

**SCRUTINY**

**ANNUAL**

**REPORT**

*2013/14*

## CONTENTS:

Section		Page No
<b>1.</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs Foreword	3
<b>2.</b>	Comments from the Chief Executive	4
<b>3.</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work and Achievements	5
<b>4.</b>	Scrutiny Outcomes and Impact on Service Delivery	12
<b>5.</b>	Scrutiny Developments During the Year	15
<b>6.</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Plans for 20014/15	18
<b>7.</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Committee Memberships 2013/14	20

## **1 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE CHAIRS' FOREWORD**

Another busy year for scrutiny is documented within this year's scrutiny annual report. We continue to produce pro-active scrutiny at Chesterfield Borough Council, allowing more members to become involved in issues and decisions at an early stage. This leads to members being more informed on current issues and decisions by the executive. This no doubt influenced the fact that during this period we only received one call-in.

Link Officers meetings have been a good opportunity for us to discuss our structure and how things have been working and we are also in the process of a review of scrutiny arrangements and will be considering the outcomes shortly. Scrutiny members have been attending scrutiny development sessions prior to each scrutiny Forum meeting. These sessions have given us an opportunity to consider sections of our process and discuss them with a view to improvement and more understanding of scrutiny.

We continue holding pre-agenda meetings for both scrutiny committees and the forum. The dates for these have been set and have been made available for officers and Executive members to attend and bring items forward to the forum/committees. We continue to hold scrutiny business meetings and from this we have produced guidance and protocols for scrutiny within Chesterfield.

You will see within the report how we use the forward plan and the importance of this document to scrutiny. We have yet again covered a wide variety of issues within scrutiny over the last year and the Council Budget has formed an Important part of our agenda. This is now a standing item on the Overview and Performance forum, along with Great Place, Great Service

We continue to work with other councils and attend regional network meetings and we have also worked with the Care Quality Commission, as well as starting to build a link with Derbyshire County Council. We have taken Scrutiny to the community assemblies and held our first Tenant/scrutiny meeting, with another one arranged for October.

We will continue to influence and challenge decisions and policy developments both with internal and external providers to ensure they have performance and good financial management at the forefront of any decision, whilst still providing an excellent service.

It has been a tough year for the council and many hard decisions have had to be made which makes it even more important that we have a good scrutiny framework.

We would like to thank all the officers and executive members for the professional way they have worked with us and also members of scrutiny who have attended meetings and given useful and valid comments and recommendations.

Scrutiny Chairs

Councillor Jean Innes

Councillor Vicki Lang

## **2 COMMENTS FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

It is my pleasure again to endorse the Annual Report of the Council's Scrutiny Committees.

It has evidently been a very busy and productive 12 months with impactful outputs and outcomes that have clearly influenced both the making of Council policy and the taking of Cabinet decisions.

What is particularly impressive has been the breadth of work progressed through the Scrutiny Project Groups. And it is also pleasing to see the number of Councillors that have come forward to chair these meetings, and in turn to drive progress and to report back on significant issues of public policy, e.g. the evolution of the local council tax support scheme, the development of a new anti-social behaviour policy and the production of a new external communications strategy.

Scrutiny has in 2013/14 touched all aspects of Council business, from pre-decision scrutiny to exercising its power of call-in, from budget and performance scrutiny to tracking the implementation of Council decisions, and from policy reviews specific to Chesterfield to joint overviews of shared services with neighbouring Councils.

There are, however, improvements that need to be made. The recent appointment of new Committee and Scrutiny Co-ordinators should provide much needed research, analytical and report writing capabilities in support of the Scrutiny Committees and Project Groups. There is also work to be done to work out how the outputs and outcomes of the Scrutiny Committees feed in a timely way into meetings of the Cabinet and Council.

My thanks and congratulations to Councillors Innes and Lang and to all the Scrutiny Committee members for their diligence, enthusiasm and commitment to promoting and progressing this very important function. And, likewise to Anita Cunningham and Sara Goodwin – for their advice and support to Scrutiny Committee members.

