided to recruit a dedicated experienced resource to manage the company and drive the investment programme. This resulted in the appointment of Gill Cotterell BSc MRICS on an annual contract basis in July 2019. Since then the company has become active in the property market and successfully acquired the first asset in December. This was a small Travelodge hotel in the centre of Hemel Hempstead that offers long term income with 5 yearly rental uplifts at above RPI rates, producing an initial income stream of £234,880pa. However, following a slowdown in the property investment market and the issuing of further guidance from CIPFA, it was agreed by the Board that the new Business Plan should be reviewed to take account of these conditions. The Business Plan for 2019/20 therefore sets out how future investments will contribute towards the Business Plan and service objectives of SBDC, the strategy for investment and the likely timescales for acquisitions and resultant income streams and costs. It also considers the process for liaison and reporting with the new shadow Executive of the Unitary Authority. As much of this information is of a commercially sensitive nature, the Draft Business Plan and budgets are contained in Part 2.

Reasons for Recommendations

To meet Consilio Property Ltd's corporate governance requirements, their Business Plan must be approved by SBDC Cabinet before it can be adopted at the company's AGM.

Content of Report

The Business Plan and budgets for consideration are contained in Part 2

8. **Links to Council Policy Objectives**

This recommendation links in with the Council's aim to deliver cost effective services which offer value for money and help provide a robust and sustainable Medium Term Financial Strategy which resources the Councils objectives and maximises the potential of the Councils assets through investment in property via the Public Works Loan Board.

Key objectives available here:
http://www.southbucks.gov.uk/aims-and-objectives

9. **Next Steps**

Once the CPL Business Plan for 2019/20 is approved by Cabinet, it will tabled for acceptance at the forthcoming AGM in June.

REPORT SUBJECT:	*South Bucks District Council Performance Report End of Year 2018-19*
REPORT OF:	*Leader of the Council – Councillor Nick Naylor*
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	*Chief Executive – Bob Smith*
REPORT AUTHOR	*Ani Sultan (01494 586 800)*
WARD(S) AFFECTED	*Report applies to whole district*

1. Purpose of Report

This report outlines the annual performance of Council services against pre-agreed performance indicators and service objectives for the end of year, 2018-19.

> **RECOMMENDATION**
> Cabinet is asked to note the performance reports.

2. Executive Summary

Overview of **End of Year 2018-19** performance indicators (PIs) against targets across the Council:

Portfolio	No of PIs	PI on target 🟩	PI slightly below target 🟧	PI off target 🟥	Not reported this quarter/ not used	Awaiting data
Leader's	3	3	0	0	0	0
Resources	4	4	0	0	0	0
Healthy communities	9	7	0	2	0	0
Planning & Economic development	15	14	0	0	1	0
Environment	4	3	0	0	0	1
Customer & Business Support	9	5	3	0	1	0
Total PIs	44	36	3	2	2	1

3. Reasons for Recommendations

3.1. This report details factual performance against pre-agreed targets.

3.2. Management Team, Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Committee receive regular updates detailing progress towards service plan objectives, performance targets and strategic risks, in line with our Performance and Improvement Framework.

3.3. Three detailed performance tables accompany this report:

- **Appendix A – Priority PIs End of Year 2018-19**
- **Appendix B – Corporate PIs End of Year 2018-19**
- **Appendix C – Data Only PIs End of Year 2018-19**
- **Appendix D – Annual Report 2018-19**

4. Key points to note:

4.1. There is one Environment PI marked as awaiting data - Cumulative CO_2 reduction from local authority operations from base year of 2008/09 (annual) – as this takes some months for the data to come through.

4.2. All priority PIs are on target.

    4.2.1. **Leaders**: All PIs within the Leader's portfolio are on target.

    4.2.2. **Resources**: All PIs for this portfolio are on target.

    4.2.3. **Healthy Communities:** CdHS4 - Number of private sector dwellings vacant for more than 6 months and returned to occupation following local authority intervention is under the target of 15 at 0. This is due to there being no active intervention work undertaken by Housing Team during 2018/19 due to other workload demands and limited identification of suitable empty homes. Therefore, no empty homes are recorded as being returned to use as direct result of Council intervention. Complaints and enforcement work for empty homes causing nuisance or health concerns are dealt with on case by case basis. Annual Capacity Grid review and cleansing of Council Tax database is identifying long term empty homes that have been returned to use but not reported to the Council. This ensures that the Council provides an accurate empty homes total to inform the New Homes Bonus calculation.

    4.2.4. **Planning & Economic Development:** All PIs for this portfolio are on target.

    4.2.5. **Environment:** All PIs for this portfolio are on target.

    4.2.6. **Customer & Business Support** JtBS1 availability of ICT systems to staff from 8am to 6pm is slightly under target of 99.5% at 96.5% for quarter 4, as is JtBS2, percentage of calls to ICT helpdesk resolved within agreed timescales (by period) - under the target of 95% at 92.3%. Both are due to problems with staff recruitment and retention within Business Support's Infrastructure Team, the section has been running at a reduced capacity throughout the year. Members of the team have also been spending time supporting projects relating to the ICT Strategy and therefore diverted from dealing with support calls. These two factors have contributed to missing both yearly targets.

5. Consultation

Not applicable.

6. Options

Not applicable.

7. Corporate Implications

    7.1 Financial - Performance Management assists in identifying value for money.

    7.2 Legal – None specific to this report.

    7.3 Crime and Disorder, Environmental Issues, ICT, Partnership, Procurement, Social Inclusion, Sustainability – reports on aspects of performance in these areas.

8. **Links to Council Policy Objectives**

Performance management helps to ensure that performance targets set through the service planning process are met, and that any dips in performance are identified and resolved in a timely manner.

This report links to all three of the Council's objectives, listed below:

Objective 1 - Efficient and effective customer focused services

Objective 2 - Safe, healthy and cohesive communities

Objective 3 - Conserve the environment and promote sustainability

9. **Next Step**

Once approved, this report and appendices will be published on the website.

Background Papers:	N/A

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Appendix A - Priority PIs 2018-19 - SBDC

Code	Title	Target 2017/18 (YTD)	2017/18 Value	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	2018/19	Traffic Light	Target 2018/19	Comments
Leader's portfolio																			
JtHR1	Working days lost due to sickness absence	10	10.88	5.8	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.5	6.7	7.0	7.0	7.1	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	☑	10	196.50 working days lost for March + 2,066.50 days lost (April - February) = 2,263 days lost. 2,263 / 301.33 (average FTE figure) = 7.51 average working days lost to sickness absence (cumulative). These figures relate to absence days from 39 employees
JtHR12	Working days lost due to short term sickness absence (up to 20 working days)	5	4.73	2.8	2.7	2.4	2.1	2.2	2.2	2.3	2.3	2.5	2.8	2.8	2.9	2.9	☑	5	87.50 working days lost for March + 775.50 days lost (April - February) = 863 days lost. 863 / 301.33 (average FTE figure) = 2.86 average working days lost to short term sickness absence (cumulative). The figures related to absence from 32 employees
JtHR13	Working days lost due to long term sickness absence (more than 20 working days)	5	6.15	3.0	3.6	3.9	4.1	4.3	4.5	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	☑	5	109 working days lost for March + 1,291 days lost (April - February) = 1,400 days lost. 1,400 / 301.33 (average FTE figure) = 4.65 average working days lost to long term sickness absence (cumulative). This absence relates to 7 employees
Resources																			
SbRB1	Speed of processing - new HB/CTB claims (cumulative)	19	16.68	17.9	17.7	17.9	18.1	18.0	17.6	17.3	17.5	17.5	17.7	17.6	17.7	17.7	☑	18	Target achieved.
SbRB2	Speed of processing - changes of circumstances for HB/CTB claims (cumulative)	8	6.28	6.2	6.1	6.0	6.3	6.5	6.6	6.7	7.0	7.1	7.1	7.2	7.0	7.0	☑	8	Target achieved.
SbRB3	Percentage of Council Tax collected (cumulative)	98%	98%	11.4%	20.8%	30.0%	39.2%	48.1%	57.2%	NA	75.6%	84.7%	94.8%	96.9%	97.7%	97.7%	☑	98.0%	Target achieved.
SbRB4	Percentage of non-domestic rates collected (cumulative)	98.8%	96.4%	12.2%	21.1%	30.1%	39.2%	48.1%	56.6%	NA	75.0%	84.2%	92.0%	95.2%	98.8%	98.8%	☑	98.8%	Target achieved.
Healthy Communities																			
SbHS1	Number of applicants with/expecting children who have been in B & B accommodation for longer than 6 weeks (snapshot figure at end of month)	18	3	3	2	2	3	2	3	1	2	2	2	1	0	0	☑	18	No applicants with/expecting children had been in B&B for longer than 6 weeks as at the end of 2018/19
SbHS7	Number of households living in temporary accommodation (snapshot at the end of the month)	68	57	60	57	55	46	45	48	48	50	43	41	43	47	47	☑	68	Total comprises (i) 12 in B&B (ii) 19 PSL scheme (iii) 5 in Registered Provider general needs stock (iv) 8 in self-contained nightly booked TA and (v) 3 in Bucks HA acquired units
Planning and Economic Development																			

Code	Title	Target 2017/18 (YTD)	2017/18 Value	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	2018/19	Traffic Light	Target 2018/19	Comments
SbPED9	Processing of planning applications: major applications processed within 13 weeks (cumulative)	90%	82.6%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	75.0%	87.5%	88.9%	90.9%	89.5%	90.9%	91.7%	92.3%	93.6%	93.6%	☑	90%	29 of 31 determined within target - cumulative figure\n5 of 5 determined within target - this month's figure
SbPED10	Processing of planning applications: minor applications processed within 8 weeks (cumulative)	85%	84.4%	90.9%	91.2%	93.7%	89.9%	90.3%	91.1%	91.0%	90.2%	90.9%	91.8%	92.3%	92.8%	92.8%	☑	85%	269 of 290 determined within target - cumulative figure\n17 of 17 determined within target - this month's figure
SbPED11	Processing of planning applications: other applications processed within 8 weeks (cumulative)	85%	86.8%	92.8%	94.8%	93.6%	93.6%	93.7%	94.0%	93.2%	92.9%	93.1%	93.3%	93.2%	93.2%	93.2%	☑	85%	689 of 739 determined within target - cumulative figure\n59 of 64 determined within target - this month's figure
Environment																		
SbWR2	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (cumulative)	55%	53.7%	52.4%	55.3%	58.2%	55.8%	53.0%	55.0%	54.9%	54.9%	54.0%	54.0%	53.7%	53.4%	53.5%	☑	53%	On target but provisional figure as waiting on BCC and some charity tonnages.

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AppendixA

Appendix B - Corporate PIs 2018-19 - SBDC

Code	Title	Target 2017/18 (YTD)	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	2018/19	Traffic Light	Target 2018/19	Comments
Leader's Portfolio																		
Customer and Business Support																		
JtBS1 (C)	Availability of ICT systems to staff from 8am to 6pm (by period)	99.5%			99.8%			97.3%			94.5%			96.5%	98.1%	▣	99.5%	Due to problems with staff recruitment and retention within Business Support's Infrastructure Team, the section has been running at a reduced capacity throughout the year. Members of the team have also been spending time supporting projects relating to the ICT Strategy and therefore diverted from dealing with support calls. These two factors have contributed to missing both yearly targets.
JtBS2 (C)	Percentage of calls to ICT helpdesk resolved within agreed timescales (by period)	95%			93.5%			88.2%			91.5%			92.3%	91.1%	▣	95%	Due to problems with staff recruitment and retention within Business Support's Infrastructure Team, the section has been running at a reduced capacity throughout the year. Members of the team have also been spending time supporting projects relating to the ICT Strategy and therefore diverted from dealing with support calls. These two factors have contributed to missing both yearly targets.
SbBS3	Percentage of responses to FOI requests sent within 20 working days (by month)	90%	98.5%	98.4%	97.6%	97.8%	97.2%	100%	96%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	98.8%	☑	90%	Target achieved.
SbCS1	Number of complaints received (cumulative, quarterly)	80			9			20			21			86	86	▣	80	Total number of complaints 2019/19 86 down from 123 last year Qtr 3 total 34: January 19/February 2/March 13
SbCS2	New measure for compliments - t.b.a.	TBA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	TBA	Placeholder for PI for when Customer Experience Strategy is implemented
JtLD1 (C)	Client satisfaction with the shared service. Percentage satisfied or very satisfied.	98%						100%						100%	100%	☑	98%	Target achieved.
SbLD1	Percentage of canvass forms returned	94%												97%	97%	☑	94%	Target achieved.
SbLD2	Standard searches carried out within 5 working days (cumulative)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	☑	100%	Target achieved.
SbLD3	Standard searches carried out within 10 working days (cumulative)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	☑	100%	Target achieved.
Healthy communities																		
SbCL1a	Customer satisfaction rating at the Beacon Centre.	83%												86%		☑	84%	Target achieved. Please contact Leisure team for a thorough breakdown.
SbCL1b	Customer satisfaction rating at the Evreham Centre.	80%												65%		☒	82%	Please contact leisure team for a thorough breakdown.
JtLI2 (C)	Percentages of licences received and issued/renewed within statutory or policy deadlines (cumulative).	97%			98.6%			97.7%			99.3%			99.3%	99.3%	☑	97.0%	Target achieved.
SbEH1	Percentage of food hygiene inspections of category A – D food businesses achieved against the inspections due by quarter	91%			80.4%			83.5%			97%			100%	100%	☑	91%	Target achieved.
SbHS2	Number of affordable homes delivered by (i) new build (ii) vacancies generated by local authority scheme (iii) acquisition of existing properties for social housing (cumulative)	22			13			14			76			77	77	☑	22 5.5/qtr	Total comprises (i) 12 x Taplow new build properties (Housing Solutions), 60 new build flats on Taplow Mill site (Paradigm) and 1 x L&Q new build bungalow (ii) 0 and (iii) 1 x acquisition by L&Q and 3 acquisitions by Bucks HA (for use as TA)
SbHS3	Average Length of stay in B & B temporary accommodation for all households (snapshot in weeks at end of period)	22			12			28			18			10	18	☑	22	During the quarter 5 x B&B placements ended and they had a combined stay of 360 nights (average stay 10 weeks per household) Overall average stay in B&B for households who left placements during 2018/19 was 18 weeks

