

For publication

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22

Meeting:	Council
Date:	20 July, 2022
Cabinet portfolio:	Non-executive
Directorate:	Corporate
For publication	

1.0 Purpose of the report

- 1.1 To present to council the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report which details the work of the council's overview and scrutiny committees, and development of the overview and scrutiny function, during 2021/22.
- 1.2 To provide an outline of overview and scrutiny work programme plans for 2022/23.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021/22 be noted.

3.0 Reason for recommendations

- 3.1 To enable council oversight of the work and operation of its statutory overview and scrutiny function, the function's effectiveness and contribution to the work of the council.

4.0 Report details

- 4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report is produced and presented to the Council each year. This is the council's 17th scrutiny annual report for submission to Council, following approval by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 30 June, 2022.
- 4.2 The provision of a scrutiny annual report is considered to be good practice and is a requirement of the Council's Code of Corporate Governance which is adopted to ensure effective operation of the council's functions.

4.3 The annual report, attached at Appendix 1, sets out the work, achievements and impact of the council's overview and scrutiny function during 2021/22. The annual report intends to:

- i. Give an overview of the effectiveness of the overview and scrutiny function and how it is developing;
- ii. Evidence and provide a comprehensive record of the work of the overview and scrutiny committees;
- iii. Promote the role and raise the profile of the statutory overview and scrutiny function and the work of the council's overview and scrutiny committees; and
- iv. Provide an outline of the overview and scrutiny committees' work programme plans for 2022/23.

4.4 Council may wish to provide comments on the report to the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum.

5.0 Alternative options

5.1 The alternative option is not to produce an annual report. This is not recommended for the purposes outlined in paragraph 4.2. The importance of the annual report was also highlighted in the statutory guidance on overview and scrutiny in local and combined authorities released in 2019.

6.0 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money

6.1 The Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum undertake budget scrutiny for the council and is involved in the early stages of budget preparation in order to review and challenge the budget forecast outturn. Budget and value for money is a key area for questioning across all scrutiny topics.

7.0 Implications for consideration – Legal

7.1 Overview and scrutiny is a legal requirement for local authorities under the Local Government Act 2000. The scrutiny function ensures that there is accountability to the public and that the needs and concerns of the community are reflected in executive decision making. The annual report helps to raise the profile of the work of scrutiny amongst the council and its communities.

8.0 Implications for consideration – Human resources

8.1 Support for the scrutiny function is provided within the Democratic Services team. Scrutiny has the power to call senior officers and cabinet members to attend meetings and provide evidence, this is done in consultation with senior officers and cabinet members through discussions at pre-agenda meetings.

9.0 Implications for consideration – Council Plan

- 9.1 The overview and scrutiny function supports the delivery of the council plan and delivery plans by aligning the scrutiny work programme to the key activities identified for delivery within the year. Scrutiny also receives regular reports on council plan performance and provides a valuable check and balance opportunity to support the council in achieving its targets.

10.0 Implications for consideration – Climate Change

- 10.1 Climate change has been a key area of interest for overview and scrutiny as scrutiny members are keen to support the council in achieving the goals set out in the Climate Change Action Plan. This will continue to be an important area of review for scrutiny during 2022/23.

11.0 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

- 11.1 Overview and scrutiny members bring experiences and skills from a wide range of different backgrounds, this enables our overview and scrutiny function to reflect and represent the needs of all our communities.

12.0 Implications for consideration – Risk management

- 12.1 There are no risk management implications.

Decision information

Key decision number	Non-key
Wards affected	All wards

Document information

Report author	
Rachel Appleyard	
Background documents	
These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared.	
<i>This must be made available to the public for up to 4 years.</i>	
Appendices to the report	
Appendix 1	Overview and scrutiny annual report 2021/22