We will miss Councillor Lang's chairing skills and passion to just get things done for the benefit of the people of Chesterfield. But, equally we should extend a warm welcome to Councillor Slack as he commences his new role.

With kind regards

Huw Bowen

Chief Executive

### **3 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

The council's scrutiny structure currently comprises 3 Overview and Scrutiny Committees which are the **Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum**, the **Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee** and the **Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee**.

The Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committees may undertake scrutiny work as a committee, or appoint Scrutiny Project Groups (informal working groups) to undertake specific task and finish projects before reporting back to the parent Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Work undertaken by our Council's Scrutiny Committees during the municipal year 2013/14 is detailed below.

#### **Forward Plan and Pre-Decision Scrutiny**

A standing item on each Scrutiny Committee agenda is the Council's Forward Plan. The Forward Plan is a public document which contains details of the key decisions the Cabinet and Executive Councillors will make over a four month period, and is updated each month. Receiving and considering the Forward Plan provides the Scrutiny Committee with the opportunity to undertake 'pre-decision scrutiny', scrutiny of a matter before a formal decision is made by Cabinet and to then make recommendations to influence the decision. The Forward Plan must also contain reference to key decisions to be made which are exempt from public access and are to be made in private.

The following Executive Members (and/or their Assistant Executive Members as necessary) have attended scrutiny committees during the year to present pre-cabinet reports, policies, plans and strategies and answer scrutiny members' questions :

Leader of the Council / Executive Member for Regeneration, Councillor Burrows

Deputy Leader and Executive Member for Planning, Councillor Gilby  
Executive Member for Governance & Organisational Development, Councillor King

Executive Member for Customers and Communities, Councillor Blank  
Executive Member for Environment, Councillor Ludlow

Executive Member for Leisure, Culture and Tourism, Councillor  
Executive Member for Housing, Councillor McManus

Throughout 2013/14 Overview and Scrutiny Committees undertook pre-decision scrutiny, influencing decisions on the following policies, strategies and plans:

- Cemeteries Strategy
- Corporate Communications Strategy
- Chesterfield Sport and Leisure Strategy
- Great Place, Great Service Transformation Plan
- Chesterfield Corporate Plan
- Housing Tenant-Led Self Regulation
- Community Infrastructure Levy
- Early Morning Restriction Order
- Review of Housing Allocations Policy

The Committees also received pre-decision and consultation reports on :

- Delivering the Market Hall Refurbishment.
- Government's Consultation on HS2 Proposals
- Taxing the Town Hall
- Health and Wellbeing in Chesterfield
- Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements Evaluation
- Chesterfield Procurement Service
- Appointing a Green Deal Eco Partner
- Derbyshire County Council Composting Facility
- 'Are You Being Served' Community Survey Results
- Community Assemblies and Scrutiny Involvement
- Discretionary Housing Payments

## **Budget and Performance Scrutiny**

Our Overview and Scrutiny Committees undertake budget and performance scrutiny receiving and scrutinising budget management reports every two months and corporate performance reports on a six monthly basis. Progress and performance reports on Service Delivery Improvement/Action Plans are also scrutinised regularly. Throughout the year, the Council Leader, Executive Members and Chief Officers are challenged on the budget, progress and performance for their service areas and on how they continue to contribute to priorities for the Chesterfield community.

In particular during the 2013/14 period Scrutiny Committees have :

- Questioned the Leader of the Council about ongoing Budget proposals and the full draft budget. Budget scrutiny is a standing

item at every meeting of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum.

- Scrutinised overall Corporate Performance against agreed targets.
- Monitored and challenged progress in implementing the Great Place, Great Service Council-wide Transformation Programme.
- Monitored action plan performance progress in implementing the Equalities, Diversity and Social Inclusion Strategy.
- Monitored and challenged progress in implementing the Council's adopted Street Scene Improvement Plan.
- Monitored and challenged progress in delivering the Corporate Services Public / Private Partnership contract for the Council's Corporate Services functions.
- Monitored progress with implementation of the action plan for delivery of Overview and Scrutiny arrangements.
- Scrutinised implementation of the Customer Services Strategy.
- Scrutinised progress in implementing the Corporate Health and Safety Improvement Plan.
- Monitored and challenged progress in delivering the Community Safety Partnership Plan (see below for further information).
- Received progress in delivering the Allotments Strategy.