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AppendixB

Code	Title	Target 2017/18 (YTD)	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	2018/19	Traffic Light	Target 2018/19	Comments
SbHS4	Number of private sector dwellings vacant for more than 6 months and returned to occupation following local authority intervention	15												0	0	☒	15	No active intervention work undertaken by Housing Team during 2018/19 due to other workload demands and limited identification of suitable empty homes. Therefore, no empty homes are recorded as being returned to use as direct result of Council intervention. Complaints and enforcement work for empty homes causing nuisance or health concerns is dealt with on case by case basis. Annual Capacity Grid review and cleansing of Council Tax database is identifying long term empty homes that have been returned to use but not reported to the Council. This ensures that the Council provides an accurate empty homes total to inform the New Homes Bonus calculation.
Planning and Economic Development																		
JtBC1 (C)	Applications checked within 10 working days (cumulative)	92%	100%	98.4%	98.2%	97.3%	97.9%	86.0%	92.1%	96.1%	98.4%	96.6%	97.8%	99.1%	99.1%	☑	92%	Target achieved.
JtBC2 (C)	Customer satisfaction with the building control service. (cumulative)	92%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	☑	92%	Target achieved.
SbPED1	Percentage of planning applicants who are satisfied or very satisfied with the planning service	80%			NA			NA			NA			NA	NA	NA	85%	The service is currenlty reviewing how to undertake these surveys.
SbPED2	Planning appeals allowed (cumulative)	35%			33.3%			25%			19.4%			19.5%	19.5%	☑	35%	8 of 41 allowed or part allowed appeals (cumulative total) Note: How this indicator is calculated has been revised. This includes, all appeal types. Appeals against -Refusal of planning permission, -Imposition of conditions -Non-determination -Enforcement notices All applications that have development types that are reported to the Government on the PS2 return and PS1, questions 6 and 7 and all appeals against enforcement
SbPED43	2019 Majors quality of planning decisions - special measures 2 year & 9 month assessment period ending Dec 2018 (cumulative monthly)	9.99%	7.9%	7.9%	7.9%	7.9%	7.9%	7.9%	7.9%	10.5%	10.5%					☑	9.99%	4 of 38 Application allowed/part allowed on appeal: Major Decision period: Apr 2016 – Mar 2018 Appeal period: Apr 2016 – Dec 2018 QUALITY Target: less than 10%
SbPED44	2019 Non-Majors quality of planning decisions - special measures 2 year & 9 month assessment period ending Dec 2018 (cumulative monthly)	9.99%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%					☑	9.99%	30 of 2499 Application allowed/part allowed on appeal: Non-Major Decision period: Apr 2016 – Mar 2018 Appeal period: Apr 2016 – Dec 2018 QUALITY Target: less than 10%
SbPED45	2020 Majors speed of planning decisions – special measures 2 year assessment period ending Sep 19 (cumulative, monthly)	60.00%	93.3%	93.3%	93.3%	88.9%	90.9%	91.3%	92%	90.9%	91.7%	92.1%	92.5%	93.3%	NA	☑	60.00%	33 of 36 speed Applications determined: Major Decision period: Oct 2017 - Sep 2019 SPEED Target: 60% or more
SbPED46	2020 Non-Majors speed of planning decisions – special measures 2 year assessment ending September 2019 (cumulative, monthly)	70.00%	80.6%	82.7%	83.8%	84.3%	85.4%	86.1%	86.2%	86.5%	87.0%	87.6%	87.9%	88.3%	NA	☑	70.00%	1445 of 1637 Applications determined: Non-Major Decision period: Oct 2017 - Sep 2019 SPEED Target: 70% or more
SbPED47	2020 Majors quality of planning decisions – special measures 2 year and 9 month assessment period ending December 2019 (cumulative, monthly)	9.99%				7.4%	6.5%	6.3%	5.88%	7.14%	6.67%	6.67%	6.67%	6.67%	NA	☑	9.99%	3 of 45 Application allowed/part allowed on appeal: Major Decision period: Apr 2017 – Mar 2019 Appeal period: Apr 2017 – Dec 2019 QUALITY Target: less than 10%
SbPED48	2020 Non-Majors quality of planning decisions – special measures 2 year and 9 month assessment period ending December 2019 (cumulative, monthly)	9.99%	0.9%	0.8%	0.7%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%	0.65%	0.67%	0.12%	0.69%	0.69%	0.69%	NA	☑	9.99%	13 of 2021 Application allowed/part allowed on appeal: Non-Major Decision period: Apr 2017 – Mar 2019 Appeal period: Apr 2017 – Dec 2019 QUALITY Target: less than 10%

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AppendixB

Code	Title	Target 2017/18 (YTD)	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	2018/19	Traffic Light	Target 2018/19	Comments
SbPED49	2021 Majors speed of planning decisions - special measures 2 year assessment period ending Sep 2020 (cumulative monthly)	60%							100%	90%	92.3%	93.3%	94.1%	95.5%	NA	☑	60%	21 of 22 speed Applications determined: Major Decision period: Oct 2018 - Sep 2020 SPEED Target: 60% or more
SbPED50	2021 Non-Majors speed of planning decisions - special measures 2 year assessment period ending Sep 2020 (cumulative monthly)	70%							87.8%	88.6%	90.8%	92.4%	92.7%	93.0%	NA	☑	70%	476 of 512 speed Applications determined: Non-Major Decision period: Oct 2018 - Sep 2020 SPEED Target: 70% or more
Environment																		
SbWR1	Number of household collections missed per month (calculated by P&C team on weekly basis)	100	129	100	135	93	123	92	89	75	86	83	49	81	Average 95/ month	☑	100	Target achieved.
SbWR4	No of missed assisted collections (monthly)	NEW PI	47	26	30	30	40	36	32	14	18	18.00	16.00	25.00	Average 28/ month	☑	35	Target achieved.
SbSE1	Cumulative CO2 reduction from local authority operations from base year of 2008/09	NEW PI												NA	NA	NA	12%	Data not yet available.

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Appendix C - Data Only PIs - SBDC

Code	Title	Target 2017/18 (YTD)	Apr-18	May-18	Jun-18	Jul-18	Aug-18	Sep-18	Oct-18	Nov-18	Dec-18	Jan-19	Feb-19	Mar-19	2018/19	Comments
Leader's Portfolio																
SbCP1 (C)	Number of unique visitors to the main website (monthly by period and annual)	Data Only	84463	82821	71933	73278	73163	68439	71852	76588	73024	95660	78292	114562	80340	
JtHR2 (C)	Voluntary leavers as a % of workforce (extrapolated for the year)	16%			21.9%			17.6%			15.7%			15.6%	Average 17.7%	10 leavers in quarter three plus 29 for quarters 1 & 2 = 39 leavers for Qs 1, 2 & 3. 39 / 3 x 4 = 52 projected for the year 52 / 332.00 average headcount * 100 = 15.66%. This information is taken from reports run on iTrent.
Healthy Communities																
SbCmSf1 (C)	Percentage reduction in burglaries from dwelling, rolling year on year (quarterly)	Data Only			15.0%			-10.6%			-26.2%			-4.4%	Average -6.6%	Burglary dwelling offences increased by 4.4% over the past year in South Bucks District. This rose from 272 to 284 offences.
SbCmSf2 (C)	Percentage reduction in violent offences against a person, year on year (quarterly)	Data Only			-79.4%			-51.3%			-44.9%			-36%	Average -52.8%	Violence against a person offences increased this year. 1,198 compared to 827 the previous year.
SbCL3a (C)	Total attendance at Evreham Centre (quarterly)				12,906			11,222			8,473			15,275	Average 11969 / quarter	
SbCL3b (C)	Total attendance at Beacon Centre				36,893			32,137			31,454			38,098	Average 34646 / quarter	
Planning and Economic Development																
JtENF1(C)	Number of new enforcement cases received (monthly)	NEW PI	23	30	25	25	40	32	49	35	29	37	32	79	436 Average 36	
JtENF2 (C)	Number of closed cases (monthly)	NEW PI	5	215	45	22	60	20	37	12	15	26	25	43	525 Average 44	
JtENF3 (C)	Number of PCNs (or S330s) issued (monthly)	NEW PI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	Dependent on number of breaches.
JtENF4 (C)	Number of notices served (monthly)	NEW PI	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	4	7	Dependent on number of types of cases, compliance and amicable negotiation.

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South Bucks District Council
Annual Report 2018 / 2019

SOUTH BUCKS District Council

Provide best value for money services by listening to our customers to ensure the provision of excellent services across all areas of the Councils
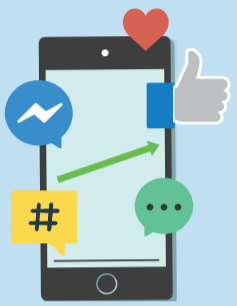
Approximately 10% increase in number of social media followers and increased engagement with residents.

Processes have been streamlined, making planning services more efficient and consistent.

Institute of Revenues Rating & Valuation (IRRV) Awards

Won Revenues Team of the Year (District Authority) 2018.

Shortlisted as finalist in IRRV Excellence in Partnership award 2018.

Implemented an electronic local land charges system for South Bucks District Council.

Received approval from Joint Committee for the Customer Experience Programme.

Began implementation of phase one of the Customer Experience Programme.

Commenced delivery of face-to-face service for South Bucks Revenues following transfer of service in-house.

The 2018/19 budget incorporated **approximately £300,000** of savings and budget reductions.

Work towards safer, healthier and more cohesive communities by improving community safety and promoting and supporting local communities

SCAMS

Launched Op Gauntlet (in partnership with Thames Valley Police, Trading Standards and NatWest to raise awareness of phone scams and held regular awareness events.

over 70 local businesses attended the Annual Business Meeting.

Supported over 60+ community groups

Community Lottery established and currently supporting. **50 local organisations**

Successful delivery of the community engagement plan that has attracted **over 5,000** throughput in hard to reach and socially disadvantaged localities.

New temporary accommodation initiative at former Bath Road depot site to reduce reliance on B&B.

Plans progressed for re-development Gerrards Cross Police Station site. Planning permission secured and work strated.

Strive to conserve the environment, whilst also promoting sustainable economic growth

Recycling rates achieved in South Bucks. **58.36%**
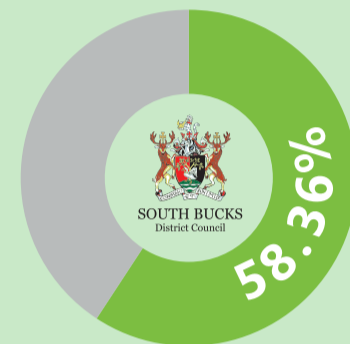
29.97% Number of residents who subscribed to chargeable garden waste collections by October 2018.

50% increase in food waste collected between January 2017 and January 2018.

Completed 100% of environmental permitted industry inspections.

Worked with HS2 joint venture companies to manage and minimise impacts from construction and future operation of a new railway.
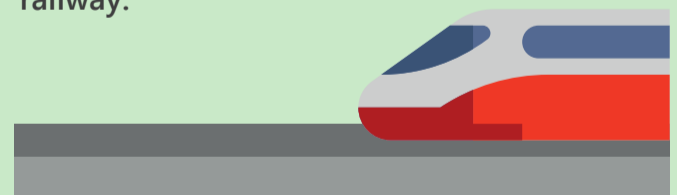
CROSSRAIL Council engagement on Cross Rail (Elizabeth Line) and smart motorway programmes.

