



**REPORT of
DIRECTOR OF LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE**

**to
ANNUAL COUNCIL
14 MAY 2026**

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

That the annual report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for 2025 / 26 is accepted.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee was set up afresh initially 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 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, a number of 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>.
- 3.4 The Committee also agreed a process for the initial consideration and review of potential items of scrutiny requested by Members. The Working Group has been tasked with this and has regard to the remit of the Committee and also the agreed operating protocol in identifying actual scrutiny items. It then reports to the next available meeting of the Committee.

3.5 The annual report for 2025 / 26 has been endorsed by the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Committee and is now 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 Council.

5. IMPACT ON PRIORITIES AS SET OUT IN THE CORPORATE PLAN 2025 - 2028

5.1 Delivering 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.
- (vi) **Impact on Devolution / Local Government Reorganisation** – None.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to: Stuart Jennings, Senior Specialist – Corporate Governance.