### **Scrutiny Committee Power of 'Call-in'**

Scrutiny legislation allows for an Overview and Scrutiny Committee (OSC) to investigate, make reports and recommendations on Cabinet decisions that have been agreed but not yet put into action. Legislation allows for action on these decisions to be suspended pending such a Scrutiny inquiry. This process is referred to as scrutiny 'Call-in'. Following a scrutiny call-in inquiry, the Scrutiny Committee may request Cabinet reconsider its decision on the basis of the further evidence gathered.

During the 2013/14 year, the following Call-in request was considered :



## ***Call-in Regarding the Restructure of the Governance Service***

In December 2013 the Council's Joint Cabinet and Employment and General Committee considered a report regarding proposals for the restructure of the Governance Service. The proposals and recommendations in that report were agreed.

A call-in request was made and the decision was called for consideration by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum. Members requesting call-in listed the following reason for consideration ;

'We believe the consultation process to be inadequately carried out with all stakeholders to ensure a better outcome. We feel a well documented wide consultation would have maximised the chances of success of the proposed changes. Ownership of these changes is vital'.

The Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum considered the matter at a meeting on 12 December 2013. The Forum received information and evidence from call-in members, the Executive Member and Head of Service for Governance. The Forum resolved not to support the call-in and let the decision of Joint Cabinet and Employment and General Committee stand.

## **Scrutiny Project Group on Parking Policy Review**

### ***Councillor Gordon Simmons – Project Group Lead Member***

A Scrutiny Project Group was appointed by the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to look into the council's parking policy. The project aimed to assess the quality of public parking within Chesterfield town centre; the management and enforcement arrangements; and facilities available to visitors, to identify what might need to change to improve parking. The Project Group's report and following recommendations were approved by the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee on 14 February 2013 :

1. That the barrier system of parking control, which gives change, should be extended to include other car parks.
2. That improvements be implemented for the New Beetwell Street Multi Storey Car Park to bring the facility up to a standard equivalent to that a Vicar Lane.

3. That improvements to signage across the town centre and at the entry points to off-street car parks be undertaken.

The scrutiny work was approved by Cabinet on 5 March 2013 which resolved that the recommendations of the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee be supported through the implementation of the Medium-Term Strategy and that the Committee be thanked for its valuable contribution.

### **Scrutiny Project Group on Housing Tenants Water Rates Arrears Evictions**

#### ***Councillor Gordon Simmons – Project Group Lead Member***

A Scrutiny Project Group was appointed by the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to look into the council's policy on Housing Tenants' Water Rates Payments. This followed a previous scrutiny review which recommended policy changes subsequently approved by Cabinet in January 2012. Implementation of the new policy had been monitored by the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee which decided to re-appoint a Scrutiny Project Group to undertake further evaluation of the policy, and to also look at arrangements around the collection of water rates payments. The Scrutiny Committee considered the Project Group's report and approved the following recommendations :

1. That officers report to scrutiny in six months time, as to the outcome and progress on the water rate collection process and technology review.
2. That an update be made to scrutiny when the contract with Severn Trent Water is formally signed.
3. That an update on the contract be given to scrutiny after one year.
4. That an informal meeting take place between the scrutiny Chairs, Executive Member and Review Group Lead to discuss the operation of the policy to confirm with Revenues and Housing that they either remove the sentence about 'write-offs' from the policy, or insert "write-offs to be officer recommendations carried out by Executive Members".

The report and recommendations are pending submission to Cabinet while further work in relation to recommendation 4 above is being undertaken.