Part of the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group and working positively with Heathrow Airport Limited to engage in discussions concerning their proposal for a third runway and the Western Rail Link.

Prepared the Local Plan for consultation.

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SUBJECT:	*New Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny*
REPORT OF:	*Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairman – Councillor Bradford*
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER	*Mat Bloxham – Democratic and Electoral Services Manager*
REPORT AUTHOR	*Clare Gray – clare.gray@chilternandsouthbucks.gov.uk*
WARD/S AFFECTED	*All*

1. Purpose of Report

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has produced statutory guidance on overview and scrutiny in local authorities which aims to increase understanding in the purpose of scrutiny, what effective scrutiny looks like, how to conduct it and the benefits it can bring. Members are asked to note the new guidance which will need to be taken into account when designing the overview and scrutiny arrangements for the new unitary District Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Guidance be noted.

2. Content of Report

The new guidance contains a number of policies and practices authorities should consider when deciding how to carry out their overview and scrutiny functions. As it has the status of statutory guidance Councils must have regard to it and should follow it unless there is a good reason not to do so in a particular case. The key points in the guidance are summarised below.

Organisational culture

2.1 The guidance emphasises that prevailing organisational culture determines whether the scrutiny function succeeds or fails. Therefore the guidance recommends that members and officers should recognise and appreciate the importance and legitimacy that the scrutiny function is given by the law and to take steps to ensure scrutiny has a clear role and focus within the organisation. There should be early and regular engagement between the executive and scrutiny, especially with regard to the work programme but, the executive should not try to exercise control over the work of the scrutiny committee. On contentious issues the guidance refers to the importance of the executive and scrutiny working together to manage any disagreement and recommends that a framework could be developed to address this through an executive-scrutiny protocol. Call in should not be used as a party-political tool and with any scrutiny work members should be supported in having an independent mind-set.

2.2 The guidance states that scrutiny functions should be provided with the necessary support and staff should also be given the necessary access to information in order to facilitate discussions internally and externally, including providing impartial advice to scrutiny members. In addition Councils should ensure members and officers are made aware of the role the scrutiny committee plays in the organisation and its value and outcomes that can be delivered. Scrutiny should decide when it would be appropriate to submit reports for wider debate e.g

submitting reports to Council rather than Cabinet and also to ensure that the work of the scrutiny committee is publicised to raise its profile in the wider community.

Resourcing

2.3 The guidance notes that the resource an authority allocates to the scrutiny function plays a pivotal role in determining how successful that function is and the value it can add to the work of the authority. Effective resourcing of scrutiny has been shown to add value to Councils, including their ability to meet the needs of local people and helping policy formulation. The guidance provides further detail on officer resource models.

Selecting Committee Members

2.4 The guidance recommends that scrutiny committees should be made up of members who have the necessary skills and commitment and ability to act. The guidance emphasises that the committee chairman plays a leadership role as they are largely responsible for establishing its profile, influence and ways of working and they should guard the committee's independence. One suggestion for Councils is to consider selecting the chairman by secret ballot. The importance of ongoing training is also seen as key as well as using co-option and outside expertise.

Power to access information

2.5 When considering what information scrutiny needs, scrutiny members and the executive should be reminded of the legal rights that committees and their individual members have, as well as their need to receive timely and accurate information to carry out their duties effectively. When asking external organisations for information it is important that the officer explains the purpose of scrutiny and looks at how to encourage compliance with the request and the best person to approach.

Planning work

2.6 The guidance emphasises that effective scrutiny should have a defined impact on the ground with the committee making recommendations that will make a tangible difference to the work of the authority. Any inquiry work should be scoped out to ensure that the right topics are addressed in the right way and at the right time and to ensure that the right approach is taken to gathering evidence from the public, authority's partners and the executive. Key information includes performance, finance and risk, corporate complaints, business cases and options appraisals and other reports and recommendations. In terms of identifying topics the guidance suggests these could be shortlisted according to the benefits that scrutiny would bring to that particular area. Topics could be scrutinised as a single item, at a single meeting, at a task and finish group, or by establishing a standing panel.

Evidence Sessions

2.7 Evidence sessions are referred to as a key way in which scrutiny committees inform their work and the guidance provides information on how to plan and to develop recommendations, which should be evidence based and SMART.

3. **Corporate Implications**

    Having an effective scrutiny function contributes to the corporate aims and objectives of all Councils by identifying improvements to service areas.

4. **Links to Council Policy Objectives**
    As above

5. **Next Step**

    Members are asked to note the report and consider any actions arising. The guidance will
     inform future scrutiny arrangements for the new unitary District Council.

Background Papers:	None other than referred to in the report

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Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

Statutory Guidance on Overview and Scrutiny in Local and Combined Authorities

OGL

Contents

3

Ministerial Foreword

The role that overview and scrutiny can play in holding an authority's decision-makers to account makes it fundamentally important to the successful functioning of local democracy. Effective scrutiny helps secure the efficient delivery of public services and drives improvements within the authority itself. Conversely, poor scrutiny can be indicative of wider governance, leadership and service failure.

It is vital that councils and combined authorities know the purpose of scrutiny, what effective scrutiny looks like, how to conduct it and the benefits it can bring. This guidance aims to increase understanding in all four areas.

In writing this guidance, my department has taken close note of the House of Commons Select Committee report of December 2017, as well as the written and oral evidence supplied to that Committee. We have also consulted individuals and organisations with practical involvement in conducting, researching and supporting scrutiny.

It is clear from speaking to these practitioners that local and combined authorities with effective overview and scrutiny arrangements in place share certain key traits, the most important being a strong organisational culture. Authorities who welcome challenge and recognise the value scrutiny can bring reap the benefits. But this depends on strong commitment from the top - from senior members as well as senior officials.

Crucially, this guidance recognises that authorities have democratic mandates and are ultimately accountable to their electorates, and that authorities themselves are best-placed to know which scrutiny arrangements are most appropriate for their own individual circumstances.

I would, however, strongly urge all councils to cast a critical eye over their existing arrangements and, above all, ensure they embed a culture that allows overview and scrutiny to flourish.

Rishi Sunak MP
Minister for Local Government

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About this Guidance

Who the guidance is for
This document is aimed at local authorities and combined authorities in England to help them carry out their overview and scrutiny functions effectively. In particular, it provides advice for senior leaders, members of overview and scrutiny committees, and support officers.

Aim of the guidance
This guidance seeks to ensure local authorities and combined authorities are aware of the purpose of overview and scrutiny, what effective scrutiny looks like, how to conduct it effectively and the benefits it can bring.

As such, it includes a number of policies and practices authorities should adopt or should consider adopting when deciding how to carry out their overview and scrutiny functions.

The guidance recognises that authorities approach scrutiny in different ways and have different processes and procedures in place, and that what might work well for one authority might not work well in another.

The hypothetical scenarios contained in the annexes to this guidance have been included for illustrative purposes, and are intended to provoke thought and discussion rather than serve as a 'best' way to approach the relevant issues.

While the guidance sets out some of the key legal requirements, it does not seek to replicate legislation.

Status of the guidance
This is statutory guidance from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Local authorities and combined authorities must have regard to it when exercising their functions. The phrase 'must have regard', when used in this context, does not mean that the sections of statutory guidance have to be followed in every detail, but that they should be followed unless there is a good reason not to in a particular case.

Not every authority is required to appoint a scrutiny committee. This guidance applies to those authorities who have such a committee in place, whether they are required to or not.

This guidance has been issued under section 9Q of the Local Government Act 2000 and under paragraph 2(9) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009, which requires authorities to have regard to this guidance. In addition, authorities may have regard to other material they might choose to consider, including that issued by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, when exercising their overview and scrutiny functions.

Terminology
Unless 'overview' is specifically mentioned, the term 'scrutiny' refers to both overview and scrutiny.[1]

Where the term 'authority' is used, it refers to both local authorities and combined authorities.

Where the term 'scrutiny committee' is used, it refers to an overview and scrutiny committee and any of its sub-committees. As the legislation refers throughout to powers conferred on scrutiny committees, that is the wording used in this guidance. However, the guidance should be seen as applying equally to work undertaken in informal task and finish groups, commissioned by formal committees.

Where the term 'executive' is used, it refers to executive members.

For combined authorities, references to the 'executive' or 'cabinet' should be interpreted as relating to the mayor (where applicable) and all the authority members.

For authorities operating committee rather than executive arrangements, references to the executive or Cabinet should be interpreted as relating to councillors in leadership positions.

Expiry or review date
This guidance will be kept under review and updated as necessary.

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[1] A distinction is often drawn between 'overview' which focuses on the development of policy, and 'scrutiny' which looks at decisions that have been made or are about to be made to ensure they are fit for purpose.

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1. Introduction and Context

1. Overview and scrutiny committees were introduced in 2000 as part of new executive governance arrangements to ensure that members of an authority who were not part of the executive could hold the executive to account for the decisions and actions that affect their communities.

2. Overview and scrutiny committees have statutory powers[2] to scrutinise decisions the executive is planning to take, those it plans to implement, and those that have already been taken/implemented. Recommendations following scrutiny enable improvements to be made to policies and how they are implemented. Overview and scrutiny committees can also play a valuable role in developing policy.

   > Effective overview and scrutiny should:
   > - Provide constructive 'critical friend' challenge;
   > - Amplify the voices and concerns of the public;
   > - Be led by independent people who take responsibility for their role; and
   > - Drive improvement in public services.

3. The requirement for local authorities in England to establish overview and scrutiny committees is set out in sections 9F to 9FI of the Local Government Act 2000 as amended by the Localism Act 2011.

4. The Localism Act 2011 amended the Local Government Act 2000 to allow councils to revert to a non-executive form of governance - the 'committee system'. Councils who adopt the committee system are not required to have overview and scrutiny but may do so if they wish. The legislation has been strengthened and updated since 2000, most recently to reflect new governance arrangements with combined authorities. Requirements for combined authorities are set out in Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

5. Current overview and scrutiny legislation recognises that authorities are democratically-elected bodies who are best-placed to determine which overview and scrutiny arrangements best suit their own individual needs, and so gives them a great degree of flexibility to decide which arrangements to adopt.

6. In producing this guidance, the Government fully recognises both authorities' democratic mandate and that the nature of local government has changed in recent years, with, for example, the creation of combined authorities, and councils increasingly delivering key services in partnership with other organisations or outsourcing them entirely.

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[2] Section 9F of the Local Government Act 2000; paragraph 1 of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

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2. Culture

7. The prevailing organisational culture, behaviours and attitudes of an authority will largely determine whether its scrutiny function succeeds or fails.

8. While everyone in an authority can play a role in creating an environment conducive to effective scrutiny, it is important that this is led and owned by members, given their role in setting and maintaining the culture of an authority.

9. Creating a strong organisational culture supports scrutiny work that can add real value by, for example, improving policy-making and the efficient delivery of public services. In contrast, low levels of support for and engagement with the scrutiny function often lead to poor quality and ill-focused work that serves to reinforce the perception that it is of little worth or relevance.

10. Members and senior officers should note that the performance of the scrutiny function is not just of interest to the authority itself. Its effectiveness, or lack thereof, is often considered by external bodies such as regulators and inspectors, and highlighted in public reports, including best value inspection reports. Failures in scrutiny can therefore help to create a negative public image of the work of an authority as a whole.

How to establish a strong organisational culture

11. Authorities can establish a strong organisational culture by:

    a) **<u>Recognising scrutiny's legal and democratic legitimacy</u>** – all members and officers should recognise and appreciate the importance and legitimacy the scrutiny function is afforded by the law. It was created to act as a check and balance on the executive and is a statutory requirement for <u>all</u> authorities operating executive arrangements and for combined authorities.

        Councillors have a unique legitimacy derived from their being democratically elected. The insights that they can bring by having this close connection to local people are part of what gives scrutiny its value.

    b) **<u>Identifying a clear role and focus</u>** – authorities should take steps to ensure scrutiny has a clear role and focus within the organisation, i.e. a niche within which it can clearly demonstrate it adds value. Therefore, prioritisation is necessary to ensure the scrutiny function concentrates on delivering work that is of genuine value and relevance to the work of the wider authority – this is one of the most challenging parts of scrutiny, and a critical element to get right if it is to be recognised as a strategic function of the authority (see chapter 6).

        Authorities should ensure a clear division of responsibilities between the scrutiny function and the audit function. While it is appropriate for scrutiny to pay due regard to the authority's financial position, this will need to happen in the context of the formal audit role. The authority's section 151 officer should advise scrutiny on how to manage this dynamic.

