

Overview and Scrutiny in Bradford



Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2021-22

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Dear Councillor

We have the pleasure of presenting the 2021-22 Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report. This report summarises the achievements and contributions made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees over the last 12 months.

The work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees is a very important contributor to the delivery of Council Services in a challenging operational environment.

We would like the opportunity to acknowledge and thank all those people who contributed to and supported the work of Overview and Scrutiny and look forward to working with you during the upcoming year.

We are particularly appreciative of the Bradford District Councillors and Co-Opted Members, who sat on our Overview and Scrutiny Committees during the year.

Finally, we are pleased to note the results of the latest Overview and Scrutiny Annual Survey which continue to show positive levels of satisfaction in the overall operation of the scrutiny function. The survey is carried out each year and full details can be found on page 5.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairs 2021-2022



Cllr Nazam Azam
Corporate



Cllr Rizwana Jamil
Health and Social Care



Cllr Geoff Winnard
Children's Services



Cllr Kamran Hussain
Regeneration and
Environment

Overview and Scrutiny in Bradford

Bradford Metropolitan District Council has four Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Two of the Committees also have additional “co-opted” members.

The Committees are: -

- Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- Children’s Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee;
- Regeneration and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

And their role is to: -

- act as a “critical friend” to the Council’s leadership (the Executive) and senior officers;
- drive improvement in public services;
- enable the concerns of the public to be heard;
- consist of independently minded people who decide their own agenda and how they will do their work.

A total of 43 members and 7 Co-opted members were engaged with Overview and Scrutiny.

The Committees take a thoughtful, evidence based approach to the areas of work they address, which also includes listening to different officers, organisations and the public on topics that are of interest and / or concern to them.

Our meetings are open to the public and we always welcome contributions from people who attend our meetings or send us their views.

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Survey 2021-22

Responses – survey carried out April/May 2022

Overall response rate: 36%

Total surveyed: 207

Total number of responses (n): 75

Councillors (all): 23

Co-opted Members and officers (Council and external): 52

Number of O&S Committee meetings attended by respondents: 0-3 meetings = 70%; 4+ meetings = 30%

Comment

In line with the trend over recent years, there has been a decrease in the number of responses received. This may reflect the decrease in scrutiny activity over time and in particular, the last 2 years.

Overall, the results remain broadly stable. As in previous surveys, the area where satisfaction is lowest concerns the level of public involvement in the scrutiny function.

Results

Question	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither Satisfied nor Dissatisfied	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
<i>Overall, how dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the general operation of overview and scrutiny in Bradford District?</i>	16%	44%	21%	16%	3%
<i>How dissatisfied or satisfied are you with the level of public involvement in the scrutiny process?</i>	4%	28%	43%	21%	4%

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know
<i>O&S effectively acts as acts as critical friend to the Council's leadership, senior officers and partners</i>	12%	61%	19%	4%	4%
<i>O&S contributes to improving services in Bradford District</i>	8%	57%	16%	3%	8%

Examples of work undertaken in the past municipal year

During the year, the Committees have looked at a wide range of issues which have been of interest and concern to a wide ranging audience. Set-out below are three detailed examples of the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in Bradford during the municipal year 2021-22.

Hate Crime Scrutiny Review

Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee undertook this scrutiny review in order to review the effectiveness of approached being undertaken by Bradford Council and its partners in addressing Hate Crime across the District, as well as recommending improvements in tackling Hate Crime across the District.

During the course of the information gathering sessions for this scrutiny review. Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Committee members have engaged widely with individuals and communities. Also consulted widely with representatives of communities who are vulnerable to prejudice, those partner organisations who are responsible for protecting and supporting victims of Hate Crime and Bradford Council Officers.

The key findings and scrutiny review recommendation centred around the following areas:

- Under reporting of Hate Crime across the District;
- A lack of understanding amongst individuals and communities, about what Hate Crime is;
- Having a more co-ordinated approach across the District to address Hate Crime;
- Resources required to support victims of Hate Crime, as well as undertaking preventative work;
- Communicating key Hate Crime messages across the whole of the District.

Members of the Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be scrutinising the progress made against the Scrutiny Review recommendations.