## **Scrutiny Project Group on Hackney Carriage Licence Capping**

### ***Councillor Vicki Lang – Project Group Lead Member***

A Scrutiny Project Group was appointed by the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to look into the review of the current cap on the number of Hackney Carriage licences. The scrutiny review aimed to ensure that (i) review process had the confidence of both council Members and the Taxi Trade within the borough, and (ii) that the review was robust enough to aid the Council in its aim to reduce the number of Hackney Carriages to a level which allows the service in the borough to thrive. The Scrutiny Committee considered the Project Group's report on 16 January 2014 and approved the following recommendations :

1. That a clear comparison of the review survey be produced and broken down into each taxi rank to aid members of the Appeals and Regulatory Committee at the decision making stage.
2. That a clear written process be put together including the reviews inclusion in the Council's Forward Plan, in future.
3. That the Appeals and Regulatory Committee considers taking action to resolve the number of Hackney Carriage licences within the borough, such as removing the option to transfer the licence, when legislation permits.

The recommendations were considered by the Council's Appeals and Regulatory Committee held 12 February 2014 and resolved that the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee be informed that the Appeals and Regulatory Committee will take account of the Project Group's report on the hackney carriage capping review process when considering and reaching its decision on future policy, in addition to the results of the Hackney Carriage Unmet Demand Survey undertaken in November 2013.

## **Scrutiny Project Group on External Communications Strategy**

### ***Councillors Helen Bagley & Howard Borrell – Joint Project Group Lead Members***

In September 2013 a Scrutiny Project Group was appointed by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum to review and inform the production of a new External Communications Strategy. The work aimed to ensure that the new strategy is customer focused but also takes into

account the needs of the council as it moves forward with embracing new technology and managing a difficult budget.

The work is still in progress at the time of writing this report. It is anticipated the Project Group's report and recommendations will be considered by the Scrutiny Forum on 19 June 2014.

### **Scrutiny Project Group on Health Inequalities**

#### ***Councillor Julie Lowe – Project Group Lead Member***

In November 2012 a Scrutiny Project Group was appointed by the Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee to look into health inequalities issues and inform the council's Health Inequalities Plan. The project work aimed to develop a better understanding of the outcomes of the Plan, review ongoing work to address the health inequality issues highlighted and recommend further action as necessary.

The work is still in progress at the time of writing this report. It is anticipated a report and recommendations will be submitted to the Scrutiny Committee in the near future.

### **Scrutiny Project Group on New Leisure Centre Facilities**

#### ***Councillor Jenny Flood – Project Group Lead Member***

In February 2012 a Scrutiny Review Panel was originally appointed to monitor and scrutinise implementation of Cabinet proposals to progress the council's ambition to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of its Leisure Centres. This work evolved in 2013 and a scrutiny project group re-appointed with revised terms of reference to look at new leisure centre facilities. The Panel's work is currently ongoing.

### **Statutory Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee**

Legislation requires that all Councils appoint a Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee (CDSC) which must meet at least once a year to provide overview and scrutiny of the Community Safety Partnership's work and performance. Meetings of the Committee were held on 5 December 2013 and 10 April 2014 to receive and scrutinise performance progress against the Chesterfield Community Safety Partnership Plan actions for 2013/14, specifically to reduce Anti Social Behaviour, Violent Crime (including Domestic Violence) and Acquisitive Crime.

As part of its work, the committee made recommendations to the Community Safety Partnership and the Council's Executive Member for Communities as follows :

- (1) That the Committee be consulted on the 'Redeeming our Communities' project proposals when completed.
- (2) That the Committee undertake pre-decision scrutiny of proposals for the review of the Council's Community Safety service.
- (3) The introduction of an alternative shopwatch scheme be looked into with some expedience.
- (4) The cessation of the making of Road Closure Orders in relation to crime in the night time economy as has been done in recent years.
- (5) A request to Derbyshire County Council's Scrutiny Committee to help obtain information from Chesterfield Hospital regarding alcohol-related health problems and hospital admissions.

The committee also received reports on the Anti Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Bill.