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While scrutiny has no role in the investigation or oversight of the authority's whistleblowing arrangements, the findings of independent whistleblowing investigations might be of interest to scrutiny committees as they consider their wider implications. Members should always follow the authority's constitution and associated Monitoring Officer directions on the matter. Further guidance on whistleblowing can be found at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/415175/bis-15-200-whistleblowing-guidance-for-employers-and-code-of-practice.pdf.

c) **Ensuring early and regular engagement between the executive and scrutiny** – authorities should ensure early and regular discussion takes place between scrutiny and the executive, especially regarding the latter's future work programme. Authorities should, though, be mindful of their distinct roles:

> In particular:
>
> - The executive should not try to exercise control over the work of the scrutiny committee. This could be direct, e.g. by purporting to 'order' scrutiny to look at, or not look at, certain issues, or indirect, e.g. through the use of the whip or as a tool of political patronage, and the committee itself should remember its statutory purpose when carrying out its work. All members and officers should consider the role the scrutiny committee plays to be that of a 'critical friend' not a de facto 'opposition'. Scrutiny chairs have a particular role to play in establishing the profile and nature of their committee (see chapter 4); and
>
> - The chair of the scrutiny committee should determine the nature and extent of an executive member's participation in a scrutiny committee meeting, and in any informal scrutiny task group meeting.

d) **Managing disagreement** – effective scrutiny involves looking at issues that can be politically contentious. It is therefore inevitable that, at times, an executive will disagree with the findings or recommendations of a scrutiny committee.

It is the job of both the executive and scrutiny to work together to reduce the risk of this happening, and authorities should take steps to predict, identify and act on disagreement.

One way in which this can be done is via an 'executive-scrutiny protocol' (see annex 1) which can help define the relationship between the two and mitigate any differences of opinion before they manifest themselves in unhelpful and unproductive ways. The benefit of this approach is that it provides a framework for disagreement and debate, and a way to manage it when it happens. Often,

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the value of such a protocol lies in the dialogue that underpins its preparation. It is important that these protocols are reviewed on a regular basis.

Scrutiny committees do have the power to 'call in' decisions, i.e. ask the executive to reconsider them before they are implemented, but should not view it as a substitute for early involvement in the decision-making process or as a party-political tool.

e) **<u>Providing the necessary support</u>** – while the level of resource allocated to scrutiny is for each authority to decide for itself, when determining resources an authority should consider the purpose of scrutiny as set out in legislation and the specific role and remit of the authority's own scrutiny committee(s), and the scrutiny function as a whole.

Support should also be given by members and senior officers to scrutiny committees and their support staff to access information held by the authority and facilitate discussions with representatives of external bodies (see chapter 5).

f) **<u>Ensuring impartial advice from officers</u>** – authorities, particularly senior officers, should ensure all officers are free to provide impartial advice to scrutiny committees. This is fundamental to effective scrutiny. Of particular importance is the role played by 'statutory officers' – the monitoring officer, the section 151 officer and the head of paid service, and where relevant the statutory scrutiny officer. These individuals have a particular role in ensuring that timely, relevant and high-quality advice is provided to scrutiny.

g) **<u>Communicating scrutiny's role and purpose to the wider authority</u>** – the scrutiny function can often lack support and recognition within an authority because there is a lack of awareness among both members and officers about the specific role it plays, which individuals are involved and its relevance to the authority's wider work. Authorities should, therefore, take steps to ensure all members and officers are made aware of the role the scrutiny committee plays in the organisation, its value and the outcomes it can deliver, the powers it has, its membership and, if appropriate, the identity of those providing officer support.

h) **<u>Maintaining the interest of full Council in the work of the scrutiny committee</u>** – part of communicating scrutiny's role and purpose to the wider authority should happen through the formal, public role of full Council – particularly given that scrutiny will undertake valuable work to highlight challenging issues that an authority will be facing and subjects that will be a focus of full Council's work. Authorities should therefore take steps to ensure full Council is informed of the work the scrutiny committee is doing.

One way in which this can be done is by reports and recommendations being submitted to full Council rather than solely to the executive. Scrutiny should decide when it would be appropriate to submit reports for wider debate in this way, taking into account the relevance of reports to full Council business, as well as full Council's capacity to consider and respond in a timely manner. Such

reports would supplement the annual report to full Council on scrutiny's activities and raise awareness of ongoing work.

In order to maintain awareness of scrutiny at the Combined Authority and provoke dialogue and discussion of its impact, the business of scrutiny should be reported to the Combined Authority board or to the chairs of the relevant scrutiny committees of constituent and non-constituent authorities, or both. At those chairs' discretion, particular Combined Authority scrutiny outcomes, and what they might mean for each individual area, could be either discussed by scrutiny in committee or referred to full Council of the constituent authorities.

i) **Communicating scrutiny's role to the public** – authorities should ensure scrutiny has a profile in the wider community. Consideration should be given to how and when to engage the authority's communications officers, and any other relevant channels, to understand how to get that message across. This will usually require engagement early on in the work programming process (see chapter 6).

j) **Ensuring scrutiny members are supported in having an independent mindset** – formal committee meetings provide a vital opportunity for scrutiny members to question the executive and officers.

Inevitably, some committee members will come from the same political party as a member they are scrutinising and might well have a long-standing personal, or familial, relationship with them (see paragraph 25).

Scrutiny members should bear in mind, however, that adopting an independent mind-set is fundamental to carrying out their work effectively. In practice, this is likely to require scrutiny chairs working proactively to identify any potentially contentious issues and plan how to manage them.

Directly-elected mayoral systems

12. A strong organisational culture that supports scrutiny work is particularly important in authorities with a directly-elected mayor to ensure there are the checks and balances to maintain a robust democratic system. Mayoral systems offer the opportunity for greater public accountability and stronger governance, but there have also been incidents that highlight the importance of creating and maintaining a culture that puts scrutiny at the heart of its operations.

13. Authorities with a directly-elected mayor should ensure that scrutiny committees are well-resourced, are able to recruit high-calibre members and that their scrutiny functions pay particular attention to issues surrounding:
- rights of access to documents by the press, public and councillors;
- transparent and fully recorded decision-making processes, especially avoiding decisions by 'unofficial' committees or working groups;
- delegated decisions by the Mayor;
- whistleblowing protections for both staff and councillors; and
- powers of Full Council, where applicable, to question and review.

14. Authorities with a directly-elected mayor should note that mayors are required by law to attend overview and scrutiny committee sessions when asked to do so (see paragraph 44).

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3. Resourcing

15. The resource an authority allocates to the scrutiny function plays a pivotal role in determining how successful that function is and therefore the value it can add to the work of the authority.

16. Ultimately it is up to each authority to decide on the resource it provides, but every authority should recognise that creating and sustaining an effective scrutiny function requires them to allocate resources to it.

17. Authorities should also recognise that support for scrutiny committees, task groups and other activities is not solely about budgets and provision of officer time, although these are clearly extremely important elements. Effective support is also about the ways in which the wider authority engages with those who carry out the scrutiny function (both members and officers).

> When deciding on the level of resource to allocate to the scrutiny function, the factors an authority should consider include:
> - Scrutiny's legal powers and responsibilities;
> - The particular role and remit scrutiny will play in the authority;
> - The training requirements of scrutiny members and support officers, particularly the support needed to ask effective questions of the executive and other key partners, and make effective recommendations;
> - The need for ad hoc external support where expertise does not exist in the council;
> - Effectively-resourced scrutiny has been shown to add value to the work of authorities, improving their ability to meet the needs of local people; and
> - Effectively-resourced scrutiny can help policy formulation and so minimise the need for call-in of executive decisions.

Statutory scrutiny officers

18. Combined authorities, upper and single tier authorities are required to designate a statutory scrutiny officer,[3] someone whose role is to:
   - promote the role of the authority's scrutiny committee;
   - provide support to the scrutiny committee and its members; and
   - provide support and guidance to members and officers relating to the functions of the scrutiny committee.

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[3] Section 9FB of the Local Government Act 2000; article 9 of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017

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19. Authorities not required by law to appoint such an officer should consider whether doing so would be appropriate for their specific local needs.

Officer resource models

20. Authorities are free to decide for themselves which wider officer support model best suits their individual circumstances, though generally they adopt one or a mix of the following:

- Committee – officers are drawn from specific policy or service areas;
- Integrated – officers are drawn from the corporate centre and also service the executive; and
- Specialist – officers are dedicated to scrutiny.

21. Each model has its merits – the committee model provides service-specific expertise; the integrated model facilitates closer and earlier scrutiny involvement in policy formation and alignment of corporate work programmes; and the specialist model is structurally independent from those areas it scrutinises.

22. Authorities should ensure that, whatever model they employ, officers tasked with providing scrutiny support are able to provide impartial advice. This might require consideration of the need to build safeguards into the way that support is provided. The nature of these safeguards will differ according to the specific role scrutiny plays in the organisation.

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4. Selecting Committee Members

23. Selecting the right members to serve on scrutiny committees is essential if those committees are to function effectively. Where a committee is made up of members who have the necessary skills and commitment, it is far more likely to be taken seriously by the wider authority.

24. While there are proportionality requirements that must be met,[4] the selection of the chair and other committee members is for each authority to decide for itself. Guidance for combined authorities on this issue has been produced by the Centre for Public Scrutiny[5].

> Members invariably have different skill-sets. What an authority must consider when forming a committee is that, as a group, it possesses the requisite expertise, commitment and ability to act impartially to fulfil its functions.

25. Authorities are reminded that members of the executive cannot be members of a scrutiny committee.[6] Authorities should take care to ensure that, as a minimum, members holding less formal executive positions, e.g. as Cabinet assistants, do not sit on scrutinising committees looking at portfolios to which those roles relate. Authorities should articulate in their constitutions how conflicts of interest, including familial links (see also paragraph 31), between executive and scrutiny responsibilities should be managed, including where members stand down from the executive and move to a scrutiny role, and vice-versa.

26. Members or substitute members of a combined authority must not be members of its overview and scrutiny committee.[7] This includes the Mayor in Mayoral Combined Authorities. It is advised that Deputy Mayors for Policing and Crime are also not members of the combined authority's overview and scrutiny committee.

Selecting individual committee members

27. When selecting individual members to serve on scrutiny committees, an authority should consider a member's experience, expertise, interests, ability to act impartially, ability to work as part of a group, and capacity to serve.

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[4] See, for example, regulation 11 of the Local Authorities (Committee System) (England) Regulations 2012 (S.I. 2012/1020) and article 4 of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017 (S.I. 2017/68).

[5] See pages 15-18 of 'Overview and scrutiny in combined authorities: a plain English guide': https://www.cfps.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Overview-and-scrutiny-in-combined-authorities-a-plain-english-guide.pdf

[6] Section 9FA(3) of the Local Government Act 2000.

[7] 2(3) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009

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28. Authorities should not take into account a member's perceived level of support for or opposition to a particular political party (notwithstanding the wider legal requirement for proportionality referred to in paragraph 24).

Selecting a chair

29. The Chair plays a leadership role on a scrutiny committee as they are largely responsible for establishing its profile, influence and ways of working.

30. The attributes authorities should and should not take into account when selecting individual committee members (see paragraphs 27 and 28) also apply to the selection of the Chair, but the Chair should also possess the ability to lead and build a sense of teamwork and consensus among committee members.

> Chairs should pay special attention to the need to guard the committee's independence. Importantly, however, they should take care to avoid the committee being, and being viewed as, a de facto opposition to the executive.

31. Given their pre-eminent role on the scrutiny committee, it is strongly recommended that the Chair not preside over scrutiny of their relatives[8]. Combined authorities should note the legal requirements that apply to them where the Chair is an independent person[9].

32. The method for selecting a Chair is for each authority to decide for itself, however every authority should consider taking a vote by secret ballot. Combined Authorities should be aware of the legal requirements regarding the party affiliation of their scrutiny committee Chair[10].

Training for committee members

33. Authorities should ensure committee members are offered induction when they take up their role and ongoing training so they can carry out their responsibilities effectively. Authorities should pay attention to the need to ensure committee members are aware of their legal powers, and how to prepare for and ask relevant questions at scrutiny sessions.

34. When deciding on training requirements for committee members, authorities should consider taking advantage of opportunities offered by external providers in the sector.

Co-option and technical advice

35. While members and their support officers will often have significant local insight and an understanding of local people and their needs, the provision of outside expertise can be invaluable.

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[8] A definition of 'relative' can be found at section 28(10) of the Localism Act 2011.
[9] See article 5(2) of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017 (S.I. 2017/68).
[10] Article 5(6) of the Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

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36. There are two principal ways to procure this:
    - Co-option – formal co-option is provided for in legislation[11]. Authorities must establish a co-option scheme to determine how individuals will be co-opted onto committees; and
    - Technical advisers – depending on the subject matter, independent local experts might exist who can provide advice and assistance in evaluating evidence (see annex 2).

