

Title of Report:	Scrutiny Annual Report 2011/12
Report to be considered by:	Corporate Board
Date of Meeting:	22 May 2012
Forward Plan Ref:	EX2307

Purpose of Report: To inform Corporate Board of the Scrutiny activity undertaken during the municipal year 2011/12

Recommended Action: To note the contents of this report.

Reason for decision to be taken: N/A

Other options considered: N/A

Key background documentation: N/A

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the following Council Strategy priority(ies):

- CSP1 – Caring for and protecting the vulnerable**
- CSP2 – Promoting a vibrant district**
- CSP3 – Improving education**
- CSP4 – Protecting the environment**

The proposals will also help achieve the following Council Strategy principle(s):

- Putting people first**
- Living within our means**
- Empowering people and communities**
- Transforming our services to remain affordable and effective**
- Doing what's important well**

The proposals contained in this report will help to achieve the above Council Strategy priorities and principles by:

Portfolio Member Details	
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Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	

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Implications

Policy: None
Financial: None
Personnel: None
Legal/Procurement: None
Property: None
Risk Management: None
Equalities Impact Assessment: Not Required - Information only
Corporate Board's Recommendation:

NOTE: The section below does not need to be completed if your report will not progress beyond Corporate or Management Board.

Is this item subject to call-in?	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/>	No: <input type="checkbox"/>
If not subject to call-in please put a cross in the appropriate box:		
The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Considered or reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission or associated Task Groups within preceding six months	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Item is Urgent Key Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Report is to note only	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report outlines the scrutiny activity undertaken by the authority in the municipal year 2011/12. It contains an overview of the year and gives detail on each of the activities undertaken.

2. Overview of the last 12 months

- 2.1 Over the last twelve months the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission, the Health Scrutiny Panel and the Resource Management Working Group have completed 21 scrutiny reviews and three items were called in for review.

3. Equalities Impact Assessment Outcomes

- 3.1 There is no decision to be made and therefore no Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 The members of Corporate Board are asked to note the contents of this report.

Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report outlines the scrutiny activity undertaken by the authority in the municipal year 2011/12. It contains an overview of the year and gives detail on each of the activities undertaken. It includes a commentary, where it is possible to give it, on the value that the activity has added.

2. Overview of the last twelve months

- 2.1 In May 2011 the scrutiny structure was streamlined with the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission (OSMC), Health Scrutiny Panel (HSP) and Resource Management Working Group (RMWG) remaining.
- 2.2 Over the course of the last year, the three Committees have conducted scrutiny reviews across all areas of the Council, and have regularly reviewed and challenged financial and performance information.
- 2.3 Three decisions have been called in to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission for review. In all cases, the original decision was upheld. These decisions were:
- (1) ID2266: The Three Year Highway Improvement Programme 2011/12 – 2013/14.
 - (2) Provisional Outturn Report 2010-11
 - (3) Funding Arrangements Framework for Domiciliary Care and Non-residential Services

3. Activity in Detail

- 3.1 Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission.

- (1) *Transfer of the West Berkshire Council CCTV control room to the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead.* The Commission reviewed the processes used during the project following reported public concern during the switch over period.

Added Value: Five recommendations which focussed on learning lessons from the project were identified and accepted by the Executive.

- (2) *Schools' Severe Weather Plans.* The Commission explored the progress being made by schools in preparing severe weather plans in order to minimise disruption to pupils and parents in light of recent weather conditions.

Added Value: The Commission was able to explore this issue in a public arena and make appropriate recommendations.

- (3) *Preparations for the London 2012 Olympics.* The Commission has received two updates on West Berkshire's preparations for the Olympic

Games, including information about the Olympic torch route through the district.

Added Value: The Commission was provided information on the wide ranging activities required to be undertaken by the Council in preparation for and during the Olympic Games.

- (4) GCSE Maths Results. The Commission reviewed information relating to GCSE maths results in light of quarter 2 - 2011/12 performance returns, which had been lower than expected.

Added value: Members of the Commission were made aware of the wider issues impacting on this performance indicator and were able to discuss the subject in a public arena.

- (5) *Examination of facilities in place for younger people.* The Commission undertook a review of this subject following an earlier review in 2008/9 as this remained a high priority for residents of West Berkshire.