### **Joint Overview and Scrutiny Panel for Chesterfield, North East Derbyshire and Bolsover**

During the 2013/14 municipal year the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Panel (JOSP) met in July and November 2013.

The Panel scrutinised performance and monitored joint services delivered between the three Councils of Chesterfield, Bolsover and North East Derbyshire receiving reports from the Head of Internal Audit Consortium, Head of Shared Procurement Unit and Business Manager for the BCN (Building Control) Consultancy, regarding the effective and efficient operation of their services.

Additionally, the Panel undertook a health-check inquiry into the purchase and costs of all insurances for each of the three councils. Officers from the three authorities researched the possibility and provided a report to the Panel. The report concluded that the insurance needs of the three councils varied too much for a unified approach to insurance but consideration of the issue had provided a good learning experience which may usefully be shared with Parish Councils.

## **4 SCRUTINY OUTCOMES AND IMPACT ON SERVICE DELIVERY**

### **Monitoring Impact of Scrutiny Work and Recommendations**

Our Scrutiny Committees monitor the progress of implementation of scrutiny recommendations that are approved by decision makers, requesting regular 6 monthly updates on progress. This follow up procedure is essential to ensure that once the recommendations are approved they are put into action, that the work of Scrutiny impacts on service delivery and the benefits of scrutiny work are received by people in our community.

Monitoring also continues to take place around those issues and services where our Scrutiny Committees have had a concern and undertaken some scrutiny work, but their scrutiny recommendations have not been approved. Regular update reports are still requested.

During 2013/14 our Scrutiny Committees monitored progress on scrutiny work and recommendations regarding :

- Water Rates Payments Policy Scrutiny Review
- Corporate Services Public / Private Partnership Scrutiny Review
- Refuse Collection – Blue Bins Scrutiny Review
- Parking Policy Scrutiny Review
- Council Tax Support Scheme Scrutiny Review
- Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Committee
- Anti Social Behaviour Scrutiny Review

Background detail of these reports and the scrutiny recommendations can be found in the previous section of this report and/or in previous Annual Scrutiny Reports. More specific progress made this year is detailed below.

### **Scrutiny Project Group on Parking Policy Review**

In February 2013 a Scrutiny Project Group was appointed by the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee to look into the council's parking policy. Its recommendations are detailed in Section 3 of this report.

In March 2013 Cabinet agreed that the recommendations of the Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee be supported through the implementation of the Medium-Term Strategy and that the Committee thanked for their valuable contribution.

***Achievements :***

(To be completed).

**Scrutiny Project Group on introduction of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme**

In January 2013 Cabinet considered a report of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum which had appointed a Scrutiny Review Panel to look at helping develop a Local Council Tax Support Scheme.

Cabinet agreed that further consideration be given to the recommendations of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum as part of the Cabinet's deliberations on establishing a Local Council Tax Support Scheme for Chesterfield.

Cabinet also recognised the value of the work done by the Scrutiny Panel and the Overview and Scrutiny Forum and acknowledged the Scrutiny Panel's recommendations had some merit and could be used to inform and develop Council policies for dealing with shortfalls in government funding for Council Tax Benefit. It was also noted however that some of the savings identified in the Scrutiny Panel's report were to be used for other purposes within the Council's budget and were therefore not available to support Council Tax Benefit claimants.

***Achievements :***

The work of the Scrutiny Project Group helped inform the development of the Local Council Tax Support Scheme particularly in relation to changing, and making savings from, the discretionary housing payments and subsidy arrangements that the council currently had in place. The involvement and work of the scrutiny group promoted lots of discussion and debate around the government's welfare reforms and ways to find a local solution.