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[11] Section 9FA(4) Local Government Act 2000

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5. Power to Access Information

37. A scrutiny committee needs access to relevant information the authority holds, and to receive it in good time, if it is to do its job effectively.

38. This need is recognised in law, with members of scrutiny committees enjoying powers to access information[12]. In particular, regulations give enhanced powers to a scrutiny member to access exempt or confidential information. This is in addition to existing rights for councillors to have access to information to perform their duties, including common law rights to request information and rights to request information under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

39. When considering what information scrutiny needs in order to carry out its work, scrutiny members and the executive should consider scrutiny's role and the legal rights that committees and their individual members have, as well as their need to receive timely and accurate information to carry out their duties effectively.

40. Scrutiny members should have access to a regularly available source of key information about the management of the authority – particularly on performance, management and risk. Where this information exists, and scrutiny members are given support to understand it, the potential for what officers might consider unfocused and unproductive requests is reduced as members will be able to frame their requests from a more informed position.

41. Officers should speak to scrutiny members to ensure they understand the reasons why information is needed, thereby making the authority better able to provide information that is relevant and timely, as well as ensuring that the authority complies with legal requirements.

> While each request for information should be judged on its individual merits, authorities should adopt a default position of sharing the information they hold, on request, with scrutiny committee members.

42. The law recognises that there might be instances where it is legitimate for an authority to withhold information and places a requirement on the executive to provide the scrutiny committee with a written statement setting out its reasons for that decision[13]. However, members of the executive and senior officers should take particular care to avoid refusing requests, or limiting the information they provide, for reasons of party political or reputational expediency.

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[12] Regulation 17 - Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10 Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.
[13] Regulation 17(4) – Local Government (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10(4) Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.

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> Before an authority takes a decision not to share information it holds, it should give serious consideration to whether that information could be shared in closed session.

43. Regulations already stipulate a timeframe for executives to comply with requests from a scrutiny member[14]. When agreeing to such requests, authorities should:
   - consider whether seeking clarification from the information requester could help better target the request; and
   - Ensure the information is supplied in a format appropriate to the recipient's needs.

44. Committees should be aware of their legal power to require members of the executive and officers to attend before them to answer questions[15]. It is the duty of members and officers to comply with such requests.[16]

Seeking information from external organisations

45. Scrutiny members should also consider the need to supplement any authority-held information they receive with information and intelligence that might be available from other sources, and should note in particular their statutory powers to access information from certain external organisations.

46. When asking an external organisation to provide documentation or appear before it, and where that organisation is not legally obliged to do either (see annex 3), scrutiny committees should consider the following:

   a) **The need to explain the purpose of scrutiny** – the organisation being approached might have little or no awareness of the committee's work, or of an authority's scrutiny function more generally, and so might be reluctant to comply with any request;

   b) **The benefits of an informal approach** – individuals from external organisations can have fixed perceptions of what an evidence session entails and may be unwilling to subject themselves to detailed public scrutiny if they believe it could reflect badly on them or their employer. Making an informal approach can help reassure an organisation of the aims of the committee, the type of information being sought and the manner in which the evidence session would be conducted;

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[14] Regulation 17(2) – Local Government (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012; article 10(2) Combined Authorities (Overview and Scrutiny Committees, Access to Information and Audit Committees) Order 2017.
[15] Section 9FA(8) of the Local Government Act 2000; paragraph 2(6) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.
[16] Section 9FA(9) of the Local Government Act 2000; paragraph 2(7) of Schedule 5A to the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009.

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c) **How to encourage compliance with the request** – scrutiny committees will want to frame their approach on a case by case basis. For contentious issues, committees might want to emphasise the opportunity their request gives the organisation to 'set the record straight' in a public setting; and

d) **Who to approach** – a committee might instinctively want to ask the Chief Executive or Managing Director of an organisation to appear at an evidence session, however it could be more beneficial to engage front-line staff when seeking operational-level detail rather than senior executives who might only be able to talk in more general terms. When making a request to a specific individual, the committee should consider the type of information it is seeking, the nature of the organisation in question and the authority's pre-existing relationship with it.

Following 'the Council Pound'

Scrutiny committees will often have a keen interest in 'following the council pound', i.e. scrutinising organisations that receive public funding to deliver goods and services.

Authorities should recognise the legitimacy of this interest and, where relevant, consider the need to provide assistance to scrutiny members and their support staff to obtain information from organisations the council has contracted to deliver services. In particular, when agreeing contracts with these bodies, authorities should consider whether it would be appropriate to include a *requirement* for them to supply information to or appear before scrutiny committees.

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6. Planning Work

47. Effective scrutiny should have a defined impact on the ground, with the committee making recommendations that will make a tangible difference to the work of the authority. To have this kind of impact, scrutiny committees need to plan their work programme, i.e. draw up a long-term agenda and consider making it flexible enough to accommodate any urgent, short-term issues that might arise during the year.

48. Authorities with multiple scrutiny committees sometimes have a separate work programme for each committee. Where this happens, consideration should be given to how to co-ordinate the various committees' work to make best use of the total resources available.

Being clear about scrutiny's role

49. Scrutiny works best when it has a clear role and function. This provides focus and direction. While scrutiny has the power to look at anything which affects 'the area, or the area's inhabitants', authorities will often find it difficult to support a scrutiny function that carries out generalised oversight across the wide range of issues experienced by local people, particularly in the context of partnership working. Prioritisation is necessary, which means that there might be things that, despite being important, scrutiny will not be able to look at.

50. Different overall roles could include having a focus on risk, the authority's finances, or on the way the authority works with its partners.

51. Applying this focus does not mean that certain subjects are 'off limits'. It is more about looking at topics and deciding whether their relative importance justifies the positive impact scrutiny's further involvement could bring.

52. When thinking about scrutiny's focus, members should be supported by key senior officers. The statutory scrutiny officer, if an authority has one, will need to take a leading role in supporting members to clarify the role and function of scrutiny, and championing that role once agreed.

Who to speak to

53. Evidence will need to be gathered to inform the work programming process. This will ensure that it looks at the right topics, in the right way and at the right time. Gathering evidence requires conversations with:
   - *The public* – it is likely that formal 'consultation' with the public on the scrutiny work programme will be ineffective. Asking individual scrutiny members to have conversations with individuals and groups in their own local areas can work better. Insights gained from the public through individual pieces of scrutiny work can be fed back into the work programming process. Listening to and participating in conversations in places where local people come together, including in online forums, can help authorities engage people on their own terms and yield more positive results.

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Authorities should consider how their communications officers can help scrutiny engage with the public, and how wider internal expertise and local knowledge from both members and officers might make a contribution.

- *The authority's partners* – relationships with other partners should not be limited to evidence-gathering to support individual reviews or agenda items. A range of partners are likely to have insights that will prove useful:
  - o Public sector partners (like the NHS and community safety partners, over which scrutiny has specific legal powers);
  - o Voluntary sector partners;
  - o Contractors and commissioning partners (including partners in joint ventures and authority-owned companies);
  - o In parished areas, town, community and parish councils;
  - o Neighbouring principal councils (both in two-tier and unitary areas);
  - o Cross-authority bodies and organisations, such as Local Enterprise Partnerships[17]; and
  - o Others with a stake and interest in the local area – large local employers, for example.

- *The executive* – a principal partner in discussions on the work programme should be the executive (and senior officers). The executive should not direct scrutiny's work (see chapter 2), but conversations will help scrutiny members better understand how their work can be designed to align with the best opportunities to influence the authority's wider work.

Information sources

54. Scrutiny will need access to relevant information to inform its work programme. The type of information will depend on the specific role and function scrutiny plays within the authority, but might include:
   - Performance information from across the authority and its partners;
   - Finance and risk information from across the authority and its partners;
   - Corporate complaints information, and aggregated information from political groups about the subject matter of members' surgeries;
   - Business cases and options appraisals (and other planning information) for forthcoming major decisions. This information will be of particular use for pre-decision scrutiny; and
   - Reports and recommendations issued by relevant ombudsmen, especially the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

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[17] Authorities should ensure they have appropriate arrangements in place to ensure the effective democratic scrutiny of Local Enterprise Partnerships' investment decisions.

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> As committees can meet in closed session, commercial confidentiality should not preclude the sharing of information. Authorities should note, however, that the default for meetings should be that they are held in public (see 2014 guidance on '*Open and accountable local government*':
> https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/343182/140812_Openness_Guide.pdf).

55. Scrutiny members should consider keeping this information under regular review. It is likely to be easier to do this outside committee, rather than bringing such information to committee 'to note', or to provide an update, as a matter of course.

Shortlisting topics

> Approaches to shortlisting topics should reflect scrutiny's overall role in the authority. This will require the development of bespoke, local solutions, however when considering whether an item should be included in the work programme, the kind of questions a scrutiny committee should consider might include:
> - Do we understand the benefits scrutiny would bring to this issue?
> - How could we best carry out work on this subject?
> - What would be the best outcome of this work?
> - How would this work engage with the activity of the executive and other decision-makers, including partners?

56. Some authorities use scoring systems to evaluate and rank work programme proposals. If these are used to provoke discussion and debate, based on evidence, about what priorities should be, they can be a useful tool. Others take a looser approach. Whichever method is adopted, a committee should be able to justify how and why a decision has been taken to include certain issues and not others.

57. Scrutiny members should accept that shortlisting can be difficult; scrutiny committees have finite resources and deciding how these are best allocated is tough. They should understand that, if work programming is robust and effective, there might well be issues that they want to look at that nonetheless are not selected.

Carrying out work
58. Selected topics can be scrutinised in several ways, including:

   a) **As a single item on a committee agenda** – this often presents a limited opportunity for effective scrutiny, but may be appropriate for some issues or where the committee wants to maintain a formal watching brief over a given issue;

   b) **At a single meeting** – which could be a committee meeting or something less formal. This can provide an opportunity to have a single public meeting about a

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given subject, or to have a meeting at which evidence is taken from a number of witnesses;

c) **<u>At a task and finish review of two or three meetings</u>** – short, sharp scrutiny reviews are likely to be most effective even for complex topics. Properly focused, they ensure members can swiftly reach conclusions and make recommendations, perhaps over the course of a couple of months or less;

d) **<u>Via a longer-term task and finish review</u>** – the 'traditional' task and finish model – with perhaps six or seven meetings spread over a number of months – is still appropriate when scrutiny needs to dig into a complex topic in significant detail. However, the resource implications of such work, and its length, can make it unattractive for all but the most complex matters; and

e) **<u>By establishing a 'standing panel'</u>** – this falls short of establishing a whole new committee but may reflect a necessity to keep a watching brief over a critical local issue, especially where members feel they need to convene regularly to carry out that oversight. Again, the resource implications of this approach means that it will be rarely used.

7. Evidence Sessions

59. Evidence sessions are a key way in which scrutiny committees inform their work. They might happen at formal committee, in less formal 'task and finish' groups or at standalone sessions.

> Good preparation is a vital part of conducting effective evidence sessions. Members should have a clear idea of what the committee hopes to get out of each session and appreciate that success will depend on their ability to work together on the day.

How to plan

60. Effective planning does not necessarily involve a large number of pre-meetings, the development of complex scopes or the drafting of questioning plans. It is more often about setting overall objectives and then considering what type of questions (and the way in which they are asked) can best elicit the information the committee is seeking. This applies as much to individual agenda items as it does for longer evidence sessions – there should always be consideration in advance of what scrutiny is trying to get out of a particular evidence session.

> Chairs play a vital role in leading discussions on objective-setting and ensuring all members are aware of the specific role each will play during the evidence session.

61. As far as possible there should be consensus among scrutiny members about the objective of an evidence session before it starts. It is important to recognise that members have different perspectives on certain issues, and so might not share the objectives for a session that are ultimately adopted. Where this happens, the Chair will need to be aware of this divergence of views and bear it in mind when planning the evidence session.

62. Effective planning should mean that at the end of a session it is relatively straightforward for the chair to draw together themes and highlight the key findings. It is unlikely that the committee will be able to develop and agree recommendations immediately, but, unless the session is part of a wider inquiry, enough evidence should have been gathered to allow the chair to set a clear direction.

63. After an evidence session, the committee might wish to hold a short 'wash-up' meeting to review whether their objectives were met and lessons could be learned for future sessions.

Developing recommendations

64. The development and agreement of recommendations is often an iterative process. It will usually be appropriate for this to be done only by members, assisted by co-optees where relevant. When deciding on recommendations, however, members should have due regard to advice received from officers, particularly the Monitoring Officer.

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65. The drafting of reports is usually, but not always, carried out by officers, directed by members.