Covid-19 Pandemic 2020/21 – 2021/22

During the 2020/21 Municipal Year, the activity of Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee was dominated by scrutiny of the Covid-19 pandemic. The Committee operated a rolling three-month work programme which meant that it could prioritise items that arose in a timely and flexible manner, for example the roll-out of the vaccination programme. The Committee also scrutinised and made recommendations concerning access and changes to primary care and GPs, the reopening of face-to-face advice services and the reintroduction of in-person day services for people with learning disabilities. The Committee also scrutinised broader trends around health inequalities and Covid-19 and the impact of the pandemic on the work of the sector inspectorate, the Care Quality Commission. As the pandemic has continued to have an impact on residents and services much of this activity carried forward to the 2021/22 work programme and has included scrutiny of services for carers and home support.

West Yorkshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee

At the start of the 2021/22 Municipal year, as one of two Bradford MDC representatives on the Committee, Cllr Vanda Greenwood was appointed Chair of the West Yorkshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. During the year the Joint Committee considered, among other things, the governance implications of the Health and Care Bill as it passed through Parliament, the constitution of the West Yorkshire Integrated Care Board, workforce issues across the health and care sector and the provision of ambulance services across West Yorkshire.

The Committee also formed a working group to consider the establishment of the Nightingale Hospital in Harrogate. The working group produced a report with a number of recommendations which included that there should be a review of intensive care capacity and an urgent review of oxygen capacity in West Yorkshire's Acute Hospitals. The report and recommendations were adopted by the Committee and were sent to Baroness Hallett in her role as Chair of UK Covid-19 Inquiry. The Chair of the Inquiry has passed the report to Solicitor's Team which is responsible for collecting evidence for the Inquiry. During the year the Committee also wrote to the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care with its views on the White Paper, *Integration and Innovation: working together to improve health and social care for all*.

Call-In

There have been no Call-Ins.

Engaging the Public

As well as publishing our agenda and reports on the internet, we now also promote our work through local media.

When scrutiny meetings are considering controversial subjects or matters of public interest, we often get several members of the public attending.

Complete Work Programmes for each Committee are available by contacting the appropriate Overview and Scrutiny Lead.

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Looking Ahead

It is important that we consider the Overview and Scrutiny activity carried out this year, in order to continue to improve the way in which Overview and Scrutiny operates in Bradford.

However, there are some big challenges in the upcoming year and set-out below are some of the key areas of work for Overview and Scrutiny.

Detailed Scrutiny Reviews

Members of Corporate Overview and Scrutiny have been concerned at the level of Hate Domestic Violence across the District and have subsequently decided to undertake a Scrutiny Review into this area.

Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny agreed a programme of detailed scrutiny reviews are currently undertaking a detailed scrutiny review into Elective Home Education across the District.

At its meeting on Tuesday 15 March 2022, Council resolved that Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny undertake a detailed scrutiny review into Child Poverty in the District.

Call for Action Enquiry

Following a member request and concerns raised by residents, Corporate Overview & Scrutiny members agreed to undertake a Call for Action enquiry regarding Anti-Social Behaviour.

Ofsted Inspection of Looked after Children

Following the Ofsted Inspection, the Children's Services Committee will be closely monitoring the progress being made against the Children's Services Improvement Plan.

Establishing the Children's Trust

The Children's Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be scrutinising the transition to the transition to Bradford's Children's Services Company.

'Culture is our Plan' and City of Culture 2025

The Regeneration and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be scrutinising the delivery of the Cultural Strategy and the establishment of governance arrangements following the designation of Bradford District as City of Culture 2025.

Biodiversity, use of pesticides and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy

At the request of Full Council, the Regeneration and Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee will be scrutinising the use of glyphosate herbicides by the Council and the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. The Committee will also be scrutinising the implications of the '10% net gain' of biodiversity value that will be required for all new developments as introduced by the Environment Act 2021 which is due to come into force in November 2023.

Health and Social Care Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The Committee will continue to scrutinise the implications of the Covid-19 pandemic and the impact on, and recovery of, services such as primary care GP services and waiting times for hospital treatment. In addition, Members will be scrutinising maternity services, cancer services and respiratory health, and adult social care services such as home support and services for carers.

Dentistry

The West Yorkshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be scrutinising the provision of and access to dentistry services and the possible implications of the Health and Care Act 2022 on how services will be provided and organised in the future.