## **Scrutiny Project Group on Anti Social Behaviour Policy**

A Scrutiny Review Panel was appointed to scrutinise and help develop the Council's Anti Social Behaviour Policy and its report was considered by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 17 January 2013 which agreed recommendations to Cabinet. The Forum's recommendations were considered by Cabinet on 10 September 2013 which agreed :

- (1) That the thanks of Cabinet be conveyed to Members of the Scrutiny Review Panel and of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum for their work and candid observations on the Council's approach to tackling anti-social behaviour.
- (2) That Cabinet notes and takes cognisance of the contents of the scrutiny report produced and, in particular, of the recommendations made by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on how the Council might modify its approach to tackling antisocial behaviour.
- (3) That the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum's report and recommendations be referred for immediate consideration by the Joint Member/Officer Working Group that has been established to review the Council's arrangements for the management of private sector anti-social behaviour.
- (4) That Members of the Scrutiny Review Panel and of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum be afforded the opportunity to consider and comment on the final working drafts of any new policy and procedures so developed for the management of private sector anti-social behaviour prior to their submission to full Council for final approval.

### ***Achievements :***

The Scrutiny Project Group report and Scrutiny Forum recommendations were taken into consideration by the executive working group set up in August 2013 to look into and review anti social behaviour policy and service delivery. The subsequent report and recommendations of the executive working group, namely concerning the resourcing of the service, were submitted to the Scrutiny Forum for further consideration. The Forum considered the options and recommended to Cabinet to use part of the funding from the vacant post to employ a part time ASB case worker.



## **Scrutiny Project Group on Refuse Collection**

### ***Councillor Howard Borrell – Project Group Lead Member***

A Scrutiny project group was appointed to look into issues associated with the introduction of the new blue recycling bin following some public concern and negative correspondence in the local media. The Scrutiny Project Group's report was considered by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum on 21 March 2013, and then by Cabinet on 23 April 2013.

Cabinet agreed that the scrutiny report be noted, and the conclusions drawn and recommendations made be taken into account in informing Cabinet's consideration of the officer's report on the matter.

### ***Achievements :***

The Scrutiny Project Group report and Scrutiny Forum recommendations were kept in mind by Cabinet when considering the report of the Head of Environment. The work of scrutiny and officers lead to improvements in service for users– namely that the blue bin caddy insert would be used for glass, and that paper and card could go into the main body of the bin with plastic and cans.

## **5 SCRUTINY DEVELOPMENTS DURING THE YEAR**

Developments in scrutiny are ongoing. Each of the Council's Scrutiny Committees includes scrutiny development as a standing item on their meeting agendas.

### **Evaluation & Review of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Function**

In last year's Annual Scrutiny Report we detailed progress in delivering the council's new scrutiny arrangements and committee structure following an independent review of the function. An internal evaluation of the delivery and performance of the new arrangements was undertaken where all our Council Members, Managers and Scrutiny Link Officers were surveyed for their views.

Overall the key findings of the 2012/13 evaluation are good. Generally the majority of measured responses to the survey questions (ie 10 out of the 12 measured questions) indicated a positive view of the new arrangements. Some of the new arrangements that have been well received include :

- Introduction of Scrutiny Link Officers
- Informal Scrutiny and Executive Member Communications Meetings
- Informal Pre-Agenda Meetings for Scrutiny Committee Chairs
- A stronger focus on pre-decision scrutiny from the Forward Plan

A combined 47.8% of responders said their experience of scrutiny had either improved or improved a lot on previous arrangements, 26.1% felt things were pretty much the same but none felt arrangements were worse than before. Feedback and engagement in the delivery of the new arrangements has on the whole been very encouraging and the general trend is positive.

A report detailing the findings and providing recommendations and an action plan to further develop the overview and scrutiny arrangements, were considered and approved by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum, Cabinet and Full Council. Actions in the agreed Action Plan have been delivered.

Scrutiny committees, members and officers continue to work pro-actively to successfully undertake and support scrutiny work, and embed the new arrangements. A further evaluation for 201/14 is underway at the time of writing this report. A results update will be included in next year's Scrutiny Annual Report.

## **Scrutiny Guidance and Protocols**

In line with the new overview and scrutiny arrangements we agreed the need for the introduction of key guidance documents as follows :

- *An Internal Working Protocol for the Council's Members and Officers, clarifying the day to day scrutiny and executive working relationship* : This document has been adopted by the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum and is in use.
  