66. Authorities draft reports and recommendations in a number of ways, but there are normally three stages:

    i.   the development of a 'heads of report' – a document setting out general findings that members can then discuss as they consider the overall structure and focus of the report and its recommendations;

    ii. the development of those findings, which will set out some areas on which recommendations might be made; and

    iii. the drafting of the full report.

67. Recommendations should be evidence-based and SMART, i.e. specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed. Where appropriate, committees may wish to consider sharing them in draft with interested parties.

68. Committees should bear in mind that often six to eight recommendations are sufficient to enable the authority to focus its response, although there may be specific circumstances in which more might be appropriate.

Sharing draft recommendations with executive members should not provide an opportunity for them to revise or block recommendations before they are made. It should, however, provide an opportunity for errors to be identified and corrected, and for a more general sense-check.

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Annex 1: Illustrative Scenario – Creating an Executive-Scrutiny Protocol

An executive-scrutiny protocol can deal with the practical expectations of scrutiny committee members and the executive, as well as the cultural dynamics.

Workshops with scrutiny members, senior officers and Cabinet can be helpful to inform the drafting of a protocol. An external facilitator can help bring an independent perspective.

Councils should consider how to adopt a protocol, e.g. formal agreement at scrutiny committee and Cabinet, then formal integration into the Council's constitution at the next Annual General Meeting.

The protocol, as agreed, may contain sections on:

- The way scrutiny will go about developing its work programme (including the ways in which senior officers and Cabinet members will be kept informed);
- The way in which senior officers and Cabinet will keep scrutiny informed of the outlines of major decisions as they are developed, to allow for discussion of scrutiny's potential involvement in policy development. This involves the building in of safeguards to mitigate risks around the sharing of sensitive information with scrutiny members;
- A strengthening and expansion of existing parts of the code of conduct that relate to behaviour in formal meetings, and in informal meetings;
- Specification of the nature and form of responses that scrutiny can expect when it makes recommendations to the executive, when it makes requests to the executive for information, and when it makes requests that Cabinet members or senior officers attend meetings; and
- Confirmation of the role of the statutory scrutiny officer, and Monitoring Officer, in overseeing compliance with the protocol, and ensuring that it is used to support the wider aim of supporting and promoting a culture of scrutiny, with matters relating to the protocol's success being reported to full Council through the scrutiny Annual Report.

Annex 2: Illustrative Scenario – Engaging Independent Technical Advisers

This example demonstrates how one Council's executive and scrutiny committee worked together to scope a role and then appoint an independent adviser on transforming social care commissioning. Their considerations and process may be helpful and applicable in other similar scenarios.

Major care contracts were coming to an end and the Council took the opportunity to review whether to continue with its existing strategic commissioning framework, or take a different approach – potentially insourcing certain elements.

The relevant Director was concerned about the Council's reliance on a very small number of large providers. The Director therefore approached the Scrutiny and Governance Manager to talk through the potential role scrutiny could play as the Council considered these changes.

The Scrutiny Chair wanted to look at this issue in some depth, but recognised its complexity could make it difficult for her committee to engage – she was concerned it would not be able to do the issue justice. The Director offered support from his own officer team, but the Chair considered this approach to be beset by risks around the independence of the process.

She talked to the Director about securing independent advice. He was worried that an independent adviser could come with preconceived ideas and would not understand the Council's context and objectives. The Scrutiny Chair was concerned that independent advice could end up leading to scrutiny members being passive, relying on an adviser to do their thinking for them. They agreed that some form of independent assistance would be valuable, but that how it was provided and managed should be carefully thought out.

With the assistance of the Governance and Scrutiny Manager, the Scrutiny Chair approached local universities and Further Education institutions to identify an appropriate individual. The approach was clear – it set out the precise role expected of the adviser, and explained the scrutiny process itself. Because members wanted to focus on the risks of market failure, and felt more confident on substantive social care matters, the approach was directed at those with a specialism in economics and business administration. The Council's search was proactive – the assistance of the service department was drawn on to make direct approaches to particular individuals who could carry out this role.

It was agreed to make a small budget available to act as a 'per diem' to support an adviser; academics were approached in the first instance as the Council felt able to make a case that an educational institution would provide this support for free as part of its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility.

Three individuals were identified from the Council's proactive search. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the committee had an informal discussion with each – not so much to establish their skills and expertise (which had already been assessed) but to give a sense about

their 'fit' with scrutiny's objectives and their political nous in understanding the environment in which they would operate, and to satisfy themselves that they will apply themselves even-handedly to the task. The Director sat in on this process but played no part in who was ultimately selected.

The independent advice provided by the selected individual gave the Scrutiny Committee a more comprehensive understanding of the issue and meant it was able to offer informed advice on the merits of putting in place a new strategic commissioning framework.

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Annex 3: Illustrative Scenario – Approaching an External Organisation to Appear before a Committee

This example shows how one council ensured a productive scrutiny meeting, involving a private company and the public. Lessons may be drawn and apply to other similar scenarios.

Concerns had been expressed by user groups, and the public at large, about the reliability of the local bus service. The Scrutiny Chair wanted to question the bus company in a public evidence session but knew that she had no power to compel it to attend. Previous attempts to engage it had been unsuccessful; the company was not hostile, but said it had its own ways of engaging the public.

The Monitoring Officer approached the company's regional PR manager, but he expressed concern that the session would end in a 'bunfight'. He also explained the company had put their improvement plan in the public domain, and felt a big council meeting would exacerbate tensions.

Other councillors had strong views about the company – one thought the committee should tell the company it would be empty-chaired if it refused to attend. The Scrutiny Chair was sympathetic to this, but thought such an approach would not lead to any improvements.

The Scrutiny Chair was keen to make progress, but it was difficult to find the right person to speak to at the company, so she asked council officers and local transport advocacy groups for advice. Speaking to those people also gave her a better sense of what scrutiny's role might be.

When she finally spoke to the company's network manager, she explained the situation and suggested they work together to consider how the meeting could be productive for the Council, the company and local people. In particular, this provided her with an opportunity to explain scrutiny and its role. The network manager remained sceptical but was reassured that they could work together to ensure that the meeting would not be an 'ambush'. He agreed in principle to attend and also provide information to support the Committee's work beforehand.

Discussions continued in the four weeks leading up to the Committee meeting. The Scrutiny Chair was conscious that while she had to work with the company to ensure that the meeting was constructive – and secure their attendance – it could not be a whitewash, and other members and the public would demand a hard edge to the discussions.

The scrutiny committee agreed that the meeting would provide a space for the company to provide context to the problems local people are experiencing, but that this would be preceded by a space on the agenda for the Chair, Vice-chair, and representatives from two local transport advocacy groups to set out their concerns. The company were sent in

advance a summary of the general areas on which members were likely to ask questions, to ensure that those questions could be addressed at the meeting.

Finally, provision was made for public questions and debate. Those attending the meeting were invited to discuss with each other the principal issues they wanted the meeting to cover. A short, facilitated discussion in the room led by the Chair highlighted the key issues, and the Chair then put those points to the company representatives.

At the end of the meeting, the public asked questions of the bus company representative in a 20-minute plenary item.

The meeting was fractious, but the planning carried out to prepare for this – by channelling issues through discussion and using the Chair to mediate the questioning – made things easier. Some attendees were initially frustrated by this structure, but the company representative was more open and less defensive than might otherwise have been the case.

The meeting also motivated the company to revise its communications plan to become more responsive to this kind of challenge, part of which involved a commitment to feed back to the scrutiny committee on the recommendations it made on the night.

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Buckinghamshire County Council
Select Committee
Health and Adult Social Care

Minutes
HEALTH AND ADULT SOCIAL CARE SELECT COMMITTEE

Minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 19 March 2019, in Mezzanine Room 1, County Hall, Aylesbury, commencing at 10.05 am and concluding at 1.00 pm.

This meeting was webcast. To review the detailed discussions that took place, please see the webcast which can be found at http://www.buckscc.public-i.tv/
The webcasts are retained on this website for 6 months. Recordings of any previous meetings beyond this can be requested (contact: democracy@buckscc.gov.uk)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Buckinghamshire County Council

Mr B Roberts (In the Chair)
Mr R Bagge, Mrs L Clarke OBE, Mr N Hussain, Mr S Lambert, Mr D Martin, Julia Wassell and Mr G Williams

District Councils

Ms T Jervis	Healthwatch Bucks
Mr A Green	Wycombe District Council
Ms S Jenkins	Aylesbury Vale District Council
Dr W Matthews	South Bucks District Council

Members in Attendance

Lin Hazell, Cabinet Member for Health & Wellbeing

Others in Attendance

Mr D Williams, Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust
Dr P Macdonald, FedBucks
Dr M Thornton, FedBucks
Mr T Chettle, Head of Access, Adult Social Care
Dr J O'Grady, Director of Public Health

1   APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CHANGES IN MEMBERSHIP

Apologies were received from Mr B Bendyshe-Brown, Mr C Etholen, Ms C Jones and Mrs A Cranmer.

2   DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3   MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 29th January 2019 were agreed as a correct record.

4   PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There were no public questions.

The Chairman reported that Bucks Healthcare Trust had responded to the remaining part of Mr Russell's question and this had been sent to him.

5   CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE

The Chairman updated the Committee on the work of the task and finish group undertaking pre-decision scrutiny on the residential short breaks (respite) proposal.

6   COMMITTEE UPDATE

Ms T Jervis, Chief Executive, Healthwatch Bucks updated the Committee on their key areas of work, including the following.

- The second "Getting Bucks involved" working group took place in February.
- The main priorities for Healthwatch Bucks were mental health, adult social care transformation and the development of primary and community care.
- A recent piece of work had just been completed around reablement where patients were interviewed to find out what they thought of the service – the feedback was generally positive.

7   THE NHS LONG TERM PLAN

The Chairman welcomed Mr D Williams, Director of Strategy, Bucks Healthcare NHS Trust. Mr Williams took Members through the presentation and made the following main points.

- The NHS long-term plan, published in January, mirrored the priorities already identified in Buckinghamshire. The Plan was in response to a 3.4% uplift in NHS funding signalled by the Government.
- As Buckinghamshire was one of the first Integrated Care Systems (ICS), its focus was already on integrated services between health and social care and working closely as a system.
- The main task over the next six months would be to develop a plan to implement change and partners within the ICS would be working together to produce a plan by the Autumn.
- £2.3 billion of the NHS funding had been ring-fenced for improving access to mental health services across the country.
- 60% of people living in Bucks would die from cancer or cardiovascular disease so early diagnosis was a priority. The target to be seen and treated for cancer was 62 days – in Buckinghamshire Healthcare Trust in January, 85.2% of patients are seen within the target compared to 76.2% nationally.
- The stroke unit at Wycombe Hospital was nationally recognised as an 'A Grade' unit. A new therapy, which would improve outcomes for a proportion of stroke patients, had been introduced in conjunction with Oxford University.
- A second Cath Lab had opened recently in Wycombe to provide more support for

cardiac patients.

- The maternity services were well regarded, particularly in terms of continuity of care.
- There was a focus on urgent care. Around 30,000 patients were seen in the Wycombe Urgent Treatment Centre each year as well as the A&E services at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. A GP streaming service had been introduced at Stoke Mandeville Hospital and this service was seeing around 50 patients a day.
- A capital investment of £5 million had been allocated to A&E services and these changes would improve the environment for patients.
- Reducing child obesity, smoking during pregnancy and health inequalities remain priorities.
- The joint IT strategy was having an impact and had received significant investment to deliver more projects to improve connections with patients to the service over the coming months.
- Within the Hospital Trust there was a 17% vacancy rate for nurses and a 5% medical vacancy rate.
- It was hoped that the 2019 spending review would provide more funding for public health and social care in line with the aspirations in the Plan.
- In response to a question about how priorities were set, Mr Williams explained that there was a national template for delivering services but the local needs of the population were the starting point. The Integrated Care System (ICS) had developed a delivery plan for Buckinghamshire.
- A Member referred to the section in the plan which outlined 4 models of funding and asked which model Buckinghamshire would adopt. Mr Williams explained that it would be the responsibility of the ICS to discuss and agree the most appropriate funding model but he went on to say that the partners within the ICS were all committed to delivering change to services at a local level. He stressed the importance of recognising the increase in housing for Buckinghamshire and for partners to work to ensure that pressure on health and social care services were recognised and adequately funded for.
- It was acknowledged that Buckinghamshire residents use services which were not within the Buckinghamshire Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Sustainability and Transformation Programme (BOBW STP) footprint, for example Frimley Hospital. Mr Williams explained that it was the Hospital Trust's responsibility to work across the boundaries and develop its partnership working. He went on to say that there were different networks, for example, the Thames Cancer Alliance which works across geographical areas.
- Next year, the Hospital Trust would be continuing to focus on quality improvement to ensure patients were treated at the right place at the right time. The Trust ensures that it learns, develops and improves its services based on feedback from patients.
- In response to a question about what "good" looks like in relation to service provision, Mr Williams explained that the Trust needs to continually improve its services and the digital revolution would help clinicians see more patients. Innovation would be key to service improvement alongside culture and behavioural change across the organisation. For example, all colleagues at the Trust were committed to improving patient care and this was enshrined within the objective and appraisal system across the Trust.
- The challenging financial system in Buckinghamshire was recognised. Mr Williams went on to explain about "Model Hospital" which benchmarks Hospital efficiencies nationally. This data was used to prioritise and drive efficiencies locally.
- 500,000 outpatients were seen every year but Mr Williams explained that patients did not necessarily have to be seen in the Hospital setting. For example, a virtual fracture clinic could assess patients without them having to visit the Hospital. The Trust was looking at other different ways for people to receive outpatient information and consultation.
- The NHS plan refers to each Hospital identifying one additional area of improvement. In Buckinghamshire, the Trust would be focussing on improving patient pathways for

ophthalmology and musculoskeletal (MSK) services which were high volume services.