Added value: The Commission formulated a number of recommendations for submission to the Executive.

The following items were also reviewed by the Commission:

- (6) *Quarterly Performance Reports.* The Commission reviewed the Council's performance reports each quarter, enabling issues to be examined, and recommendations to be made.
- (7) *Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment.* The details of this report were reviewed prior to its submission to DEFRA.
- (8) *Performance Indicator: Affordable Housing units.* The Commission explored the factors causing this indicator to be reported as red in quarter 2 2010/11 and were satisfied at the actions being taken by officers.

Scrutiny reviews initiated and due for completion during 2012/13.

- (9) *Methodology of repairing potholes.* The Commission is currently scrutinising the methodology for identifying and repairing potholes, recognising that amendments had been made following a previous review a year earlier.
- (10) *Housing Allocation Policy.* The Commission expressed a desire to be involved in the process of amending the Housing Allocation Policy.
- (11) *Assessing and assuring the 2012/13 performance 'scorecard'.* The Commission have established a working group to help develop the measures and targets that will be incorporated into the Council Strategy.

3.2 Health Scrutiny Panel

- (1) *Review into Dignity of Care for Older People in Hospitals.* The Panel commissioned a review of this subject to be undertaken by the Local Involvement Network (LiNK) in order to understand local issues not explored by a similar national review undertaken by the Care Quality Commission.

Added Value: The Panel were able to contribute to and provide direction to this public review.

- (2) *Ambulance Service Quality Indicators.* The Panel received a report on changes to the South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) performance reporting targets.

Added Value: Members were able to challenge the information provided in a public forum.

- (3) *Commissioning of General Practitioner Services.* The Panel discussed the proposed changes to GP commissioning arrangements and how this would affect services in the east of the District.

Added Value: Members were able to explore and challenge areas of concern in a public forum

- (4) *Update on the "Six Lives" Review:* The HSP considered the Council's response to a national report on the provision of public services to those with Learning Disabilities.

Added Value: The Panel were able to challenge the Council's response ensuring it was appropriate and robust.

- (5) *Scrutiny Review of NHS Continuing Healthcare.* The Panel explored guidelines and directions for continuing healthcare for the district's residents. A subsequent and ongoing review being undertaken by the Council is also to be reported to the Panel.

Added Value: Members were able to question the approach taken by the PCT in a public forum.

3.3 Resource Management Working Group (RMWG)

- (1) *Car Parking Charges and Income: Season tickets and PCN payments.* Officers presented information to the RMWG in order to clarify differences between forecast and actual income figures.

Added Value: The RMWG provided challenge to officers and were able to make suggestions for improvement.

- (2) *Financial Monitoring.* Members examined financial reports throughout the year as reported across the Council.

Added Value: Members were able to explore and challenge areas of concern in a public forum and provide suggestions directly to officers.

- (3) *Establishment Monitoring.* The RMWG regularly examined the figures reported across the Council on staffing establishment.

Added Value: The exercises provided challenge to officers and allowed examination of the Council's establishment in public.

- (4) *Strategic Risk Register.* The RMWG examined the assessment of risk for individual items on the register.

Added Value: The review enabled identified risks to be explored in a public setting. The Group recommended that the risk register be scrutinised on an annual basis.

- (5) *School Academies.* The RMWG considered the effect of schools becoming academies on the capacity of the Local Education Authority.

Added value: Ten recommendations were identified for submission to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission and subsequently endorsed by the Executive.

- (6) *Geographical Information Systems (GIS).* The Group heard from officers how GIS was currently used by the Council and its potential for future use.

Added Value: Members were able to explore potential uses for GIS in a public forum.

- (7) *Highways Asset Management Plan.* The RMWG were consulted on the plan prior to its submission for approval by Individual Decision.

Added Value: The Group were able to explore the plan and make suggestions for improvement. The public meeting was of additional benefit to the consultation process for the plan.

- (8) *Timelord Programme.* The RMWG received a closing report on the Timelord Programme.

Added Value: The successful completion of the project was confirmed by Members in a public forum.

4. Recommendation

- 4.1 It is recommended that Corporate Board notes the contents of this report.

Appendices

There are no Appendices to this report.