- *Internal Working Protocol(s) for Scrutiny Councillors to help them deliver their overview and scrutiny duties and obligations* : A Toolkit for Scrutiny Project Groups has been adopted and is in use. Guidance for Call-in, Councillor Call for Action, Petitions, and Reporting, are under consideration.
  
- *A Public Guidance document which promotes scrutiny externally, explains its role to the public and how the public can be involved* : Commencement planned for this year.
  
- *A Partner Protocol which explains how the Council's overview and scrutiny function will engage and involve key partners and external organisations* : Commencement planned for this year.

## **Scrutiny Councillor Learning and Development**

The Council agrees that the development and growth of individuals to enable them to undertake their roles effectively is essential. During the year Scrutiny members attended in-house scrutiny development sessions every 2 months prior to each meeting of the Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum. The sessions have given members an opportunity to learn about scrutiny and consider and discuss scrutiny process with a view to improvement.

During 2013/14 Scrutiny Members received learning and development sessions on :

- Budget Setting and Scrutiny
- Scrutiny Project Management and Process
- Chairing Skills for Scrutiny Members
- Decision Making Process, Policy Cycle and Scrutiny Relationship

Learning and development plans are ongoing and for the new year currently include Questioning Skills and Councillor Call for Action.

### **Tenants' Challenge Panel**

Members have also held an introductory meeting with representatives of the Council's new Tenant Challenge Panel (TCP). Like the Council's corporate scrutiny function, tenants of social landlords (such as the Council) now have rights to scrutinise the performance and plans of their landlords housing provision service.

The TCP is the body comprising Council house tenants set up to undertake this role. The new role will co-exist alongside that of the council's corporate scrutiny function. A further informal, networking meeting is planned for October 2014.

### **East Midlands Councils' Regional Scrutiny Network *and the* National Overview and Scrutiny Forum**

The East Midlands Councils Regional Scrutiny Network and the National Overview and Scrutiny Forum are both forums for learning, sharing, promoting, supporting and developing the scrutiny function regionally and nationally.

*The Regional Scrutiny Network* is supported by East Midlands Councils which is a local government consultative body and provides important learning and development for local government councillors and officers in the East Midlands. The Regional Scrutiny Network gives councillors and officers the opportunity to share knowledge, work programmes and information, as well as providing opportunity to explore and influence national developments concerning scrutiny.

*The National Overview and Scrutiny Forum* was set up in 2007 to help develop the overview and scrutiny function in England and Wales. The Forum comprises Chairs and Vice Chairs (or equivalent) of each Regional Scrutiny Network. It controls its own agenda and work programme which are driven by the needs and interests of overview and scrutiny practitioners. Forum meetings are convened and facilitated by the Centre for Public Scrutiny, but this is currently under review.

The Council plays a proactive role in supporting and contributing to the work of these bodies and the influence they have regionally and nationally. The Council's Policy and Scrutiny Officer is currently Vice Chair for the East Midlands Regional Scrutiny Network and Vice Chair for the National

Overview and Scrutiny Forum. This helps raise Chesterfield's profile and puts Chesterfield in a good place to learn and influence developments around scrutiny, and to help champion, lead and promote scrutiny externally.

## 6 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE WORK PLANS 2014/15

The three Scrutiny Committees update their Work Programme business on a bi-monthly basis, in line with their bi-monthly meetings. Programmes of work would normally include :

- Items agreed by the Scrutiny Committees for consideration including Scrutiny Project Group work.
- Ongoing priorities such as budget, performance and corporate priority (Corporate Plan) scrutiny.
- Scrutiny of the Council's Forward Plan of key decisions.
- The monitoring of implementation of approved scrutiny recommendations.
- The monitoring of implementation of corporate and service improvement plans.
- Other unplanned business items that the Committees will decide to deal with as and when they arise.