- A Member asked about the measurable objectives, who was accountable for each element of the work streams and where progress was monitored. Mr Williams explained that the Integrated Care System Partnership Board was responsible for overall delivery of the plan. An operating plan would be available which would set out how the plan will be achieved over the coming year.
- A Member asked how outcomes for mental health patients would be improved and felt this should align with the "No health without mental health" project which focussed on more preventative and recovery work. Mr Williams explained that the Plan outlined more support in schools for children experiencing anxiety and depression. Improving Access to Psychological Therapies would continue next year. Nationally, Buckinghamshire does well in terms of its mental health services. Mr Williams stressed the importance of health checks, particularly for those people with learning disabilities.
- Main areas of risk around delivery of the Plan:
  - o Financial risks – aspirations needed to match the funding and resources available and the local system would need to prioritise.
  - o Workforce – more nurses would be required over the next 5-10 years. There was a focus on "growing our own nursing workforce" and making Bucks a good place to work where each individual could achieve their potential. The Trust had a number of educational partnerships to enhance its ability to develop its staff.
  - o Capital investment – NHS capital funding was in short supply. The system would be bidding for more funding to improve the environment for patients over the next 5-10 years.
  - o Housing growth – collective responsibility with partners to meet health needs as part of the growth agenda.
- In response to a question about the robustness of public and patient engagement across the system in redesigning the outpatient services and delivering the overall plan, Mr Williams emphasised that there were mechanisms in place to capture patient feedback, including patient experience groups to ensure the patient voice was central to any changes in services.
- A Member suggested using patients to help develop the digital projects.

The Chairman thanked Mr Williams for attending.

8   **PRIMARY CARE NETWORKS**

The Chairman welcomed Dr P Macdonald, Chair of FedBucks and Dr M Thornton, Clinical Director of FedBucks.

The following main points were made during the presentation and the discussion.

- The GP Federation provides an opportunity for practices to work together to build community models of care and to work at scale.
- The five year plan would help practices with their planning and provide stability.
- Part of the new GP contract involved enhanced services and developing Primary Care Networks (PCNs) which were a vehicle for bolting on an integrated team and a place based care service.
- PCNs would provide additional resilience and support for GPs and provided an opportunity for practices to work together and develop a new community model of care. This would result in better outcomes for the patients.
- The Networks would be made-up of around 30-50,000 population size although some networks can be larger than this and there had to be a connection geographically.
- One of the key advantages of the new PCNs was around additional support for the workforce. The Government had a target of recruiting 5,000 new GPs which had been

very difficult to achieve.
- There were five different areas:
    - o Pharmacists;
    - o Social prescribers;
    - o Physician Associates;
    - o Physiotherapists;
    - o Community paramedics.
- The new workforce would be rolled out across the PCN over the next 3 years.
- The new contract included indemnity packages for GPs.
- There were also new service specifications within the contract which focussed on the following areas:
    - o Medication reviews, bringing pharmacists into the network means that more advanced medication reviews can take place which would be of particular importance in care homes;
    - o Care Homes – more general practice in this setting;
    - o Anticipatory care – preventing people from admittance to Hospital;
    - o More personalised care for patients with specific needs;
    - o Early cancer diagnosis – earlier access to diagnostic services to detect stage 1 and 2;
    - o Tackling inequalities – additional funds to tackle this.
- Would like strong patient engagement in this and there was a need to involve the voluntary sector.
- A priority would be to look at the local population and redesign the services to meet the local needs.
- Quality and service improvement managers would be appointed to look at what currently works and build on this.
- In general, a positive move for GPs and better care for patients would be provided. Opportunity to develop as time goes on as it was a 2-5 year project.
- In Somerset, a model had been developed which resulted in a reduction of 30% in Hospital admissions. This was due to finding problems across the whole population, better outcomes for patients, identifying problems earlier and intervening earlier to find solutions.
- PCNs would use "Community connectors" – people in the community who are the eyes and ears and connect people with the system.
- Single digital record will help to see the patient story.
- In response to a question about the role and scope of the Physician Associates, Dr Thornton explained that they would play a similar role to nurse practitioners and would deal with minor illness or be specialists in a specific illness.
- Working in partnership would help to identify people who had specific needs, for example, those with dementia.
- In response to a question about the £4.5 billion investment, Dr Macdonald explained that each practice would be funded £1.50 per patient to the network and £1.75 per patient for administration to help set-up the networks.
- In the first year, there would be no cost to the network for the social prescribers as these would be funded by NHS England. The Physician Associates and other posts will be reimbursed 30% by NHS England and 70% by the network.
- Dr Thornton provided an example of a PCN with a population size of 40,000, by the end of year 5, the PCN would receive £700,000 of funds towards the new workforce. There would be five new clinical pharmacists in this PCN, partly funded by the Government and the PCN.
- No GP practice would be left out of a PCN. The Clinical Commissioning Groups and NHS England would negotiate with practices if there were any issues.
- The timescales were very tight but as the PCNs develop, the patient voice would be key as part of future development. The Patient Participation Groups would also have a voice in shaping the new model of care.
- A Member commented that the GP landscape was changing which meant that

sometimes patient trends were not being picked up due to not seeing the same GP. Dr Macdonald responded by saying that recruitment and retention was a major challenge within General Practice. This had been recognised by NHS England which was part of the reasoning behind the new roles within the PCNs. Hopefully more graduates would be attracted to General Practice.

- A Member mentioned that the gap in life expectancy was 12 years between the least deprived areas and the most deprived areas in Buckinghamshire.
- A Member commented that the report states that there would be more recognition for carers. Dr Macdonald explained that it was early days and this was a 2-5 year plan. Need to involve stakeholders in the planning and this would include carers and organisations supporting carers.
- The PCNs would go live on 1 July so new staff would start to be recruited after this date.
- In response to a question about the 7 localities and 7 multi-disciplinary teams and how they would be integrated, Dr Macdonald explained that the PCNs were vehicles for streamlining services and delivering a more integrated service to allow greater access to services for patients.
- Funding for the networks would be separate from the funding for GP practices to allow resources to be tailored to meet local needs.

The Chairman thanked the presenters for attending.

9 ADULT SOCIAL CARE TRANSFORMATION - TIER 1

The Chairman welcomed Dr J O'Grady, Director of Public Health and Mr T Chettle, Head of Access, Adult Social Care. This item looked at Tier 1 of the ASC Transformation Programme.

During their presentation, the following main points were made.

- The overall aim was for people to remain happy, healthy and independent at home for as long as possible.
- A shared approach to prevention had been developed which had been co-designed with partners and looked at the broader determinants of health.
- Social isolation had been identified and agreed as a priority by all partners across the whole system. All partners had been offered an opportunity to work with Public Health to help build the plan for tackling this issue. The Integrated Care System had signed up to the shared model.
- One of the main areas of work for this tier was around redesigning the digital front door to provide guidance, signposting and self-assessment and self-referral for Adult Social Care clients.
- Extensive training for staff in the strength based approach had taken place and this would continue over the coming months. More people were having their problems resolved at the front door.
- A prototype for the community mapping project had been developed. The service had received national funding for discovery work which looks at what will work for the user. A company had just been appointed to redesign the digital offer, including further development of the community map. This project was due for completion by the end of September.
- Street Association pilots had been set-up which focus on working with communities to help them build resilience and strength.
- Social Care were working in partnership with communities, voluntary sector and other key stakeholders to co-design the community map.
- The ambition would be to have a similar product to the Family Information Service website which brings all services and information together. Work was currently underway with partners to create a single point of access.

- This year, less packages of care had been commissioned which resulted in savings in tier 1. Services were being provided differently in a more appropriate way for the client.
- A Member suggested measuring the quality of the new service by the number of compliments and complaints.
- Concerns were raised in relation to a lack of communication and engagement between service users and the service area. The Chairman agreed to look into this outside of the meeting.

Action: Chairman

- In response to a question about the use of community hubs, Mr Chettle explained that the community hubs were part of a wider County Council strategy and Adult Social Care were asked to contribute to the development of hubs, as part of the pilot.

The Chairman thanked the presenters and the Committee agreed that this item should be brought to a future meeting to review and monitor its progress.

10   COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Members noted the work programme.

11   DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 25th June 2019 at 10am in Mezz Room 1, County Hall, Aylesbury.

CHAIRMAN

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Buckinghamshire County Council
Select Committee
Children's Social Care and Learning

Minutes

CHILDREN'S SELECT COMMITTEE

> Minutes from the meeting held on Tuesday 12 March 2019, in Mezzanine Room 1, County Hall, Aylesbury, commencing at 10.02 am and concluding at 12.11 pm.
>
> This meeting was webcast. To review the detailed discussions that took place, please see the webcast which can be found at http://www.buckscc.public-i.tv/
> The webcasts are retained on this website for 6 months. Recordings of any previous meetings beyond this can be requested (contact: democracy@buckscc.gov.uk)

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mrs P Birchley,   Mrs A Cranmer,   Mrs I Darby,   Mr D Dhillon   (Chairman),   Mr M Hussain, Mr S Lambert, Mrs L Sullivan and Ms K Wood

CO-OPTED MEMBERS PRESENT

Mrs C Pease

GUESTS PRESENT

OFFICERS PRESENT

Miss S Callaghan,   Mrs K Collier,   Mr G Drawmer,   Ms S Tilston,   Ms V Trundell   and Ms S Turnbull

1   DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Mr Lambert declared an interest as he had been a Member of the steering group for the early help strategy and stated that he would not participate in this agenda item.

2   APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE/ CHANGES TO MEMBERSHIP

Apologies had been received from Mr Roberts, Mrs Mallen, Mr Collingwood and Mrs Ward. There had been changes to membership as a new Parent Governor Representative had joined. The Chairman welcomed Mrs Pease.

3   MINUTES

The minutes of the last meeting dated 15th January 2019 were agreed to be accurate.

4   PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There had been no public questions received.

5   CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman reported that the Committee had recently visited social workers at their Aylesbury offices and that there would be a further social worker visit at the Amersham offices. He expressed thanks to Amanda Andrews, Head of First Response for arranging these meetings. He also discussed his recent visit to schools in India and spoke about differences between British and Indian education.

A Member enquired about planned social worker visits to the Wycombe offices and was informed that these had been requested.

6   COMMITTEE MEMBER UPDATES

There were no updates.

7   CABINET MEMBERS' QUESTION TIME

The Chairman noted that Mrs Cranmer – Deputy Cabinet Member for Education & Skills, was attending in place of Mr Appleyard and Mr Williams – Deputy Cabinet Member for Children's Services, was representing Mr Whyte as he was attending a Local Government Association Children & Young People Board meeting in London. He also welcomed Miss Callaghan, Service Director Education.

Mrs Cranmer told the Committee that the changes to post-16 transport arrangements were being rolled out. It was confirmed that new children who had been eligible for free transport would be assessed based on their ability to travel and their family's income. Charges would only be a partial cost recovery with a distance banding rate. Discretionary support to families who needed it would continue.

A Member requested that the excellent education results which had been achieved in Buckinghamshire should be better publicised. This was agreed with the understanding that there would be a time delay while results were validated nationally.

The Chairman asked for an update about the Burnham E-Act Academy. Miss Callaghan told the Chairman that there was a prescribed process set out by the DfE for all school closures. In situations where the school was an Academy, the role of the Council is that of a consultee. In these instances, the Council had not been responsible for the Academy's proposal to consult about potential school closure, but BCC officers had been working cooperatively with the Academy to minimise effects on local children who attended, continuing to fulfil its sufficiency duty.

