



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF STRATEGY AND RESOURCES**

to
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
5 MARCH 2024

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present to the Council an annual update on the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATION

To the Council:

That the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2023 / 24 is accepted.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was set up afresh under the Council's new Constitution with effect from October 2019. One of its responsibilities is to report to the Council on an annual basis, and the arrangements for this have been endorsed by the Council. Although the Committee also acts as the Council's Crime and Disorder Committee, its scrutiny remit in that role is quite specific and relates to outside bodies and agencies involved with crime and disorder. The Committee's annual report to the Council is therefore confined to its scrutiny role other than in relation to crime and disorder.
- 3.2 The Operating Protocol for the Committee offers a process for the consideration of potential scrutiny items to ensure efficiency and clear outcomes linked to strategic themes. The Protocol also reflects Government Guidance which needs to be heeded. This refines the role of the Committee as being positive and forward looking, providing more of a 'critical friend' challenge, and generally assisting the Council and its Committees by identifying improvements and making recommendations. The intention is that Committee time will predominantly be spent on the planning and carrying out of actual scrutiny work. It has established a Working Group, now made up of all members of the Committee, which can be used to manage items of a 'watching brief' nature or where information has been requested, and to assist with the planning of scrutiny.
- 3.3 In this municipal year, **three direct referrals** were received from the Member request form. All members have access to make a referral through the following link <https://forms.office.com/r/zR5yjZZFf3> . In line with the process agreed by the Committee, the Working Group is tasked with the receipt and initial consideration of Member requests and then reports to the next available meeting of the Committee.

3.4 The annual report for 2023 / 24 is set out at **APPENDIX 1** to this report.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 The Council has established a sound basis for the operation of its Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the annual reporting arrangements are intended to ensure a degree of accountability of the Committee to the Council.

5. IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2023 - 2027

5.1 Provide good quality services.

5.1.1 Thorough scrutiny processes support improved performance and efficiency which in turn will contribute to the quality of services provided, and functions undertaken by the Council.

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – None directly, but individual scrutiny reviews will enable the impact on customers to be assessed.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – Equalities are considered as part of the reporting on review work undertaken by Officers.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk (including Fraud implications)** – Scrutiny reviews enable potential Corporate Risks to the organisation and their mitigation to be identified.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Scrutiny reviews offer the potential for an assessment of financial impact to the organisation.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – Scrutiny reviews offer the potential for an assessment of any resource impact to the organisation.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Stuart Jennings, Corporate Governance Project Officer.