Scrutiny aims for its work to have both a strategic and community focus, and to involve all stakeholders where possible. Councillors, Officers, Public and Partners all have opportunity to inform contents of the Scrutiny Work Programmes. This year the Scrutiny Chairs and Policy and Scrutiny Officer attended Chesterfield's four Community Assemblies to introduce and raise the profile of scrutiny whilst engaging members of the community about their current priorities for change. Community issues raised by the Assemblies are being considered for inclusion into the scrutiny work programmes.

Work Programme business (*as at 12 May 2014*) includes :

### Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Corporate Budget, Corporate Plan and Corporate Performance monitoring and scrutiny.</li><li>- Great Place Great Service Transformation Programme</li><li>- Constitution Review</li><li>- Overview and Scrutiny Arrangements Annual</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- ICT Strategy and Action Plan</li><li>- Corporate Asset Management Plan</li><li>- Chesterfield Procurement Service</li><li>- External Communications Strategy</li></ul>
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<p>Evaluation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tenant Involvement Strategy</li> <li>- Tenant Consultation Survey</li> <li>- Dog Control Measures</li> <li>- Corporate Services Public / Private Partnership Performance</li> </ul>	<p><i>Scrutiny Project Groups on :</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Welfare Reform</li> <li>- External Communications Strategy</li> </ul>
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### **Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health Inequalities Plan / Health and Wellbeing Strategy</li> <li>- Outside Market Reconfiguration</li> <li>- Corporate Health and Safety Improvement Plan Monitoring.</li> <li>- Community Assemblies Progress Report</li> <li>- Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion Strategy and Action Plan.</li> <li>-</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Statutory Crime and Disorder Committee duties (with Police and Crime Panel Update)</li> <li>- Customer Services Strategy.</li> </ul> <p><i>Scrutiny Project Groups on :</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Health Inequalities Plan</li> </ul>
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### **Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sport and Leisure Strategy</li> <li>- Parks and Open Spaces Strategy</li> <li>- Playing Pitches Strategy</li> <li>- Homeless Prevention Service</li> <li>- Housing Accommodation and Support Budget / Older People's Services</li> <li>- Housing Allocations Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Street Scene Improvement Plan</li> <li>- Housing Self Finance (Decent Homes and Rents)</li> <li>- Allotments Strategy</li> </ul> <p><i>Scrutiny Project Groups on :</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- New Sport and Leisure Facilities</li> <li>- Water Rates Policy Review</li> <li>- Taxi Subsidy</li> </ul>
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The Overview and Scrutiny function is a continually evolving and growing role, requiring ongoing learning and development. Much of the developments this year are detailed in the previous section of this report.

The Council will undertake formal, annual reviews of its overview and scrutiny function to ensure its ongoing evaluation and effectiveness.



## 7 SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP 2013/14

<p><b>Overview and Performance Scrutiny Forum :</b></p> <p>Councillors</p>	
<p>Vicki Lang – Co Chair Jean Innes – Co Chair Helen Bagley Howard Borrell Stewart Bradford Ian Callan Alexis Diouf Barry Dyke</p>	<p>Jenny Flood Bob Gibson Denise Hawksworth Julie Lowe Tom Murphy Neil Rayner Andy Slack Paul Stone</p>
<p><b>Community, Customer and Organisational Scrutiny Committee</b></p> <p>Councillors</p>	
<p>Jean Innes – Chair Tom Murphy – Vice Chair Helen Bagley Howard Borrell</p>	<p>Alexis Diouf Julie Lowe Neil Rayner Andy Slack</p>
<p><b>Enterprise and Wellbeing Scrutiny Committee</b></p> <p>Councillors</p>	
<p>Vicki Lang – Chair Denise Hawksworth – Vice Chair Stewart Bradford Ian Callan</p>	<p>Barry Dyke Jenny Flood Bob Gibson Gordon Simmons</p>

For further information contact :

Anita Cunningham

Policy and Scrutiny Officer

Tel: 01246 345273

[anita.cunningham@chesterfield.gov.uk](mailto:anita.cunningham@chesterfield.gov.uk);

[scrutiny@chesterfield.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@chesterfield.gov.uk);

or visit the Council's website at <http://www.chesterfield.gov.uk>