Miss Callaghan delivered an update about the Educational Psychology service (EPS). Staff shortages had continued and the service area had mitigated this using the associate model and by implementing an improved structure, which facilitated integrated care between SEN, EP and Specialist teaching services. Backlogged cases continued to be an issue but the service area had been working towards clearing them.

The following points were made in response to questions from Members:
- 115 Education, Health, Care Plans (EHCP's) had fallen outside the acceptable timeline of 20 weeks and new requests for EHCP's meant work continued to accumulate.
- The EPS consultation had ended, so a permanent Principal Education Psychologist could now be recruited.
- Timings for EHCP completion had depended on the complexity of each case. The general assumption with relation to the associate model had been that an Associate EP could complete their contribution to a straight forward EHCP within 5 days, which would reduce the number of backlogged cases.
- Nearly 4000 EHCP's had been issued in total in Buckinghamshire, with 115 of these sitting outside of the expected timescale of 20 weeks. The service area had been sympathetic to parents experiencing delays but complex cases would continue to take longer to complete. The service area remained committed to using expertise and placements within Buckinghamshire, where possible, to alleviate pressures on the budget associated with high cost, out of County placements. The priorities for the service had been ensuring children received the right resource, that they had tailored support to a child's individual needs and that they worked cooperatively with parents as this was the objective of the SEND reforms introduced in 2014. In Bucks, there has been a slow response to implementing the SEND reforms which had created pressure on the service to meet statutory timelines. This had been why performance within the service was not as good as it should be.
- The reformed early help strategy would be expected to spot issues earlier and would encourage early work with families before more serious intervention would be needed this will decrease the number of Education Health and care Plans by putting in the support before things escalated to requiring a plan.
- Population growth within Buckinghamshire had resulted in nearly 1000 additional plans requiring completion.
- Buckinghamshire was no longer an outlier with SEND numbers as this had evened out nationally with Bucks stabilising at 3.1%, the same as regional comparators. National SEND policy reforms had increased the age range of children who potentially required an EHCP up to 25 yrs. Buckinghamshire County Council had not responded fast enough to these reforms but had been remedying this situation.

- Home-educated children had been able to gain an EHCP and had been entitled to the same support as children within an educational placement, depending on their needs. Information to assist parents with the process and setting out the local offer was available on the Bucks Family Information Service (BFIS) website.

The Chairman requested that the EPS update continued in future meetings and that data would be clearly stated within tables. This was agreed by Miss Callaghan.

ACTION: Service Director Education/Committee & Governance Advisor

Mr Williams presented apologies on behalf of Mr Whyte. He told the Committee that they had recently attended the opening of a new Buckinghamshire children's home and that the new fostering offer had been working effectively since it had been reformed. The service were still looking for more adoption and fostering placements.

Members requested a visit to the new children's home and asked about ongoing vetting processes for foster carers after they had commenced fostering. Mr Williams reassured Members that foster carers faced continuous assessment to ensure they remained suitable and that they had been subjected to a fostering panel as well as independent reviewing officers.

A Member asked whether a suitable site for a new children's home had been identified in High Wycombe. Mr Williams said that a site had been found and the required work to make it fit-for-purpose would be costed up. The service area would involve the local Member in the process and keep them updated.

Mr Williams informed Members that the national trend over the past few years had been for local authorities to outsource children's home provision, but recent spikes in supply and demand had resulted in the necessity for the Council to invest in their own children's homes. This ensured that the Council retained oversight, control and management of the homes and also of the children who had been placed within the homes. It was explained to Members that children placed within the provision had to get along for placements to work. Mr Williams reported that there had been no complaints about Buckinghamshire children's homes and the newest children's home was awaiting approval from Ofsted.

8   EARLY HELP CONSULTATION REPORT

The Chairman welcomed Ms Turnbull, Early Help Transformation Manager and Mr Morgan, Head of Early Help. Mr Lambert left the room for this item. The Chairman commended Ms Turnbull and Mr Morgan for their completed consultation and for listening to responses. During this item, another Member complimented the recent consultation and said it should be used as a model template for future consultations within the new council.

Mr Williams updated the Committee about the outcome of the consultation. He said 16 children's centres would now stay open, following feedback from residents. Nationally, a family-centred approach had been proving successful. He told Members that three key improvements of the more targeted support would be:

- Service users would only have to tell their story once due to inter-agency data-sharing.
- Self-referral would now be possible and the BFIS website would contain updated information on how to do this.
- The Council would be working more closely with Schools and service users would also have a named link family support worker.

Mr Morgan added that the new model would change the way Early Help operated, making it more responsive, flexible and accessible.

A Member asked about the intended use of vacant children's centres and whether the service area had confidence that the new council would continue working with partners to manage local offers. Ms Turnbull said that several partners had come forward and that property services would draw up details of new leasehold arrangements. Appendix 4 of the Cabinet papers contained details of potential interested parties. The service area had ensured that joint working with health services had continued.

In response to further questions it was confirmed that:
- The Council would not be continuing financial help for the closed children's centres which are located on School sites. Lease arrangements would be handed to them, but the early year's team would continue to work closely with Schools to ensure quality and sufficient provision. Schools had community funding sources which they would be encouraged to bid for.
- Members would be able to influence the offer within their local areas to ensure it reflected resident needs, working within available resources.
- The 16 centres which remained would be directly operated by BCC would be staffed by trained and DBS checked BCC employees. The Council would also ensure that other centres which continued to offer care would be safe, secure and appropriate for children.
- Coordination of care, early response and partner-working would improve under the new model.
- Early help for young people would tend to be focussed on one-to-one and small group mentoring, not through youth clubs

Several Members of the Committee requested that key performance indicator (KPI) measures would be reported back to the Committee at 6 monthly intervals. The Committee was advised that Early Help would be implemented from 2nd September and the service area would report back before the unitary formation in March.

The Chairman thanked the service area for their update.

9   CURRENT AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD) SERVICE PROVISION

The Chairman welcomed Ms Tilston – Designated Clinical Officer SEND and Mr Drawmer – Head of Achievement & Learning, who delivered a presentation about current ASD service provision.

The main points were noted as follows:

- There had been an increase in Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) diagnosis which had placed pressure on the number of mainstream, additional support units and specialist support units available.
- Speech and Language needs had increased significantly since 2014.
- There had been an increase in demand for Education, Health & Care plans (EHCPs) in the post-16 age group as some children had been able to access under 16 placements without additional help, but had required an EHCP when they had entered a new educational placement.
- Children who had been home-educated had the same access to support and EHCP's as children who attended an educational placement. Information about the application process had been published on the BFIS website.
- The presentation of ASD was very varied across different children, which caused challenges for diagnosis. The most challenging issues for Schools and Councils had been the need to reduce children's anxiety, which was a product of the disorder, and the requirement to provide the right learning environment and placement.
- Girls had been under-diagnosed and tended to present later as they internalised and masked symptoms. The standardised test for autism had been very boy-focussed, but it was confirmed that CAMHS had been aware and had remedied this.
- There would be a newly developed ASD toolkit to assist parents, teachers and professionals to identify ASD and access support services. This had been promoted to parents through SENDIAS, FACT Bucks, SENDCOs and Schools.
- The waiting list for 0-4 years support and diagnosis was currently short. Where a parent and GP suspected a child who is under 5 years old had ASD, paediatricians could hold off diagnosis but would still offer support.
- Adults who are over 18 years and newly diagnosed could access a great service through the Whiteleaf Centre.
- Help for 5-17 year olds had recently improved with children no longer being batted between CAMHS and paediatrics.
- Waiting lists for children aged 5-11 years had been too long. CAMHS had received funding to bring them down, but there had been no funding for paediatrics. The new single point of access would be expected to bring improvements.
- New post-diagnostic SENDCO support in the form of a Specialist Teaching Service drop-in had brought positive improvements to the service
- The service area intended to keep as many children in mainstream provision as possible. They had initiated side-by-side partnerships between special and mainstream schools to facilitate this.
- A recent development within the service meant that the Specialist Teaching Service would now support children with ASD who did not have an EHCP.
- There would be an increase in social, emotional and mental health needs (SEMH) provision, due to an increase in prevalence in Bucks. This would be delivered through adaptations to whole School behaviour management strategies, where support staff would be taught to de-escalate challenge, reduce tension and support SEMH pupil needs.

- There had been an increased requirement for Schools to evidence the support they have been providing ASD and SEMH pupils.
- Some Academies chose to use the SEND/ASD help and assistance provided by BCC, however larger chains tended to have their own in-house provision. BCC had approached all academies and tried to ensure the correct provision was being offered.
- Prosecution for non-attendance wouldn't happen if the parent continued to work cooperatively with BCC and CAMHS. Parents should ensure they had communicated difficulties with attendance to the service area.
- The number of home educated children had increased but as there had been no national reporting criteria, BCC had no insight as to whether this was ASD-related. Although, there are mechanisms in place to ensure all home-educated children had been visited so the service area had been reassured that the education provided is appropriate, there were no national comparators for BCC to make with other Council's data on this.
- Transitions to adult services were being evaluated and a big piece of work to make support better and smoother was due to commence.
- High Needs Block funding had been available to Schools, where a child's needs had been higher than School SEN funding allowed for.
- CAMHS services had been divided into different pathways to improve waiting lists for particular high-need groups.

It was agreed that Members would revisit this topic in a future meeting to enable a deep-dive approach into more focussed aspects of ASD provision.

10   WORKING TOGETHER TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF PERMANENT EXCLUSIONS FROM SCHOOL - 6 MONTH RECOMMENDATION MONITORING

The Chairman welcomed Viv Trundell, Education Entitlement Manager, and requested an update about permanent exclusions in Buckinghamshire. The Committee was informed that although permanent exclusions were up slightly from last year, they had been radically down from previous years. Mrs Cranmer thanked the Committee for undertaking the inquiry, as she felt that the situation had improved.

Committee Members requested that despite Cabinet's rejection of the recommendation for clusters of Schools to have access to an Educational Psychologist, that the service area would look at improving School access to the EPS. Miss Callaghan confirmed that although there was a clear need for preventative work to take place in Schools, this was a challenge when the current performance for the statutory Appendix D assessments had been so low. Members felt that preventative work for the EPS would assist with retention rates within the service as it provided more varied workloads.

Members were concerned that the Summer conference only had a 50% attendance rate by Buckinghamshire Schools. The service area advised that they had reached out to all Schools and that they'd received a better take-up from Primary Schools, than Secondary Schools.

The Committee agreed that the Chairman could assign a RAG status to all recommendations after the meeting ended.

11   PLACEMENTS INQUIRY SCOPE

The Committee agreed the placements inquiry scope but told the Chairman that Members would need dates and times to fit around busy schedules, particularly due to the new unitary council workload. The Chairman informed that Members of the FPR Select Committee would be co-opted onto the inquiry. Mrs Darby, Miss Wood, Mr Hussain and Mrs Birchley agreed to participate in the inquiry.

12   COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman informed the Committee that upcoming items for future meetings included:
- Educational standards update
- Side-by-side project update
- Joint scrutiny of mental health services

As a work programming meeting was taking place, the Chairman asked Committee Members whether they had any item preferences. A Member requested an in-depth review of current School curriculums. Miss Callaghan agreed to scope and support the item for Members.

13   DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting is due to be held on 11th June 2019, at 10am, in Mezz 1, County Hall, Aylesbury.

CHAIRMAN

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY WORK PLAN 2018-19

		2018		2019		
		June	October	January	February	June
Performance Indicators/Service Plans	Ad hoc	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Revenue Budget Proposals	Annual			▓		
Capital Strategy & Capital Programme	Annual			▓		
Treasury Management Strategy	Annual			▓		
Housing Developments – Viability Assessments	Ad hoc	▓			▓	
Report of T&F Group on MTFS	Ad hoc	▓	▓			
Open Spaces & Playing Fields Strategy	Ad hoc		▓			
Farnham Park	Ad hoc				▓	▓
Housing Strategy	Ad hoc			▓		
Consilio Investment Approval Process	Ad hoc					▓
LEP Industrial Strategy	Ad hoc				▓	
Annual Review of FoI/DP /GDPR	Annual		▓			
Frimley Park Trust Update (Wexham Hospital)	Annual				▓	
Ambulance Service	Annual				▓	
Local Health Providers (CCG)	Annual	▓				
Crime Statistics						
Homelessness – Costs of Bath Road development, impact on number in B & B accommodation						▓
Statistics on TPO complaints and prosecutions						
Bucks Health & Adult Care Select Cmm Minutes	Every Meeting	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓
Bucks Children's Social Care & Learning Select Cmm Minutes	Every Meeting	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓

Notes

1. All Members will receive notification of the publication of the 28 Day Forward Plans and can raise with the Chairman of O&S any items to be added to an O&S meeting agenda.

2. Budget monitoring reports will be circulated to Members of O&S Cmm in advance of Committee to allow any matters to be raised if necessary.